

SEARCH PROFILE:

DIRECTOR, SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY
AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE



UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha



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**The University of
Nebraska at Omaha (UNO)
seeks a visionary leader
and accomplished scholar
to lead the prestigious
School of Criminology
and Criminal Justice.**



THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

As a Metropolitan University of distinction, and Carnegie Doctoral Research Institution, the University of Nebraska at Omaha transforms and improves the quality of life locally, nationally, and globally. UNO is recognized as the premier Metropolitan University throughout the United States and the world.

UNO is fueled by its historical ties to Omaha. Founded in 1908 as the first municipal university in Omaha, the early founders' goal was to make higher education accessible and affordable for the city's residents. In 1968, the campus joined the University of Nebraska system and today has the unique role of serving as the state's metropolitan campus.

Accessibility is a top priority in UNO's mission and vision. Today, the campus is known for its student-centered environment, its community engagement, and its dedication to embracing students from all types of backgrounds. The campus has built strong partnerships with local businesses, education, government, arts, and civic organizations in the city. UNO's commitment to community engagement has landed UNO on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for seven consecutive years—the highest federal

recognition a school can receive for civic engagement. UNO was among the first institutions to receive the Carnegie designation for community engagement, including its most recent affirmation in 2026.

This honor is but one of many points of pride. Nearly 90 percent of UNO's 15,000 plus students are from Nebraska and roughly 60 percent of recent alumni surveyed report graduating with no debt or less than \$5,000 in debt. UNO is one of the most competitively priced institutions in the region. While large enough to provide students with global opportunities, UNO thrives on its personal and close-knit campus culture, where students come first and strong partnerships with the community that grow every day.

In addition to program-specific accreditations, UNO is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The University's HLC accreditation status was last reaffirmed in a 10-year comprehensive accreditation report in 2018. UNO is also a member of the American Association of State Colleges & Universities (AASCU), the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), the Coalition

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA (CONT.)

of Urban & Metropolitan Universities (CUMU), the Engaged Scholarship Consortium (ESC), the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), and the Metropolitan Omaha Education Consortium (MOEC), among others.

The work we lead at UNO every day is best summarized by the UNO Core:

- UNO is an urban public research university educating people of the world. We innovate for the public good through pragmatic and impactful research and discovery. We advance the social and economic mobility of our learners and serve our communities. We assume responsibility for workforce and economic development within our state and beyond. We devote each day to transforming lives.

Within the framework provided by the UNO Core, several strategic initiatives are underway within the academic sector aimed at advancing focus on the following strategic goals:

- Empower student success and belonging (e.g., focusing on retention efforts, building first year experience opportunities, etc.)
- Drive innovation and expand impact (e.g., expand research infrastructure and development capacity, grow adult learner programming, explore innovative academic programming ideas)
- Redefine workforce readiness and industry engagement (e.g., expand student internships and experiential learning opportunities, develop co-op programming)
- Foster fiscal responsibility and institutional excellence (e.g., expand academic leadership programming, develop retention and success focused resources for faculty to implement, etc.)

STUDENTS

Nearly 85% of UNO's 15,000+ students are drawn from the Omaha Metro region. Approximately 40% of UNO students are first-generation students and nearly 30% of UNO students are students of color. UNO enrolls both traditional and non-traditional students, with approximately 29% attending part-time. Its student body also includes a substantial international population, with nearly 800 students representing more than 65 countries. The university maintains close ties to Offutt Air Force Base and enrolls approximately 125 active-duty service members each year. UNO students are taught by 650 full-time and more than 540 part-time faculty and are supported by a professional staff of approximately 1,300.

