

DIVISION OF CONTINUING STUDIES

Division of Continuing Studies

For 75 years, the Division of Continuing Studies (DCS) has been dedicated exclusively to the needs of adult and contemporary learners by *meeting students where they are*. Elevating the adult student voice across the institution, DCS serves as a key resource for adult learners, providing guidance and support tailored to their individual needs. Although the higher education landscape has changed, our core beliefs and guiding principles have not. Since our beginning, we've worked to raise awareness of the characteristics, circumstances, and needs of adult learners, recognize the value that our diverse, multigenerational students bring to UNO, and provide opportunities for degree attainment that honors their unique backgrounds, experiences, and aspirations.

DCS was founded with an entrepreneurial spirit and has sustained a culture of resilience, adaptability, and innovation. The nontraditional design of our unit and degree program is what has allowed us, and in turn, our students, to thrive. Our expertise is in serving the needs of adult and contemporary learners. Our commitment is to helping students achieve their academic goals by providing flexible and accessible pathways to degree completion while honoring the unique experiences they bring. We are dedicated to supporting each learner's journey, ensuring they have the guidance and resources needed to succeed.

DCS takes a holistic approach to student success, working to support, empower, and advocate for adult and contemporary learners. Through an assigned advising model, we build relationships and provide personalized guidance from pre-admission exploration through graduation. Our students take varied pathways and are provided individualized attention to ensure a smooth transition through their university experience.

Our Academic Programs

The Division of Continuing Studies offers two distinct degree programs - the Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies and the Bachelor of Science in Applied Leadership Studies. Both programs are available online, on-campus, or through a combination of online and on-campus classes.

Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies

The Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies (BMS) degree is intentionally designed to offer flexibility, allowing adult and contemporary learners to align their education with their interests and future aspirations. Students can choose from structured concentrations or create an individualized plan of study tailored to their goals. The BMS, awarded to over 27,000 students since 1950, is one of the nation's oldest multidisciplinary degrees and is part of UNO's longstanding, rich tradition of serving military and veteran students.

Bachelor of Science in Applied Leadership Studies

The Bachelor of Science in Applied Leadership Studies (BSLS) degree explores leadership as a discipline and a practice, developing the leader within while building the knowledge needed to successfully take on leadership roles in a variety of contexts. The Bachelor of Science in Applied Leadership Studies degree cultivates durable skills responsive to the modern workforce and complexities of contemporary life. Designed for adult learners, the BSLS degree emphasizes real-world application, allowing students to integrate their professional and life experiences into their leadership development.

Program Goals

DCS provides educational experiences, both curricular and co-curricular, for students to develop and enhance the skills, abilities, and perspectives to be self-directed, lifelong learners. DCS supports holistic growth and development; shaping the contribution our students and graduates make to their lives, their profession, and to society.

The following Program Goals & Graduate Expectations guide our programs and services:

- To ACT Responsibly
- To COMMUNICATE Effectively
- To CONNECT Meaningfully
- To LEARN Continuously
- To THINK Independently

Student Civility Statement

Student learning is a priority in the Division of Continuing Studies. We value the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and work to foster a community of mutual respect. To achieve these ideals, all DCS students are expected, while in the role of student or representative of the University, to exhibit, and practice civil behaviors that exemplify:

- Respecting faculty, staff, fellow students, guests, and all University property, policies, rules, and regulations.
- Taking responsibility for one's choices and actions.
- Accepting the consequences of one's inappropriate choices and actions.
- Communicating in a professional and courteous manner in all forms, and all times, whether verbal, non-verbal, or written.

Behavior that is contradictory to the above and to the standards outlined in the UNO Student Code of Conduct (<http://catalog.unomaha.edu/aboutuno/regulations-and-policies/student-code-conduct/>) (<http://catalog.unomaha.edu/undergraduate/student-code-conduct/>) will be taken seriously and appropriately reported.

Transfer Credit & Credit for Prior Learning

The Division of Continuing Studies believes in maximizing prior learning so students can finish what they have started without starting over. Our generous transfer credit and credit for prior learning practices value prior coursework, training, and experiences. DCS recognizes that not all college-level learning happens in the classroom, so there are established processes for awarding curriculum credit for college-level learning obtained through other institutions and prior learning experiences outside of traditional academic study to seamlessly transition credit towards our degree programs.

Standards for Assessing Learning

Since 1974 the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) has worked with colleges and universities in both the public and private sectors to support the learning goals of adults. CAEL has created standards for assessing CPL.

