University of Northern Iowa

“Leadership and Innovation for the Future: Transforming Opportunities into Reality”

UNI continues to provide an excellent educational experience for students and fulfill our mission to “provide transformative learning experiences that inspire students to embrace challenge, engage in critical inquiry and creative thought, and contribute to society.”

2014-15 UNI Strategic Plan Accomplishments
GOAL 1:  
Be a leading undergraduate public university that provides a strong liberal arts foundation.

UNI is Iowa’s comprehensive public university. Our faculty and staff recognize and embrace the importance of academic excellence and a strong liberal arts foundation. More than ever, employers in Iowa and across the country and world acknowledge the importance of critical thinking, strong communication skills, working with diverse populations and understanding a collaborative approach to solving problems. At UNI, students receive a rigorous and dynamic collegiate experience from dedicated professors and staff.

FACULTY EXCELLENCE EXAMPLES

- Two UNI faculty members, Adrienne Stanley (Mathematics) and JoAnn Schnabel (Art) were named Fulbright Scholars for 2014-15.
- Three National Science Foundation awards were received by faculty members in Geography and Earth Science in 2015.
- UNIBusiness professor Dennis Clayson (Marketing) was named Marketing Educator of the Year by the Marketing Educator’s Association.
- UNIBusiness professor Shahina Amin (Economics) and her colleagues have taught the Local Labor Market Workshop, which celebrated its 25th year and has reached more than 800 Cedar Valley area teachers.
- Eleven UNI Elementary Education majors partnered with Iowa’s Lakeside Laboratories to deliver day camp curriculum during the summer course Teaching Elementary School Science. Dr. Beth vanMeeteren (Director of the Regents’ Center for Early Developmental Education) developed a two-week, on-campus component for the course, then the students traveled to Milford where they supported Ms. Jane Shuttleworth, Lakeside Labs Education Coordinator, in delivering life science projects to elementary school children enrolled in day camps.

- Amy Petersen (Special Education) chaired the 2015 Institute for Inclusion and Communication held on campus this summer. Local and national presenters included Tracy Thesher, featured in the documentary Wretchers & Jabbers, Sue Rubin, featured in the documentary Autism is a World, Pascal Chen, Marilyn Chadwick, Darlene Hansen and Kathy Snow, authors of Disability is Natural.
- Annette Lynch (Director of the School of Applied Human Sciences & Professor, Textiles and Apparel) was recognized as a Title IX Champion by the American Association of University Women. The award celebrates advocacy that supports and advances gender equity in education.
- Xavier Escandell (Sociology) was accepted into the National Endowment for the Humanities summer seminar series. He was one of only 16 scholars selected to participate in the five-week seminar The Cross-Border Connection: Immigrants, Emigrants and their Homelands, which was held at the University of California, Los Angeles.
- Sarah Diesburg and Ben Schafer (Computer Science) were selected as recipients for the 2015 NCWIT Engagement Excellence Award. This award, given yearly, recognizes authors whose curricular materials have been submitted to the elite EngageCSEdu collection and demonstrate not only
excellence in CS content and pedagogy, but utilize research-based engagement practices to make computer science relevant and meaningful for students.

• Gretta Berghammer (Theatre) developed a theatrical production titled WONDERland, which was targeted to K-6 students on the autism spectrum.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT EXAMPLES

• Two UNIBusiness students, Joe Noonan (Management) and Jay Fruechte (MIS) traveled to Monaco to meet co-founders of Stüdnet, a Web-based platform that offers students purposeful cross-cultural networking and professional skill development, exposure to different countries' organizational practices, and international internship and job opportunities not available through traditional means.

• Emily Brodie, an English education, TESOL teaching major from Roland, Iowa, will gain international experience teaching students in Southeast Asia.

• The University of Northern Iowa's American Advertising Federation (AAF) student chapter took home first place at the 2015 AAF District 9 National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC).

