



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

November 29, 2023

The Honorable Jim Pillen
Governor of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848

Mr. Brandon Metzler
Clerk of the Legislature
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

Dear Governor Pillen and members of the Nebraska Legislature:

Thank you for your support of LB 814 (2023), which added the fourth year of funding for the Nebraska Career Scholarship program. Along with our higher education partners, we express our sincere gratitude for bringing the program's original vision to fruition.

The enclosed report focuses on the progress and outcomes of the first and second cohorts, most of whom are in their second and third year of study at the University of Nebraska System. We are pleased to report a retention rate of scholarship recipients in an eligible program at nearly twelve percentage points above non-recipients! Quarterly data from the Nebraska Department of Labor will add greater insight into the program's success going forward. Of our Fall 2022 graduates, 48 of 62 (approximately 77 percent) worked in Nebraska during Quarter 1 of 2023 and earned an estimated average salary of \$54,000.

Please find enclosed our responses to the annual reporting requirements outlined in Neb. Rev. Stat. § 85-3004. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out. Again, thank you for supporting of this important scholarship program, which has helped us recruit and retain high-achieving students in areas of critical workforce demand.

Sincerely,

Ted Carter
President

TC/pb

Enclosure

**Nebraska Career Scholarship
Report to the Nebraska Legislature
University of Nebraska
December 1, 2023**

LB 902:

(5) The Board of Regents shall collect information on each university scholarship recipient and shall report electronically to the Clerk of the Legislature and the Governor on or before December 1 of each year the following information for each eligible program of study at the university in the current or prior academic year

Contents

(a) The total number of students enrolled in the program in the immediately prior academic year and the total number of students enrolled in the program as of September 30 for the current academic year; 1
Table 1. Enrollment by Academic Program 1

(b) The total number of scholarship recipients in the program as of September 30 for the current academic year and the total number of such scholarship recipients who are newly enrolled in the program for such academic year;..... 2
Table 2. Number of Scholarship Recipients by Academic Program 2

(c) The total number of students retained in the program from the immediately prior academic year to the current academic year and a comparison of the retention rates between scholarship recipients and non-scholarship students; 3
Table 3. Retention by Academic Program 4

(d) The number of students participating in an internship, an apprenticeship, a clinical position, or employment in a major-related field during the immediately prior academic year and a comparison of participation rates for scholarship recipients and non-scholarship students; 5
Table 4. Participation in an Internship, Apprenticeship, Clinical Position, or Employment in a Major-Related Field by Academic Program 6

e) The total number of graduates for the immediately prior academic year, the number of scholarship recipient graduates for such academic year, and a comparison of the graduation rates for scholarship recipients and non-scholarship students; and 7
Table 5. Graduation by Academic Program 9

(f) The number of graduates from the immediately prior academic year who obtained employment in a major-related field in the state within four months after graduation and the average starting salary for such graduates. 10
Table 6. Employment Status of Graduates 10

(a) The total number of students enrolled in the program in the immediately prior academic year and the total number of students enrolled in the program as of September 30 for the current academic year;

Summary

In the previous academic year, 5,337 students¹ were enrolled in one of the four eligible academic programs across the University of Nebraska. As of the beginning of the current academic year, 6,721 students were enrolled in one of the four eligible academic programs. The highest number of students were enrolled in Health Care (4,162), followed by Engineering (1,545), Computer Information Systems (866), and Math (148).

Table 1. Enrollment by Academic Program

| Academic Program | Number of Students | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| | 2022-2023 | Fall 2023 |
| Computer Information Systems | 620 | 866 |
| Engineering | 1,150 | 1,545 |
| Health Care | 3,471 | 4,162 |
| Math | 96 | 148 |
| Total | 5,337 | 6,721 |

¹ Students who had enrolled in one of the eligible programs as first-time students since Fall 2021 and met the other eligibility requirements of the scholarship or first-time recipients. Enrollment in Table 1 for 2022-2023 does not match what was reported for 2022-2023 enrollment in last year’s report partially because last year’s report included enrollment as of September 30, 2022, whereas this year’s report includes enrollment for the entire 2023 academic year (fall, spring, and summer semesters).

(b) The total number of scholarship recipients in the program as of September 30 for the current academic year and the total number of such scholarship recipients who are newly enrolled in the program for such academic year;

Summary

In the Fall 2023 semester, 1,120 students received the Nebraska Career Scholarship across the University of Nebraska. The highest number of recipients were enrolled in Health Care (519), followed by Engineering (329), Computer Information Systems (224), and Math (48). Of these students, 702 received the scholarship for the first time.