The Division of Continuing Studies has adopted CAEL's ten standards for assessing learning: <https://www.cael.org/ten->

standards-for-assessing-learning (<https://www.cael.org/ten-standards-for-assessing-learning/>)

1. Credit or competencies are awarded only for evidence of learning, not for experience or time spent.
2. Assessment is integral to learning because it leads to and enables future learning.
3. Assessment is based on criteria for outcomes that are clearly articulated and shared among constituencies.
4. The determination of credit awards and competence levels are made by appropriate subject matter and credentialing experts.
5. Assessment advances the broader purpose of equity and access for diverse individuals and groups.
6. Institutions proactively provide guidance and support for learners' full engagement in the assessment process.
7. Assessment policies and procedures are the result of inclusive deliberation and are shared with all constituencies.
8. Fees charged for assessment are based on the services performed in the process rather than the credit awarded.
9. All practitioners involved in the assessment process pursue and receive adequate training and continuing professional development for the functions they perform.
10. Assessment programs are regularly monitored, evaluated and revised to respond to institutional and learner needs.

Credit for Prior Learning

DCS determines how Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) credits are applied toward graduation requirements in accordance with the policies of the institution, college, and program. Duplicate credit for the same learning is not awarded. For example, students who may have previously taken and passed an English Composition I course at two prior institutions will only get credit for the most recent course taken and passed.

Learning experiences vary, and as such, academic credit for prior learning is highly individualized and must be determined on a case-by-case basis. Many adult and contemporary learners apply some method of CPL towards their BMS or BSLS degree. Our professional academic advisors work closely with you to determine how the credits may apply to your program of study and your future goals.

All modalities outlined are currently available only to degree-seeking students enrolled in a DCS academic program. Students enrolled in UNO programs outside of DCS should adhere to the policies established by the respective program and college. Due to the nature of our student population, DCS provides the broadest and most flexible CPL policy at UNO. As such, students who change to a non-DCS program at UNO may find that CPL credits do not apply to their new program in the same manner. Students are encouraged to work closely with a DCS academic advisor to determine if CPL is an option.

Transfer Credit

The Division of Continuing Studies offers a generous transfer policy, accepting credits from most colleges and universities, including regionally accredited institutions, nationally accredited institutions, and non-U.S. tertiary institutions. Students may apply a maximum of 64 credit hours from two-year institutions towards their BMS or BSLS degree.

Transfer Credits from Postsecondary Institutions (Colleges and Universities)

In order to determine if coursework taken at a postsecondary institution other than UNO is eligible for transfer and how it applies, DCS relies on the recommendations of the Joint Statement on the Transfer and Award of Credit (AACRAO, CHEA, & ACE, 2021 (<https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Joint-Statement-on-the-Transfer-and-Award-of-Credit.pdf>)). The three considerations that determine the transferability of credit includes:

1. The educational quality of the institution.
2. The comparability of nature, content, and level of the course that is to be transferred to UNO and applied to the academic program.
3. The appropriateness and applicability of the credit in relation to the plan of study.

Institutional Accreditation

Accreditation serves as the basic indicator that an institution meets certain minimum standards in order to give students and policymakers confidence in the effectiveness of academic quality. As such, DCS recognizes the value of accreditation and has outlined a process for identifying postsecondary credit that may transfer to our programs.

Regionally Accredited Institutions

Coursework of comparable content and scope to the UNO curriculum will generally be transferred if it was completed at colleges and universities accredited by one of the six regional accrediting agencies recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). Courses must be successfully completed with a grade of C- or better.

The six regional accrediting agencies that operate in the U.S. are:

- Middle States Commission on Higher Education
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Nationally Accredited Institutions

DCS recognizes that institutions may offer programs that are recognized by programmatic or specialized accrediting agencies. Students who have successfully completed coursework at colleges and universities that do not hold regional accreditation may request evaluation of credit for applicability of transfer. As a rule, DCS requires that the institution and/or program be recognized by an accrediting body that is recognized by both CHEA and USDE during the time of attendance.

Non-U.S. Tertiary Institutions

UNO recognizes the value of postsecondary coursework completed outside of the U.S. higher education system and provides pathways for international credits to be applied toward degree programs. Due to the diversity of languages, curriculum, structure and grading schema of non-U.S. colleges and universities, UNO requires a certified translation to accompany transcripts not issued in English by World Education Services, www.wes.org (<http://www.wes.org/>), or Educational Credential Evaluators, www.ece.org (<http://www.ece.org/>). The translation should be literal and not interpretive. In many cases, international credits will be converted to the U.S.

semester system. A DCS academic advisor can provide a list of organizations that provide transcript translation services.

