



Ellucian customer case study

Ellucian Degree Works™ integrated with Oracle® PeopleSoft Campus Solutions at the University of Nebraska at Omaha

About University of Nebraska at Omaha

The University of Nebraska at Omaha is Nebraska's premier metropolitan research university offering nationally recognized bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. Enrollment: 15,395

Objective:

- Keep students on track to graduation

Solution:

- Ellucian Degree Works™
- Oracle® PeopleSoft Campus Solutions

Business Benefits:

- Students have clear picture of graduation requirements and their progress
- Advisors have better tools and more time for quality advising

IT Improvements:

- Reduced administrative burden on IT

Ellucian® Degree Works™ Helps University of Nebraska at Omaha Keep Students on Path to Graduation

Students Have a Clearer Picture of Degree Requirements and Advisors Have More Time for Meaningful Advising

Planning a path and sticking to it

Students, advisors, and their academic plans are more closely aligned since The University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) went live with Ellucian Degree Works in fall 2010. Ellucian Degree Works is a comprehensive solution for academic advising, transfer articulation, and degree audit. It helps students and their advisors successfully negotiate the institution's curriculum requirements and move toward graduation. The university has integrated Degree Works with its Oracle PeopleSoft Campus Solutions, recording interactions with students, and providing clarity that helps students make better decisions with confidence.

“Students love Degree Works because it clearly defines everything they need to do to graduate. The tools provided to students are very straightforward.”

CHARLENE WILCOX

Curriculum & Degree Audit Coordinator
University of Nebraska at Omaha



Undergrads in all nine schools at the university have access to view individualized plans created by their advisors to help them map and gauge their progress. The basic audit function lets students check their academic history for compliance with their degree program, detailing what they have accomplished and what still needs to be done. User-friendly GPA calculators help students stay on top of their class grades without executing tedious manual calculations. And the Student Planner lets students create a personalized semester-by-semester academic plan, mapping out the time it will take to graduate based on the number of credit hours they want to carry. Students can also use the Look Ahead functionality to run an audit modeling their progress if they added or removed a course, or made other changes.

“Students like to be able to look ahead and see how a different course would fit into their education path,” explained Eric Manley, associate dean for Arts & Sciences, UNO. “And they like that they can use the tool on their own without having to come in to see an advisor during office hours.”

By planning more accurately, students can reduce the chances of wasted time and money on unnecessary courses, and minimize their stress about academic planning and finishing on time.

For UNO graduate students, Degree Works is their official course of study. The Carnegie Doctoral Research institution offers a graduate-level specialist program, 45 master’s degree programs, and 19 graduate certificates. All graduate requirements and possible electives are loaded into Degree Works.

“Degree Works for graduate students begins at admission, by customizing the standard requirements with the added admission requirements, students have a complete picture of the requirements necessary to graduate,” explained Penny Harmony, director of operational support at UNO. “Students and their advisors really like it. It shows our graduate students exactly what they need to complete their degree, and it is easy for them to use.”

Shifting focus from requirements to possibilities

The tools for advisors are equally intuitive, making more meaningful and personalized academic support so much easier to provide.

While all UNO colleges have centralized advising, some offer it only for the first one to two years. Students in those colleges are later assigned to a faculty member in their home department who is not an official advisor. The ease of use of the tools in Degree Works is especially important for these faculty members.



“I hear a lot of positive feedback from faculty advisors for whom degree requirements, especially the general ones, were always a bit of a mystery. Degree Works helps make them better advisors because the course requirements are laid out for them.”

ERIC MANLEY

Associate Dean for Arts & Sciences
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Advisors also can readily see and check off transfer credits for new students. More complicated scenarios are gauged using the ‘If/Then’ functionality in Degree Works. For example, an if/then case exempts transfer students who earned an Associate of Arts degree from a local community college from general education requirements at the university.

Additional tools help advisors broaden their scope of advising. For example, “What/If” lets faculty members and advisors easily show students the impact of academic options, like changing majors or adding a minor, for example.

“Degree Works presents defined curriculum requirements automatically, so advisors spend less time outlining a student’s courses and instead can focus on providing more meaningful direction,” emphasized Wilcox. “Advisors can spend more time presenting students with options that might interest them, or the steps and time needed to complete a double major, rather than just outlining basic requirements.”

Making it effortless for users and IT

The solution’s ease of use was a key factor in the university’s selection of Ellucian Degree Works. “We reviewed several other solutions, but they were not very user friendly,” recalled Wilcox. “Degree Works was the front runner by far because it was easy for

our department to scribe and build the requirements, and it is easy for users to understand what they are looking at. The overall functionality and flexibility is much better than the other solutions we considered.”

IT staff loaded students’ academic history and related data from the university’s Oracle PeopleSoft Campus Solutions into Degree Works. Ellucian has published an API that lets institutions move data from most student information systems into Degree Works.

“Working with the staff at Ellucian was fantastic,” said Daniel Kenny, information services, University of Nebraska at Omaha. “And once we got it up and running, the software has been on auto pilot ever since.”

Customer solution at a glance

- Ellucian Degree Works™
- Oracle® PeopleSoft Campus Solutions

DANIEL KENNY
Information Services
University of
Nebraska at Omaha

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ABOUT ELLUCIAN

Ellucian helps education institutions thrive in an open and dynamic world. We deliver a broad portfolio of technology solutions, developed in collaboration with a global education community, and provide strategic guidance to help education institutions of all kinds navigate change, achieve greater transparency, and drive efficiencies. More than 2,400 institutions in 40 countries around the world look to Ellucian for the ideas and insights that will move education forward, helping people everywhere discover their futures through learning.

To learn more, please visit www.ellucian.com