• Matt Mullesch (Electrical Engineering Technology senior) took first place in the Haig Vahradian Technology Challenge, a Jeopardy-style competition testing one's knowledge of technology, management and applied engineering. Fraiser Dew (Technology and Engineering Education freshman) placed third in the challenge.

• Daniel Yehieli (with majors in Criminology, Global Studies: Conflict & Human Rights, and Global Studies: Global Health), now a Second Lieutenant in the Army, was awarded the Governor's Cup, awarded each year to the top students in the 10 ROTC programs within Iowa. He was also the recipient of the Distinguished Military Graduate award which represents the top 10% of all 5,300 ROTC graduates in the nation this year.

• Rachel Gregory and Kerri Robinson (Masters in Public Policy) spearheaded bringing an American Association of University Women (AAUW) program to campus. Elect Her – Campus Women Win helps recruit young women to consider running for elected office, whether it be for student government, or eventually in local, state or national positions. This year, the national campaign held trainings on 50 campuses, and UNI was selected to be the first site in Iowa due to the efforts of Rachel and Kerri.
GOAL 2: Provide rigorous and relevant graduate education that meets the needs of graduate students, the university and the community.

Graduate education at the University of Northern Iowa provides selected programs of advanced study, research and creative activity grounded in a personalized and diverse graduate community that prepares successful practitioners, scholars and professional leaders.

- UNI offers more than 50 graduate programs on-campus, online or blended instruction (online with some on-campus requirements) to serve constituencies throughout the state and the world.
- The UNI MBA program is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International), the gold standard of business school accreditation, and was named “Best Business School” by the Princeton Review for nine consecutive years.
- UNI Master of Accounting students’ first-time CPA pass rate on all four sections of the Uniform CPA Examination is more than six times the national average.
- The UNI Rod Library implemented an Institutional Repository called UNI ScholarWorks to host and display the works of UNI faculty and students. There were almost 7,000 downloads in the first year.
- The UNI School Psychology Program is the only program in Iowa emphasizing preparation of specialist level school psychologists to work in school settings. Approximately one in four Iowa school psychologists is a UNI graduate.
- Graduate students have presented their research at such conferences as the TESOL International Conference, Annual Association for Behavior and Cognitive Therapies Convention, the Central States Communication Association, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, as well as the Annual New Frontiers in Graduate History Conference.
- UNI Speech-Language Pathology master’s students had a 100% pass rate on the required exams for clinical competence by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association National Praxis Examination.
- The graduate Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program is designed for K-12 teachers to enhance their skills and employability. Alumni teach at community colleges, intensive English program, and overseas in 20 countries.
GOAL 3:
Lead the state and nation in preK through 12 education.

The University of Northern Iowa proudly acknowledges its lead in the state in preK through 12 education as evidenced by numerous accomplishments and accolades.

- The UNI Principalship Program has achieved record enrollment in each of the past three years. In July 2015, our largest group ever completed their Advanced Studies Certificates/Masters of Arts in Education and are eligible to become preK through 12 principals in Iowa.
- Approximately 37% of Iowa’s school principals and superintendents earned their credentials at UNI.
- UNI offered more than 20 summer camps for K-12 students in 2015, in topics as diverse as music, robotics, athletics, tall-grass prairies, digital storytelling and leadership.
- The Sturgis Youth Theatre is in its 15th season and hosted Spectrum Theatre, where each session was carefully designed to enhance creative expression of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- UNI hosted the 51st annual Iowa High School Model United Nations Spring Conference.
- The Department of Physics faculty and students again hosted the State of Iowa Physics Competition for high school students, as well as the AEA 267 Regional Physics Competition.
- In partnership with a local elementary school, UNI’s Teaching Educators about Mathematics organization delivered its 9th annual Math Fair for 4th-6th graders in April 2015.
- UNI hosted the 47th annual Elementary Literacy Conference in April 2015.
- UNI again hosted a Spotlight on STEM Day to showcase award-winning math and science projects that integrate technology into preK through 12 classes.
- In collaboration with the Mount Pleasant Community School District, UNI developed and launched a project on Inclusive Education as an in-service program for classroom teachers.
- The UNI Center for Educational Transformation was designed and created to continue and maintain UNI’s long-standing tradition and commitment to educational research and development.
- The Technology and Teachers: Promoting Accessible Learning (T2PAL) Center provides UNI preservice teachers, faculty, staff and local teachers with the tools necessary for making learning achievable and accessible to all preK through 12 students, regardless of abilities.
- UNI Research and Sponsored Programs provided $9.9 million in preK through 12 education support funds, including a $1.6 million FY 15 addition to the $1.0 million federally funded Teacher Quality Program, and $1.0 million in Iowa teacher professional development programs run by just four of the many UNI faculty involved in professional development activities.
GOAL 4:
Create and maintain an inclusive educational environment that prepares students to thrive in a diverse global environment.