Table 2. Number of Scholarship Recipients by Academic Program

| Academic Program | Total Recipients | New Recipients |
|------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Computer Information Systems | 224 | 106 |
| Engineering | 329 | 172 |
| Health Care | 519 | 396 |
| Math | 48 | 28 |
| Total | 1,120 | 702 |

(c) The total number of students retained in the program from the immediately prior academic year to the current academic year and a comparison of the retention rates between scholarship recipients and non-scholarship students;

Summary

Within each of the four eligible programs, the graduation/program retention rate of recipients was higher than non-recipients. Across all four programs, 92.4% of students who received the scholarship in the prior year either graduated or were still enrolled in an eligible program in the current Fall 2023 semester compared to 80.5% of non-recipients.

The difference in graduation and retention rates potentially indicates that the Nebraska Career Scholarship serves as an incentive for recipients to remain in the same program or continue in one of the other eligible programs to maintain their scholarship eligibility.

Table 3. Retention by Academic Program

| Program | Cohort Group | Count | Graduated or Retained in the Same Program ² | | Graduated or Retained in an Eligible Program ³ | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|--|--------------|---|--------------|
| | | | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Computer Information Systems | Recipients | 130 | 118 | 90.8% | 118 | 90.8% |
| | Non-Recipients | 490 | 377 | 76.9% | 383 | 78.2% |
| Engineering | Recipients | 196 | 167 | 85.2% | 178 | 90.8% |
| | Non-Recipients | 954 | 747 | 78.3% | 785 | 82.3% |
| Health Care | Recipients | 138 | 132 | 95.7% | 133 | 96.4% |
| | Non-Recipients | 3,333 | 2,663 | 79.9% | 2,677 | 80.3% |
| Math | Recipients | 22 | 20 | 90.9% | 20 | 90.9% |
| | Non-Recipients | 74 | 58 | 78.4% | 60 | 81.1% |
| Grand Total | Recipients | 486 | 437 | 89.9% | 449 | 92.4% |
| | Non-Recipients | 4,851 | 3,845 | 79.3% | 3,905 | 80.5% |

² Students who graduated OR persisted in the same program from the immediately prior academic year to the current academic year (program retention).

³ Students who graduated OR persisted in the same program from the immediately prior academic year to the current academic year (program retention) OR transferred to one of the other eligible programs (eligible-program retention).

(d) The number of students participating in an internship, an apprenticeship, a clinical position, or employment in a major-related field during the immediately prior academic year and a comparison of participation rates for scholarship recipients and non-scholarship students;

Summary

Overall, a higher percentage of non-recipients (21.3%) participated in a/an internship, apprenticeship, clinical position, or employment in a major-related field compared to recipients (14.6%). Participation rates are relatively low because most students included in this report⁴ have only been at the University of Nebraska for one or two academic years and are still completing general education requirements; participation rates will increase as time progresses and these students move into major-specific courses.

Additional context

The difference in participation rates largely owes to the imbalance of UNMC students between recipients and non-recipients. UNMC students represent a significantly higher proportion of non-recipients (12.6%) than recipients (2.3%). Within the University of Nebraska, UNMC is unique because it enrolls only transfer students who have completed their first two years of coursework, so their students are only enrolled in major-specific courses. Moreover, all UNMC students are required to participate in clinicals as part of their curricula. The resulting high participation rate of UNMC students disproportionately benefits the participation rate of non-recipients given the imbalance of UNMC students. When removing UNMC students from the calculation, recipients had a slightly higher participation rate (12.6%) than non-recipients (10.1%).

⁴ Students who had enrolled in one of the eligible programs as first-time students since Fall 2021 and met the other eligibility requirements of the scholarship or first-time recipients.

Table 4. Participation in an Internship, Apprenticeship, Clinical Position, or Employment in a Major-Related Field by Academic Program

| Program | Cohort Group | Count | Number Participating | Percent Participating |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Computer Information Systems | Recipients | 130 | 9 | 6.9% |
| | Non-Recipients | 490 | 34 | 6.9% |
| Engineering | Recipients | 196 | 33 | 16.8% |
| | Non-Recipients | 954 | 165 | 17.3% |
| Health Care ⁵ | Recipients | 138 | 27 | 19.6% |
| | Non-Recipients | 3,333 | 831 | 24.9% |
| Math | Recipients | 22 | 2 | 9.1% |
| | Non-Recipients | 74 | 4 | 5.4% |
| Grand Total | Recipients | 486 | 71 | 14.6% |
| | Non-Recipients | 4,851 | 1,034 | 21.3% |
| Grand Total Less UNMC | Recipients | | | 12.6% |
| | Non-Recipients | | | 10.1% |

⁵ All Health Care students at UNMC are required to participate in clinicals as part of their curricula.

e) The total number of graduates for the immediately prior academic year, the number of scholarship recipient graduates for such academic year, and a comparison of the graduation rates for scholarship recipients and non-scholarship students; and

Summary

Of the 5,337 students⁶ who were enrolled in one of the four eligible academic programs in the prior academic year, 340 graduated (6.4%). The graduation rate of scholarship recipients was higher than non-recipients in each program except Health Care. Within Health Care, the graduation rate of non-recipients (9.2%) was higher than recipients (4.3%).