UNO is also home to two major full-tuition financial need-based scholarship programs that make the university's high-quality undergraduate education as broadly accessible as possible. The Goodrich Scholarship Program, housed within the College of Public Affairs and Community Service, was created over 50 years ago, and of the approximately 230 current student scholars, more than 70% are first-generation and 80% are students of color. Funded by the Buffett Foundation and modeled after the Goodrich Scholarship Program, the Thompson Learning Community (TLC) also provides full-ride scholarships to students with financial need. Nearly one (1) in nine (9) (around 1,150) UNO undergraduate students are part of TLC, and like the Goodrich Scholarship Program, many are first-generation (65%), and more than 65% are students of color.



THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA (CONT.)

CAMPUS LEADERSHIP

Chancellor: The University is led by Dr. Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, who assumed her duties as UNO's sixteenth Chancellor in July 2021. Li previously served as dean of the College of Business at Florida International University, the nation's fourth-largest public university. She is the first woman of color to serve as UNO Chancellor and the first Asian-American in the history of the University of Nebraska system to hold an executive leadership role. A first-generation college student who went on to graduate summa cum laude, Dr. Li is deeply committed to students and the mission of public higher education with a demonstrated record in improving student outcomes, growing enrollment and programs, fundraising, and building community partnerships. Learn more about Chancellor Joanne Li and the Chancellor's Office [here](#).

Senior Vice Chancellor: Ni (Phil) He, Ph.D., is Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and serves as UNO's chief academic officer. As Senior Vice Chancellor, Dr. He provides leadership for UNO's six colleges and library and guides academic initiatives within UNO's strategic plan. Dr. He also has oversight of scholarship and research initiatives, global partnerships and engagement efforts, and UNO's commitment to excellence across undergraduate, graduate, professional, and online programs. Dr. He is an alumnus of CPACS School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at UNO, and prior to returning to UNO in January 2023, he served in a variety of academic leadership roles at Northeastern University in Boston. Learn more about Dr. Phil He [here](#).

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND CAMPUS RESOURCES

UNO offers nationally recognized bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees that meet the diverse needs of traditional and nontraditional students. UNO's more than 200 programs are offered through six colleges:

- [College of Arts and Sciences](#)
- [College of Business Administration](#)
- [College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media](#)
- [College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences](#)
- [College of Information Science & Technology](#)
- [College of Public Affairs and Community Service](#)

The [Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Library](#) serves the entire campus and is a hub of innovation housing the Creative Production Lab, Center for Faculty Excellence, and Office of Digital Learning along with traditional library services and resources for students and faculty. The library is a popular campus destination with individual and group study areas for students, a Library Café, faculty study lounge, and various open collaborative meeting spaces. Additionally, the [Division of Innovative and Learning-Centric Initiatives](#) supports the campus in the growth and development of online courses, teaching and learning support, and both academic and non-credit programs.

Student achievement and well-being are supported by both academic and cocurricular initiatives intended to provide holistic support for students both in and outside of



THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA (CONT.)

the classroom. Academic support and tutoring are available through four teaching-learning centers: the Writing Center, Speech Center, Math and Science Learning Center, and the Computer Science Tutoring Lab. Cocurricular supports are provided through the [Division of Student Life and Wellbeing](#), further supporting students through offices such as Counseling and Psychological Services, Accessibility Services Center, Maverick Food Pantry, Health Center, and Multicultural Affairs.

INNOVATIVE AND ENGAGED RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

UNO is known for innovative and engaged research and continued growth in this area. The [Office of Research and Creative Activity](#) reported external funding more than \$40.7 million in fiscal year 2025 with strong cross campus collaborations. For example, the University is home to the [National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education Center of Excellence](#) (NCITE), a national leader in counterterrorism research driven by an interdisciplinary team of faculty from Psychology, Political Science, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Interdisciplinary Informatics, and Management. UNO is also home to cutting-edge research programs in biomechanics. Research programs in biomechanics and NCITE have contributed to the enormous growth in sponsored research funding at UNO, which has more than doubled in the last few years.