Diversity and inclusion remain a significant institutional goal and core value. Campuswide, faculty, staff and students work to create a more inclusive, welcoming environment for all. UNI hosts multiple events and trainings related to diversity every year for faculty, staff and students. We also present Diversity Matters awards in our annual Town Hall on diversity every year for persons on campus who are making a difference in creating and maintaining an inclusive environment at UNI.

• The UNI Rod Library received the Latino Americans: 500 Years of History grant, giving the library $10,000 toward programming to help students explore the rich and varied experiences of Latinos in the United States.

• In the summer of 2015, UNI hosted the first group of Mexican students from the Proyecta 100,000 initiative as part of the United States - Mexico higher education bilateral program.

• A group of UNIBusiness students visited Ireland this summer to earn Six Sigma Green Belt certification, a highly sought after certification for business students. Not only did students receive training, they also experienced working for international companies, giving them a better global perspective as well as a new perspective to apply to problem solving.

• UNI CIEP enrolled 44 Brazilian undergraduate students as part of the Brazil Scientific Mobility Program (BSMP), sponsored by the Brazilian Ministry of Education and Ministry of Science and Technology.

• UNI hosted its 9th annual African-American Read-In for UNI students and Cedar Valley youth, as well as the fourth annual Conference on African-American Children and Families.

• The Adapted Sports Camp was held at UNI for young athletes, second grade through high school, with various lower limb disabilities who use wheelchairs for adapted sports.

• Associate professor of communication studies, Francesca Soans, and Robert Neymeyer, student supervisor at the Grout Museum District, received the 2014 Loren Horton Community History Award for “Sons of Jacob Synagogue.” The pioneering documentary explores the histories and experiences of the Jewish community in Waterloo, from the early immigrants seeking new opportunities and freedom from persecution to the present day.

• In an effort to internationalize STEM education, UNI CIEP welcomed South Korean students to participate in the CIEP Cultural Immersion Program with a STEM component as part of UNI’s partnership with Kyungpook National University (KNU) in Daegu, Korea.
GOAL 5: Enhance the economic, social, cultural and sustainable development of the state.

The UNI Regional Business Center provides leadership on behalf of the university in serving entrepreneurs and small business owners statewide. Various departments and student organizations also contribute to the social and cultural development of Iowa.