Additional Context

Health Care carries the most weight in the overall graduation rate because it enrolls the most students among the four programs (65%). Thus, even though the graduation rate of recipients was higher than non-recipients in three of the four programs, the overall graduation rate across the four programs was higher among non-recipients (6.7%) than recipients (3.5%) because the difference in graduation rates within the Health Care program carries so much weight.

The difference in graduation rates within Health Care largely stems from the imbalance of UNMC students between the recipients and non-recipients. As discussed in the previous section, UNMC students represent a significantly higher proportion of non-recipients than recipients. Furthermore, UNMC enrolls only transfer students who have progressed beyond general education requirements, making them much more likely to graduate in two years. By comparison, students can enter Health Care programs at UNK, UNL, and UNO as first-time freshmen or transfer students with a small number of credits. As a result, graduation rates are naturally higher at UNMC, which disproportionately benefits the graduation rates of non-recipients given the overrepresentation of UNMC students. When excluding UNMC (and thus a substantial portion of Health Care students), the graduation rate of scholarship recipients (2.9%) was slightly higher than non-recipients (1.3%).

As detailed in the prior table, the combined graduation/retention rate of recipients was higher than non-recipients, suggesting that the graduation rate of recipients will soon begin to outpace non-recipients in future years. Furthermore, similar to internship/apprenticeship/clinical participation, graduation rates are relatively low because most students included in this study have been at the University of Nebraska for one or two years. Graduation rates will

⁶ Students who had enrolled in one of the eligible programs as first-time students since Fall 2021 and met the other eligibility requirements of the scholarship or first-time recipients.

increase over the next few years, particularly once the first cohort of students has been at the University of Nebraska for four years.

Table 5. Graduation by Academic Program

| Program | Cohort Group | Count | Number Graduated | Percent Graduated |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Computer Information Systems | Recipients | 130 | 4 | 3.1% |
| | Non-Recipients | 490 | 4 | 0.8% |
| Engineering | Recipients | 196 | 5 | 2.6% |
| | Non-Recipients | 954 | 12 | 1.3% |
| Health Care | Recipients | 138 | 6 | 4.3% |
| | Non-Recipients | 3,333 | 307 | 9.2% |
| Math | Recipients | 22 | 2 | 9.1% |
| | Non-Recipients | 74 | 0 | 0.0% |
| Grand Total | Recipients | 486 | 17 | 3.5% |
| | Non-Recipients | 4,851 | 323 | 6.7% |
| Grand Total Less UNMC | Recipients | | | 2.9% |
| | Non-Recipients | | | 1.3% |

(f) The number of graduates from the immediately prior academic year who obtained employment in a major-related field in the state within four months after graduation and the average starting salary for such graduates.

Summary

As mentioned in the previous section – of the 5,337 students⁷ who were enrolled in one of the four eligible academic programs in the prior academic year, 340 graduated: of these students, 62 graduated in Fall 2022, 264 in Spring 2023, and 14 in Summer 2023.

Of the 62 students⁸ who graduated in Fall 2022, 48 – or approximately 77% – worked in Nebraska during Quarter 1 of 2023⁹. Based on earnings during that quarter, these graduates’ estimated average salary was approximately \$54,000.

Table 6. Employment Status of Graduates

| Graduation Term | Count | Number Working in Nebraska | Percent Working in Nebraska | Average Starting Salary |
|-----------------|-------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Fall 2022 | 62 | 48 | 77.4% | \$54,020 |
| Spring 2023 | 264 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Summer 2023 | 14 | N/A | N/A | N/A |

⁷ Students who had enrolled in one of the eligible programs as first-time students since Fall 2021 and met the other eligibility requirements of the scholarship or first-time recipients.

⁸ The most recent data available from the Nebraska Department of Labor is from Quarter 1 of 2023; data are not yet available for the post-graduation employment outcomes of students who graduated in Spring 2023 (which would require data from Quarter 3 of 2023) or Summer 2023 (which would require data from Quarter 4 of 2023).

⁹ January through March.