FACILITIES

UNO has added 832,000 total square feet of facilities and renovated more than half of its academic space in recent years. These projects also include a state-of-the-art 120,000 SF home for the College of Business Administration, a new building for the nationally renowned Biomechanics program, new student housing, a 60,000 SF Community Engagement Center that supports and expands university-community partnerships, as well as renovations to many other campus buildings. Capital improvements have also been prioritized through the [Only in Nebraska](#) campaign being led by the University of Nebraska Foundation and include the renovation and expansion of STEM education facilities as well as human futures-focused space for the Samuel Bak Museum, Fried Holocaust and Genocide Academy, Goldstein Center for Human Rights, and Schwalb Center for Israel and Jewish Studies. UNO has also added a new sports arena and a new baseball and softball complex. UNO participates in NCAA Division 1 athletics in the Summit League and plays hockey in the National Collegiate Hockey Conference.





OMAHA: A CITY OF OPPORTUNITY

As the 42nd largest city in the United States, [Omaha](#) has a population of nearly 1.1 million within a 50-mile radius and is integral to what UNO is as a university. It resides on the past, present, and future treaty homelands of the Omaha [Umoꞛhoꞛ] and Otoe-Missouria Tribal Nations, and in the region of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, the Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska, and 170+ other tribes. The city truly functions as part of the UNO campus. With an economic impact on the city of more than \$605 million through direct, indirect, and charitable services, the relationship between UNO and Omaha offers unlimited opportunities for collaboration.

Located on the eastern border of Nebraska, near the Missouri River, the city of Omaha is a center of creativity, business, and philanthropy. The growing metropolitan population is the fastest-growing region in the state, according to the most recent US census data, led by growing numbers within the Latinx community. Omaha is home to a diverse range of immigrant groups from around the globe. Recently, the Omaha Public Schools identified more than two dozen linguistic groups among its student body.

While it is a thriving metropolitan center, Omaha is quintessentially Midwestern. Residents enjoy the benefit of the four seasons and find outdoor activities plentiful year-round including the UNO co-sponsored College World Series for baseball each June. Visitors are welcomed with open arms and authentic Midwestern hospitality.

INTERNSHIPS, JOBS, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Students find internships, careers, and other opportunities in the heart of Nebraska's largest city. Omaha is home to four Fortune 500 companies, including Berkshire Hathaway, Mutual of Omaha, Peter Kiewit, and Union Pacific, as well as five Fortune 1000 companies: TD Ameritrade, West Corporation, Valmont Industries, Green Plains Renewable Energy, and Werner Enterprises. Students can also find opportunities among a wide array

of visionary nonprofits and philanthropy organizations, innovative start-ups, award-winning arts and cultural centers, and public sector partnerships with local educational and government entities.

CULTURE, ENTERTAINMENT, AND SPORTING EVENTS

In recent years, the [Omaha riverfront](#) and downtown area have experienced tremendous growth with over two billion dollars in new development. Residents and visitors can take in a concert at the [CHI Health Center Omaha](#) or the world-famous [Holland Performing Arts Center](#), catch an art house film at the internationally recognized [Film Streams](#), visit the nationally acclaimed [Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium](#), stroll the more than 100 acres at the [Lauritzen Gardens](#), or shop and dine to your heart's content in the [Old Market](#), [Midtown Crossing](#), or [Aksarben Village](#). Take a walk from Nebraska to Iowa – and back again – on the [Bob Kerrey Bridge](#). This landmark offers a memorable view of Omaha's skyline and is a prominent feature of our newly reinvigorated waterfront.

Signature events hosted in Omaha span a wide array of interests, including the UNO co-sponsored NCAA College World Series (CWS), NCAA Basketball Tournament, U.S. Senior Golf Open, U.S. Olympic Swim Trials (2008, 2012, 2016), U.S. Olympic Curling Trials, U.S. Figure Skating Championships, Big Omaha, Berkshire Hathaway Annual Meetings, and a score of cultural events, such as national movie premieres, concerts, and plays.