- UNI’s chapter of Dance Marathon raised more than $275,000 for Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals.
- The UNI Regional Business Center received a Gold Excellence in Economic Development Award for its 2014 project in the category of entrepreneurship for communities.
- In FY15, 39% of the research and sponsored program awards at UNI were for Public Service projects that strengthened UNI’s ties to the Iowa community and had statewide beneficial impacts. Examples include the Food Waste Composting Education Program for Iowa landfill and Latino Americans: 500 Years of History.
- UNI hosted the Midwest Summer Institute on Inclusion and Communication for all for educators, families, support personnel and researchers.
- UNI continues to host the Iowa High School Athletic Association football playoffs.
- The Iowa Thespian Festival is an annual event sponsored by the Iowa Educational Theatre Association. For the past five years, the Department of Theatre has hosted the event at various locations on the UNI campus for more than 1,000 theatre students across the state of Iowa.
- The UNI Business Pi Sigma Epsilon chapter partnered with UNI dining centers and the local food bank to help area families in need during holiday season.
- The Geographic Alliance of Iowa (housed in the Department of Geography) is the only organization in the state to provide systematic, credit-bearing professional development specifically for Iowa K-12 geography/social studies educators. With a membership that includes educators in all 99 counties and 80% of Iowa school districts, the GAI directly supports the tradition of K-12 education at UNI as well as being a subsidiary of National Geographic, advancing National Geographic’s efforts to improve geography education and make a positive change in our world.
- UNI is participating in the Green Iowa AmeriCorps program for the 7th year. Based out of UNI, they offer comprehensive energy services to underserved populations across the state of Iowa.
- The UNI Panther Plot is an on-campus vegetable garden organized and maintained by students of all disciplines and majors. Beyond simply growing and harvesting the produce, the students give back to the community by donating portions of each harvest to several community resources, including the Northeast Iowa Food Bank.
- UNI’s Tallgrass Prairie Center continues to assist with the development of county plans for integrating and managing roadside vegetation. The 2015 Iowa Prairie Conference was held on the UNI campus. Hosted by the Tallgrass Prairie Center, the conference included a variety of symposia, field trips and social events. More than 200 registrants attended the conference, including natural resource practitioners, educators, students and prairie enthusiasts.
- The UNI 2+2 partnership with Des Moines Area Community College reached a 20-year milestone of continuous collaboration from 1995-2015. The program provides a pathway for DMACC graduates to earn an Elementary Education degree via off-campus and online coursework.
- Recruiting has begun for newly created distance education programs in Early Childhood Education, Literacy Coaching, Art Education and Public Policy.
- UNI Business professor Shahina Amin (Economics) and her colleagues have taught the Local Labor Market Workshop, which celebrated its 25th year and has reached over 800 Cedar Valley area teachers.
GOAL 6:
Ensure accountability, affordability and access.

UNI is committed to providing access to the population of Iowa through on-campus, distance and online education. Accountability and locating efficiencies remain integral to our mission. UNI also continues to keep affordability as an important consideration.

- UNI’s student loan indebtedness has decreased by 13% since 2010.
- UNI assists students in money management and responsible borrowing through a course called “Live Like a Student.”
- During the 2014-15 academic year, 36% of full-time undergraduates were employed on campus.
- UNI’s Center of Urban Education (UNI-CUE) has continued to help students learn about college and prepare them for college. UNI-CUE collaborates with other university departments and community programs to match its resources with community needs.
- UNI is #4 of all public universities in the nation administering the Federal TEACH Grant Program for students planning to teach in a high-need field.
- UNI was ranked one of the top 100 “Best Values in Public Colleges” by Kiplinger’s Personal Finance for 2015 because of its high four-year graduation rate, low average student debt at graduation, financial aid options and overall great value.
- The Washington Monthly College Guide ranks UNI 65th in the nation out of 684 Master’s colleges and universities, and 38th on their list of Master’s universities that are the Best Bang for the Buck, and in the top 100 for all universities.
- AffordableCollegesOnline.org ranked UNI #1 in Iowa and #18 in the nation in 2014-15, based on affordability and quality of distance education offerings.
- UNI is working collaboratively with the Iowa Department of Education, Upper Iowa and Morningside College to develop a program to meet the immediate needs of approximately 600 teachers in the state affected by recent changes in licensure requirements. This program will provide Iowa teachers affordable access to high quality instruction with the university as the lead institution.
- UNI was one of only 24 institutions in the nation to receive the highest score (99 out of 99) on the Princeton Review’s 2016 Green Rating Honor Roll.