

## Frequently Asked Questions about UNL's Student Affairs Program

### Program Type

1. What is the primary focus of your program?  
The Educational Administration – Student Affairs Administration program has three main focus areas – student development, university administration, and research. As a program we also maintain a theme of social justice throughout our courses in which we question whether current practices in higher education support all students and encourage students, staff, and faculty to try and find ways to support more students.
2. Is it academic or practice based?  
We have a theory to practice curriculum in which students are expected to apply the course materials into their day-to-day work at their assistantships.
3. What separates your program from others?  
Our program is unique in the fact instead of just having faculty focused on obtaining external research funding, we currently have two core teaching faculty members whose main role is teaching and advising. Our program also maintains a strong commitment to research and emphasizes social justice throughout the students' time here.

### Size/Style of Cohort

4. How many students enroll in your program each year?  
Every year our program accepts average of between 17-20 students into our cohort. This number does vary depending on the number of assistantships available.
5. Does your program organize students by cohort?  
Yes, students take 85% of their courses in a specific order with their cohort. If a student decided not to complete a thesis there are two electives for them to take. Students who do not opt to write a thesis are required to complete a capstone paper or presentation to meet degree requirements as outlined by graduate studies.

### Application

6. What is your application process?  
Applications for the student affairs program will be due **January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020**. If you have more questions as you do your research into programs, please contact Stephanie Bondi sbondi2 @unl.edu or the Graduate Recruiter saprogramga@unl.edu.
7. When is the deadline to apply?  
Applications and required documents must be electronically submitted to graduate studies. Applications completed by January 15 will get preference.
8. Does your program require the GRE?  
No.
9. What are admission requirements in regard to GRE Scores, undergraduate GPA, previous experience, letter of recommendation, etc.?  
Currently our admissions requirements include three (3) letters of recommendation; previous experience supporting college students, those applying to college, or working in a higher education institution or related organization or related skills, a clear understanding of the field of student affairs, and an assistantship. **We do not require a GRE score.** There is no identified GPA, but applications are reviewed for academic potential.

10. What does the admission committee look for?

Applicant files are reviewed to see that the applicant has an understanding of student affairs and what they might reasonably expect to learn in the program. Faculty look for applicants whose interests align with the program goals. Academic potential demonstrated by prior grades, improvement in grades over time, quality of application, or other scholarly related endeavors are considered. Letters of recommendation may also speak to academic potential, so it is best to have at least one letter from a former faculty member addressing performance in some kind of academic course. Since the program is designed to prepare students to work with a wide variety of college students, applications are reviewed to see that the applicant has a demonstrated interest in working with a diverse group of people. It is easier to learn about a variety of differences when people in the program have different backgrounds and experiences so how applicants bring different perspectives, identities, and experiences are part of what is considered. Lastly, since candidates are required to hold a graduate assistantship, the applicant's resume and ability to secure a position are evaluated. Applicants are strongly encouraged to have a mentor in student affairs, or a career services staff member review their resume prior to submitting the application.

Assistantships, Internships, and Practicums

11. What are the benefits offered by assistantships?

The benefits offered by assistantships usually include full tuition during the academic year often with an additional 6 credits for summer sessions plus a portion of the health insurance costs and a stipend. During the fall and spring semesters students work about 20 hours a week. Some assistantships have summer employment opportunities too.

12. Does your program offer assistantships?

Students who are admitted to the academic program are invited, typically in February, to interview for assistantships. Those who secure an assistantship are accepted into the cohort. **Assistantships in higher education are required for entry into the program.**

13. Are there on-campus interviews? When do those tend to take place?

Yes, on-campus interviews are conducted in order to provide the opportunity for applicants to interview with assistantship providers. It is through these interviews that applicants get an assistantship. Our on-campus interviews usually take place in February. Students may also request virtual interviews with providers if they are unable to make it to campus during the campus visit days.

14. What benefits are offered for assistantships? (tuition, stipends, etc.)

Most assistantships offer full tuition during the academic year with an additional 6 credits in the summer plus reduced cost health insurance and a stipend. Additional benefits are up to the discretion of the assistantship providers.

15. Are there assistantships available for Residence Life, Intercollegiate Athletics, or Greek Life for your program? **Effective December 2019 we are no longer enrolling full-time professionals and/or UNL staff in the cohort -based program. We recommend enrolling in the online Higher Education Administration program.**  
<https://cehs.unl.edu/edad/programs/educational-administration-higher-education-administration-ma-draft/>

16. Assistantships have occasionally been offered in Residence Life & Housing.

Intercollegiate Athletics GA positions are typically for trainers and assistant coaches;

Greek Life often has one or two positions. Students may also seek out internship or practicum opportunities.

Availability is different year to year; sometimes there is not a vacancy so that particular assistantship may be offered in a different year.

17. How many assistantships are available that provide housing or cover housing cost?

Only if there is a live -in position in Residence Life, which there often has not been.

Stipends are intended to help cover housing and necessities, but it is not guaranteed that it will cover all these expenses.

18. Does your program guarantee assistantships?

No, we do not guarantee that you will get an assistantship if you interview. However, if you are admitted into our program it is required that you have an assistantship.

Does your program require students to do internships or practicums as a part of the program? If so, how many?

Yes, one internship totaling 135 hours is required. Many students often complete this internship during the Summer but they are free to schedule their internship at their discretion. A summer internship seminar is also offered in the summer to complement the internship fieldwork. Some students may opt to complete a second internship field placement as an elective.

19. Is there anything else you would like to share about work experience to be gained through your program or any other benefits that we have not touched?

There are various opportunities on campus and around Lincoln for practicum or internship experience. Volunteering in other department's events allow students to see and work with various student populations and in various functional areas.

20. What types of assistantships are offered?

In the past we have had positions in academic advising, career services, student involvement, multicultural services, retention programs, outdoor adventures, fraternity and sorority life, college recruitment, student support services, campus recreation, wellness, graduate and professional student service among others. Position availability changes from year to year.

#### Various

21. What about your program are you most proud of?

Students grow to understand higher education beyond what their own experience in college has been. Many of our students also grow to see the value of research and present at local, regional, and national professional conferences.

22. Where can I look to find more information on your program/apply?

<https://go.unl.edu/studentaffairsprogram>

23. What are the cost to attend?

Our program requires that students work 20 hours a week in a graduate assistantship so that graduates have experience working in higher education when they graduate. These positions often pay full tuition and offer health insurance at a discounted rate. In addition, assistantships offer stipends that range anywhere from \$1000/month to \$1,500/month in order to help cover living expenses and as well as the fees. On average, students are responsible for about \$1,000 in fees each semester (fall and spring) and typically pay

closer to \$150 for the summer term. Depending on the assistantship, some positions will be available over the summer for work.

In addition, students will have the cost of books and other course related materials. The cost for books would vary from term to term but the cost averages out to be between \$200-\$400 per term, depending on the types of books required, where you buy your books, and your preferences on the condition (rental, used, new). Students are able to purchase a parking pass through the university. Cost vary depending on type of pass and the duration of pass (semester/9-month/annual) with a semester parking pass averaging anywhere from \$104-\$365. Cost are subject to change based on decisions made by the UNL Parking and Transit Services office and by UNL policy changes.

<https://parking.unl.edu/>

Each student pays for a bus pass included in student fees, visit link to claim pass.

<https://www.tokentransit.com/unlpass>

24. What is your employment placement rate after graduation?

As a program, we have about a 95% placement rate for our students who want to work in student affairs jobs after graduation.