Omaha residents enjoy a wide culinary array of dining experiences that range from innovative chef-created cuisine, vegan dining, seafood, sidewalk cafes, a downtown arts and dining district called the Old Market, local breweries and roasters, and ethnic favorites such as Mexican, Italian, French, German, Greek, Indian, and Asian. And, yes, even a few steakhouses.

For more information about living in Omaha, visit the [Omaha Chamber](#).



THE SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO) [School of Criminology and Criminal Justice](#) (SCCJ) is a nationally recognized leader in criminological research, education, and community engaged scholarship, housed within the College of Public Affairs and Community Service (CPACS) led by criminologist Dean Gaylene Armstrong. Uniquely, UNO entities, the college, and the SCCJ extend their reach beyond the Omaha campus to serve students at the University of Nebraska Lincoln campus. The school is consistently ranked among the top criminal justice programs in the nation, with its Bachelor of Science program ranked #17, its Master's program ranked #5, and its Ph.D. program ranked #13 by *U.S. News & World Report*.

With more than 1,100 students across its Omaha and Lincoln campuses, the SCCJ offers one of the largest and most vibrant academic communities in the field. The school delivers five degree programs, from the BS through the MA, MS, and PhD, along with a fast-track (Bachelor to MS degree) options, graduate certificates, dual degree pathways, and extensive online opportunities, ensuring that students at all stages have flexible, high-quality routes to advancement.

The faculty of the UNO School of Criminology and Criminal Justice are nationally recognized leaders whose scholarship shapes the disciplinary direction. As one of the most productive criminology faculties in the country, the SCCJ scholars advance cutting edge research across victimology, policing, corrections, terrorism prevention, biosocial criminology, and the etiology of criminal behavior. Their work is showcased through [major research labs and centers](#) including the [Victimology and Victim Studies](#)

[Research Lab](#), the [Advancing Research in Corrections Lab](#), the [Criminological Research of Counterterrorism and Security](#), the [Violence Intervention and Policing Research Lab](#), the [Nebraska Collaborative for Violence Intervention and Prevention](#), the [Nebraska Center for Justice Research](#), the [Juvenile Justice Institute](#), and in partnership with the [National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology and Education Center \(NCITE\)](#), demonstrating both scholarly excellence and national influence. Faculty routinely publish in top journals, secure competitive federal funding, and serve as trusted advisors to policymakers and justice system leaders, reinforcing the school's reputation as a premier hub for innovation and evidence-based practice in criminology and criminal justice. The SCCJ's robust partnerships locally and nationally have resulted in more than \$10 million new externally funded grants and contracts since January 1, 2025.