Coursework Not Accepted for Transfer Credit

The following coursework will not be accepted for transfer credit and will not count toward a degree at UNO:

- Courses in which the grade earned is below a C- on 4.0 grading scale (except from the NU system).
- Courses identified by UNO as remedial, such as remedial English, Mathematics and developmental reading.
- Portfolio-based experiential credits awarded by another institution.

Standardized Exams

Standardized examinations are available in disciplines from physics to studio art, from computer science to foreign language. Typically, DCS awards credit for introductory-level courses; although, some students use examinations to demonstrate advanced knowledge. Students may apply a maximum of 30 hours of exam credit towards their BMS or BSLS degree.

Eligible Exams

Credit may be earned by successfully completing eligible examinations:

- Advanced Placement Exams (AP): <https://apcentral.collegeboard.com> (<https://apcentral.collegeboard.com/>)
- International Baccalaureate Exams (IB): <https://ibo.org> (<https://ibo.org/>)
- College Level Exam Program (CLEP): <https://clep.collegeboard.org/>
- DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST) (formerly DANTES): <https://www.getcollegedcredit.com/>

Note: AP and IB examinations are normally completed as part of a high school curriculum.

Course and Credit Equivalencies

Course and credit equivalencies for AP, IB, CLEP, and DSST examinations are regularly evaluated and updated. Be advised that examinations accepted for credit, the minimum score required, and hours/courses awarded are subject to change by UNO and DCS at any time without notice. Course and credit equivalencies for AP, IB, CLEP, and DSST are posted on the UNO website (<https://www.unomaha.edu/registrar/students/before-you-enroll/transfer-credit/clep-credit.php>). Courses not listed on the articulation guide may be eligible for transfer and fulfillment of general elective requirements.

Evaluated Non-College Programs

Adult and contemporary learners can demonstrate college-level knowledge and competencies gained from courses, examinations and certifications offered by employers, federal agencies, professional associations, apprenticeship programs, online education providers and other organizations. Courses and training are rigorously reviewed by a team of faculty experts who make recommendations for course-level and credit-hour equivalencies.

Eligible Credit Recommendations

Credit may be awarded for learning assessed by the following organizations:

- **American Council on Education (ACE)**
ACE's College Credit Recommendation Service (CREDIT) has reviewed over 35,000 courses, exams,

and learning experiences for academic credits since it was founded in 1974. For more information, visit <http://www.acenet.edu/nationalguide> (<http://www.acenet.edu/nationalguide/>).

- **National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS)**

Formerly known as National PONS, the NCCRS has been evaluating training and education programs for college credit equivalencies since 1973. For more information, visit <http://www.nationalccrs.org/course-credit-directory> (<http://www.nationalccrs.org/course-credit-directory/>).

- **DCS Faculty Academic Policy Committee (FAPC)**

The FAPC provides academic guidance and oversight for DCS academic programs. In conjunction with UNO faculty, the committee is responsible for reviewing and approving select nontraditional college credit recommendations that may be applied to the BMS or BSALS programs. The committee does not evaluate individual credit requests on an ad hoc basis.

Military Training and Experience

DCS is dedicated to bridging military service with undergraduate curriculum. As part of this commitment, we award academic credit for military training and learning experiences from all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces. As with all methods of CPL, credit awards are at the full discretion of DCS.

- **Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy**

In 2013, the Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy transitioned to the Joint-Services Transcript (JST) for active-duty, reserve and veteran members. JST replaced the following systems: AARTS (Army), SMART (Navy and Marines), CGI (Coast Guard) and Form DD-295 (all branches). JST CPL credits are posted as other institutional credits, rather than transfer credits. For instructions on how to order a JST, visit <https://jst.doded.mil/faq.html>.

- **Air Force**

Air Force training is certified by the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF). CCAF is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools through Air University, therefore, CCAF courses are considered transfer credits at UNO. For instructions on how to order CCAF transcripts, visit <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Barnes/CCAF/Display/Article/803247/community-college-of-the-air-force-transcripts/>.

- **Defense Language Institute (DLI)**

Operated by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD), DLI provides linguistic and cultural instruction to members of the DoD and federal agencies. DLI courses are considered transfer credits at UNO as it is regionally accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. For instructions on how to order an official transcript, visit www.dlilfc.edu (<http://www.dlilfc.edu/>).

DCS Policies

Academic Amnesty

Academic amnesty gives students the opportunity to rebuild their University of Nebraska system cumulative grade point average (GPA). Students must have been out of the Nebraska system for at least one year to be eligible for academic amnesty and only 'F' and 'D' grades earned within the University

of Nebraska system (UNO, UNL, UNK, UNMC) prior to the year out will be included in the amnesty. All UNO colleges will accept the results of the DCS amnesty. Consult a DCS academic advisor to learn more.

Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) Grades

DCS students may elect to receive a grade of Credit (CR) or No Credit (NC) in lieu of a letter grade. A student earns a CR with a C- grade or higher. Please see University policy regarding eligibility (<https://catalog.unomaha.edu/undergraduate/grades/#text>). Students planning to apply to graduate of professional programs should consult with those programs on their acceptance of non-graded credit.

- **Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies:** Students may apply up to 24 credit hours on a Credit/No Credit basis, with a maximum of six credit hours allowed in the Multidisciplinary Core (Block 1, 2, 3).
- **Bachelor of Science in Applied Leadership Studies:** Students may apply up to 24 credit hours on a Credit/No Credit basis, with a maximum of six credit hours allowed in the Leadership Competencies or Leadership Context Blocks.

No Activity Drop Policy

DCS offers a variety of courses online each semester to support our learners' needs. This policy pertains to student activity in registered online courses offered through our division.

Students are considered to have "no activity" if they do not log in to Canvas and initiate active participation in an "academically related activity" during the designated drop period for the course as outlined below:

- **Non-Accelerated Courses:** At the end of the fifth day of the course.
- **6-Week Accelerated Courses:** At the end of the second day of the course.

Merely logging in to the Canvas course does not constitute engaging in an academically related activity. Academic related activities in an online course include but are not limited to:

- Student submission of an academic assignment or exam.
- Documented student participation in an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction.
- A posting by the student showing participation in an online study group assigned by the institution.
- A posting by the student in a discussion forum showing participation in an online discussion about academic matters.
- An email from the student or other documentation showing student-initiated contact with a faculty member asking a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

If a student fails to meet these requirements, they are considered as having "no activity" and will be notified of administrative removal from the course. If students are Financial Aid recipients and dropped for having "no activity" they will have their aid adjusted to reflect the actual number of credits for the courses they are attending. Only students dropped in error will be enrolled back in the class. If the situation arises and a student is reenrolled in the course, they must contact the Financial Aid Office requesting that aid be reevaluated for reinstatement. If reinstated, aid will again be adjusted based on enrollment status and eligibility. Students who wish to drop a class during the designated drop period should still follow the University policy to change their

enrollment. A No Activity drop is different from a withdrawal. Please review the Withdrawal Policy for more details.

Student Groups

Alpha Sigma Lambda Honor Society

Campus Locations & Services

UNO Campus Location

DCS is on the second floor of the College of Public Affairs and Community Service building (CPACS 207) on UNO's Dodge Street campus. This location serves as the headquarters of our operations. To provide high touch services to our students and to accommodate their busy lives, students are able to meet with staff over the phone, online, and in person. In addition to standard weekday business hours (8-5), professional advisors offer early morning and evening appointments to accommodate varying schedules.

- Main Campus | CPACS 207 | 402.554.2370 | unodcs@unomaha.edu

Offutt Air Force Base

A branch of DCS is located at Offutt AFB in Building C, Room 222. UNO/DCS at Offutt, in partnership with the Offutt AFB Education Office, offers a wide array of services to increase educational opportunities for active-duty military, as well as the greater Offutt AFB community. DCS also oversees the testing center at Offutt, offering CLEP, DSST, and Pearson Vue proctoring services. The testing center is located in Building C, Room 204.

- Offutt Air Force Base | Building C | Room 222 | 402.554.6305 | unooftt@unomaha.edu

Admission Requirements

The minimum age for admission to the Division of Continuing Studies is normally 21. However, students under the age of 21 pursuing an undergraduate degree who do not meet the definition of a "traditional" college student may also be eligible for admission to DCS academic degree programs. Examples may include military-affiliated students; students who are on the path to an alternate UNO academic degree/department/college; and students pursuing an area of study not represented by another UNO degree program.