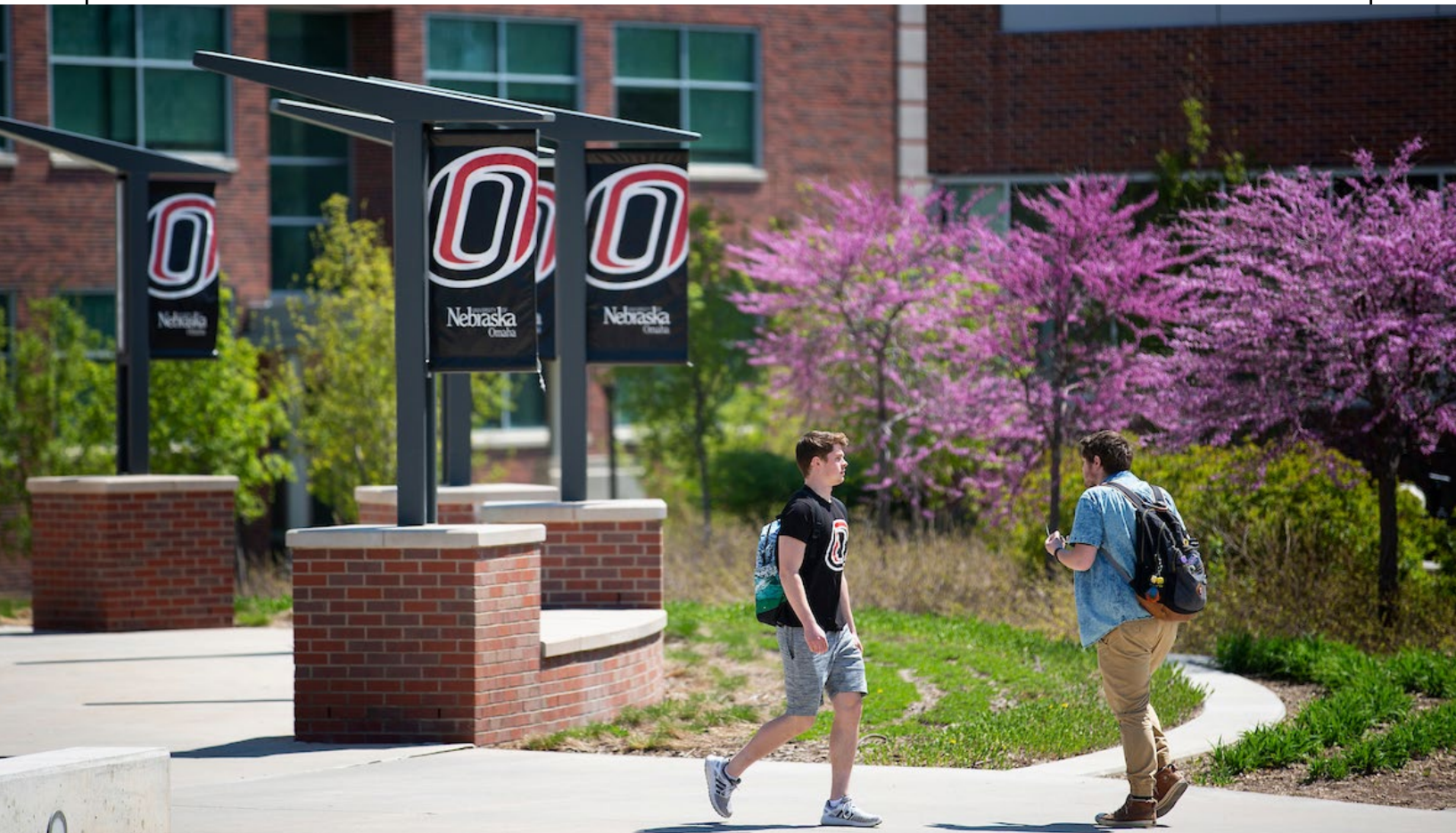
The School of Criminology and Criminal Justice is deeply embedded in the community, maintaining strong, enduring partnerships with a wide array of criminal justice agencies and organizations. Students and faculty collaborate closely with federal, state, and local partners including the Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Secret Service, Omaha and other metropolitan police departments, Nebraska Probation, and the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services creating pathways for internships, applied research, and evidence-based innovation. These partnerships extend into the school's specialized applied research centers and labs, where faculty and students work alongside practitioners to address real world challenges through data driven solutions. Through these initiatives, the SCCJ serves as a trusted resource for agencies seeking rigorous analysis, program evaluation,

THE SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (CONT.)

policy guidance, and professional training, reinforcing its role as a vital contributor to public safety and community wellbeing across Nebraska and beyond.

The SCCJ also serves the criminal justice community through high-impact executive education that strengthens leadership capacity across justice system agencies at the local, state, and national levels and plans to grow this asset. Through partnerships such as the [Jail Executive Institute \(JEI\)](#), a multi segment, immersive training program jointly offered with the American Jail Association, the SCCJ provides senior level practitioners with advanced skill building, research informed strategies, and a national professional network to support effective organizational leadership. JEI includes intensive, on-site instruction at UNO, virtual modules, and capstone presentations at a national conference, offering participants a comprehensive leadership development experience tailored to modern correctional and public safety challenges.

The SCCJ's commitment to expanding educational horizons includes faculty-led study abroad programs, a diverse suite of experiential learning options, and interdisciplinary collaborations. As a future-oriented school operating at the intersection of research excellence and community impact, the SCCJ is poised for significant strategic growth. The next School Director is expected to not only expand the capacity and expertise of our faculty, but also lead efforts to update and expand curriculum programming in ways that are responsive to workforce development needs, support continued excellence in research and graduate education, and cultivate an environment that prioritizes the success of our undergraduate students and engages all faculty and staff in both Omaha and Lincoln campuses. The Director will steward a nationally recognized faculty and an expanding research enterprise, advance interdisciplinary collaboration, and shape the preparation of future scholars and leaders across the justice system. This is a rare opportunity to provide strategic leadership to one of the country's premier criminology and criminal justice programs at a pivotal moment of institutional strength and trajectory.





DIRECTOR, SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The director is the chief academic and administrative officer of the school responsible for providing vision, strategic direction, and operational oversight. This role is responsible for outcomes that foster excellence in teaching, research, and service while promoting a positive and collaborative environment. The director leads faculty and staff, oversees curriculum development, ensures compliance with institutional policies, and leads efforts in budgeting, resource allocation, and personnel decisions. Additionally, the director represents the school within the college, university, and community; advocates for its needs; and builds partnerships that advance its mission and goals.

The director serves as a key member of the dean's executive team to advance the College of Public Affairs and Community Service goals and is the largest unit

in the college. The SCCJ offers undergraduate degree programs on both the Omaha and Lincoln campuses of the University of Nebraska system, and nationally ranked graduate degrees and certificates on the Omaha campus including the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice. The SCCJ Director also oversees two research units, the Nebraska Center for Justice Research and the Juvenile Justice Institute. The SCCJ is one of five academic units within the College of Public Affairs and Community Service (CPACS), which also houses Aviation, Gerontology, Public Administration, Social Work and several research units. UNO is one of four campuses of the University of Nebraska and is in the heart of Nebraska's largest metropolitan area with over 1,000,000 residents.

DIRECTOR, SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (CONT.)

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will demonstrate:

- **Academic Credentials:** An earned doctorate in criminology, criminal justice, or a closely related discipline.
- **Faculty Experience:** A proven record as a full-time faculty member with excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service, qualifying for tenure at the rank of associate or full professor.
- **Leadership Experience:** The ability to lead an academic unit through development and implementation of strategic vision, demonstrate innovation, foster collaboration, provide oversight of faculty and staff including guidance of guide personnel management, oversight of innovative curriculum advance, support of faculty and student recruitment and retention, and budgetary leadership.
- **Servant Leadership:** An approach to leadership that is consultative, fosters trust and collaboration, and values consensus building.
- **Commitment to Service:** A strong dedication to community engagement with criminal justice agencies and related non-profit entities.
- **Communication Skills:** Exceptional interpersonal and communication abilities to effectively engage with internal and external stakeholders.
- **Grant Development:** Experience in securing and managing grants and external funding to support research and program growth.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Prior experience as a department or program chair.
- Experience with a multi-campus program.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications should consist of a substantial letter of interest, a CV, and a list of five professional references with full contact information and a note indicating the nature of your working relationship with each. No references will be contacted without the explicit permission of the candidate. Applications, nominations, and expressions of interest can be submitted electronically, and in confidence, to:

UNODirectorSCCJ@academicsearch.org

The position is open until filled but only applications received by Monday, March 23, 2026, can be assured full consideration. The University is being assisted by Academic Search. Confidential discussions about this opportunity may be arranged by contacting senior consultant Chris Butler at Chris.Butler@academicsearch.org. Further information about the University of Nebraska at Omaha is available at <https://www.unomaha.edu/>.

The University of Nebraska does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment. UNO is a VEVRAA Federal Contractor and an E-Verify employer.



ABOUT ACADEMIC SEARCH

Academic Search is assisting University of Nebraska at Omaha in this work. For more than four decades, Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that we provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with our deep knowledge and experience. Our mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with our parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.