In order to be considered for admission to DCS, applicants must submit the following:

- Completed UNO application for admission.
- Official high school transcript or high school equivalency examination (GED). This requirement is waived for transfer students with 24 or more credit hours.
- Official transcripts from post-secondary institutions (colleges and/or universities, including CCAF and DLI)

Additional Documents

Although not required at the time of application, we recommend that students also submit documentation of credit for prior learning for a comprehensive credit evaluation. These documents may demonstrate college-level learning outside of the traditional classroom and may shorten the time to degree completion. Documents include:

- Official standardized examination scores (e.g., CLEP, DSST)
- Military training and education transcripts (Joint Services Transcript)
- Official transcripts from nationally accredited institutions
- Transcripts documenting evaluated non-college programs (e.g., American Council on Education, National College Credit Recommendation Service)

Degrees Offered

- Bachelor of Science in Applied Leadership Studies (<http://catalog.unomaha.edu/undergraduate/college-public-affairs-community-service/division-continuing-studies/applied-leadership-studies-bs/>)
- Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies (<http://catalog.unomaha.edu/undergraduate/college-public-affairs-community-service/division-continuing-studies/bachelor-multidisciplinary-studies/>)

Career Insights

Students enrolled in the degree programs offered by the Division of Continuing Studies bring with them a rich blend of prior learning, professional experience, and personal goals. Our diverse, multi-generational student population includes working professionals, career changers, adult learners returning to finish a degree, and lifelong learners seeking purpose-driven education.

Students pursue their education for a wide range of reasons—from career advancement and professional growth to personal enrichment and the fulfillment of long-held educational goals. Since 1950, more than 27,000 graduates from the Division of Continuing Studies have:

- Advanced in their current careers
- Transitioned into new professional fields
- Reskilled or upskilled to stay competitive in the workforce
- Pursued graduate or professional degrees
- Achieved personal growth and lifelong learning milestones

Our mission is to expand access to high-quality, flexible education that empowers our learners to improve their lives, careers, and communities. Our student-centered, holistic advising approach ensures that each learner is guided toward a degree path that aligns with their personal, professional, and academic aspirations.

We believe education is a powerful driver of social mobility. Earning a bachelor's degree significantly enhances employment prospects and earning potential. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data (https://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2025/data-on-display/education-pays.htm?utm_source=chatgpt.com) underscores the value of a bachelor's degree opening doors to a wide range of career paths and higher earnings.

More specific occupation and career information for our unique degree offerings and concentrations can be found at complete.unomaha.edu.

Career & Professional Pathways

Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies (BMS)

The Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies (BMS) degree offers unparalleled flexibility and customization, making it an ideal choice for learners with varied interests and experiences. Students design a program of study tailored to their professional objectives and personal passions, choosing from a wide range of content areas to align with their goals.

Graduates of the BMS program stand out for their ability to:

- Think critically and solve complex problems
- Collaborate effectively and build meaningful connections

- Exercise ethical judgment and sound decision-making
- Adapt and respond to change in a dynamic world
- Engage in self-directed learning and lifelong development

BMS graduates pursue a wide-range of careers in business, nonprofit leadership, public service, healthcare, information technology, human services, and many other fields. Their success is often grounded in the real-world experience they bring to the table—amplified by the transferable skills developed throughout the program. The BMS degree also prepares students to pursue graduate studies by equipping them with the academic foundation and reflective skills needed for advanced learning.

Bachelor of Science in Applied Leadership Studies (BSLS)

Launching in Fall 2025, the Bachelor of Science in Applied Leadership Studies (BSLS) is designed for students seeking to lead with purpose in their organizations and communities. The program emphasizes durable skills—those essential for long-term success in a rapidly changing workforce—and supports students in shaping a leadership identity rooted in values, insight, and impact.

The program is grounded in the 5-Cs of Leadership Framework:

- Character – Who the leader is (e.g., integrity, responsibility, self-awareness)
- Communication – How the leader interacts (e.g., influence, conflict management, storytelling)
- Connection – How the leader builds relationships (e.g., collaboration, shared vision, inclusivity)
- Context – When and where leadership occurs (e.g., adaptability, innovation, strategic thinking)
- Content – What the leader knows (e.g., critical thinking, leadership theories, industry knowledge)

The BSLS prepares graduates to pursue supervisory, managerial, and leadership roles across industries such as healthcare, business, nonprofit, government, education, and public service. Students gain both a theoretical foundation in leadership and practical, applied knowledge aligned with organizational needs. Through this integrated model, BSLS graduates are equipped not just to lead—but to lead well.

Personal Fulfillment And Lifelong Learning

Beyond professional outcomes and vocational objectives, both the BMS and BSLS programs support deeply personal and transformational learning journeys. Many students return to college to fulfill a lifelong dream, model perseverance for their families, reignite their curiosity, or complete something they once started.

Our programs empower students to:

- Accomplish a personal milestone
- Explore interdisciplinary interests
- Cultivate intellectual growth and self-confidence
- Engage more deeply with their communities or values
- Demonstrate a lifelong commitment to learning and development

The Division of Continuing Studies honors each learner's unique path—and supports their success every step of the way.