

Fall 2026

International Student Orientation

August 13-14, 2026



Welcome!

Welcome to UNMC and to the 2026 International Student Orientation! We are excited to have you join our campus community and begin this new chapter of your academic journey.

Starting at a new university in a new country can bring a mix of excitement, questions and challenges. Orientation is designed to help you feel more comfortable navigating life at UNMC, connect with other students and learn about the resources and learn about support available to help you succeed both inside and outside the classroom.

Throughout orientation, you will meet fellow students, orientation ambassadors, faculty and staff from across campus. You will also participate in interactive sessions covering important topics such as immigration, academic expectations, student support services, safety, wellness and life in Omaha. Most importantly, orientation is a chance to ask questions, build community and start feeling at home at UNMC.

The Office of Global Engagement team will be available throughout orientation to help answer questions and support you as you transition to campus life. And yes, there will definitely be food along the way!

We are looking forward to welcoming you to campus and helping you get started at UNMC.

Sincerely,

Office of Global Engagement

Please note: All orientation sessions on August 13 and August 14 are mandatory.



UNMC International Student Orientation Philosophy

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Orientation lays the foundation for belonging, and belonging is essential to student success.

International student orientation is not a single event; it is a process of transition, connection and support that unfolds over time. Our goal is to use orientation as the beginning of your transition to life at UNMC, not to overwhelm you with information all at once. During orientation, we aim to introduce the most important resources, people and topics, students need to get started and feel supported as they begin their academic journey.

The transition to a new university does not happen in a single week. For this reason, orientation continues throughout the first year through the First-Year Club, which is designed to help new international students connect with one another, explore Omaha and build a sense of belonging at UNMC. Through social events, excursions, shared experiences and peer engagement, students continue developing relationships and support systems well beyond orientation week.

As part of the First-Year Club, students also participate in the Life@UNMC series, an extended orientation program that provides ongoing support during the first four weeks of the semester. Rather than delivering large amounts of information during students' first days on campus, Life@UNMC introduces topics at the time students are most likely to need them. Sessions focus on practical areas such as academic culture, healthcare, financial literacy, finding an advisor and navigating daily life in the United States.

Together, orientation, First-Year Club, and the Life@UNMC series create a layered and student-centered approach to onboarding that prioritizes understanding, connection, and long-term student success.



Orientation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Do I have to attend all sessions?

Yes - all orientation sessions on August 13 and 14 are mandatory. If you are a transfer student within UNMC (meaning you just finished another program at UNMC), orientation is optional for you. All other incoming students including transfers from other institutions must attend all orientation sessions.

What should I bring to orientation?

We will have sessions to help you troubleshoot any IT issues you are having - so bring your laptop/cell phone with you. Please note that we are not liable for your belongings, and you will need to be responsible for them. Otherwise, bring a smiling face and an open mind!

What are we going to do at orientation?

Please check out our schedule on the next two pages.

Who will be at orientation?

All new international students are required to attend orientation. Additionally, you will meet a panel of student volunteers known as Orientation Ambassadors. They have been in your shoes and are at orientation to help you navigate your new setting.

You will also meet members of UNMC leadership and experts from across campus who can help you along the way.



Are the Life @UNMC sessions mandatory?

No, these sessions are part of the Office of Global Engagement programming that is offered to new and current students. Although this is not mandatory, we highly recommend attending

as many sessions as you can, as this content is an extension of orientation. It is also a great opportunity to continue to form connections with other students in your incoming class.

Prayer and Reflection During Orientation

As part of our commitment to supporting your well-being and honoring the various backgrounds of our international community, we want to make you aware of the following prayer and reflection opportunities during orientation:

Prayer Room on August 13

A quiet space will be available during the break at 2:30PM on Thursday, August 13 for anyone who would like to pray or take time for personal reflection. A room on the third floor has been reserved. Students wishing to pray can simply go to this room when we have a break at 2:00 PM. Prayer mats will be available for those who need them.

Jummah Prayer on August 14

A representative from the Muslim Student Association (MSA) will be present on Friday, August 14 to guide interested students to Jummah prayer.

For more details or to stay informed, please scan the WhatsApp group QR code to join the Jummah info group.



Campus Chapel

UNMC's non-denominational chapel is open to all faiths and is located in Clarkson Tower, first floor. It's a peaceful space available throughout the week for prayer, meditation or quiet reflection.

If you have any questions or specific needs, please feel free to reach out during orientation. We're here to support you.



Orientation Ambassadors

Orientation ambassadors are current UNMC international students who have volunteered to serve as Orientation Ambassadors. They are excited to welcome you and answer any questions you have!





Aavash Adhikari

Nepal
IGPBS Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology



Ridhi Bhola

India
IGPBS Immunology, Pathology, Infectious
Disease



Elizabeth Etafo

Nigeria
Pharmaceutical Sciences



Neelanjana Gayen

India
IGPBS Biochemistry and Molecular Biology



Ramireddy Indumati

India

IGPBS Biochemistry and Molecular Biology



Matt Ma

Hong Kong SAR, China

IGPBS Neuroscience



Hasan Mahmud

Bangladesh

IGPBS Biochemistry and Molecular Biology



Bright Manu

Ghana

IGPBS Immunology, Pathology, and
Infectious Diseases



Bianza Tinotenda Mbavha

Zimbabwe

IGPBS Biochemistry and Molecular Biology



Ajay Murakonda

India

IGPBS Biochemistry and Molecular Biology



Frank Osei

Ghana
IGPBS Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology



Elizabeth Besiwa Quaw

Ghana
IGPBS Biochemistry and Molecular Biology



Saadyeh Rashidi

Iran

IGPBS - Bioinformatics & Systems Biology



Elina Lynge Wagner

Denmark

IGPBS - Cancer Research



William Wu

China
IGPBS Molecular Genetics & Cell Biology



Swathi Sai Yakasiri

India
IGPBS Bioinformatics and Systems Biology

Thursday, August 13

Orientation Day 1 – *Compliance Day*

International Student Check-In

11:00-11:30

Wigton Heritage Center

Come to Wigton Heritage Center and check in. The Office of Global Engagement staff and orientation ambassadors will be waiting to welcome you!

[Wigton Heritage Center](#)

Welcome Party

11:30 – 12:50 p.m.

Wigton Heritage Center

Kick off orientation with an outdoor BBQ and a chance to meet fellow students, orientation ambassadors and staff in a relaxed and welcoming environment. Enjoy food, game and fun ice breaker activities designed to help you make connections, learn names and start building your community at UNMC.

Orientation Overview

1:00 - 1:15 p.m.

Williams Science Hall 1.0.009

Let's talk about orientation goals, what orientation is, and what it is not. In this session, we will also introduce you to your orientation ambassadors and give an overview of how they will support you throughout orientation.

Safety and Security

1:15 - 1:45 p.m.

Stephen Venteicher, Public Safety

Feeling safe and knowing where to turn for help are important parts of adjusting to life at UNMC and in Omaha. During this session, members of Campus Security will provide an overview of safety resources and services available to students both on and off campus. Students will learn about campus safety procedures, emergency notifications, safe transportation options, building access, personal safety tips and what to do in emergency situations. The session will also cover practical information related to living in Omaha, including staying safe in apartments and neighborhoods, weather-related safety and common scams that target students.

This session is designed to help students feel more comfortable navigating campus and the surrounding community while building awareness of the many resources available to support their safety and well-being. There will also be time for questions, and students are encouraged to ask about any safety or security concerns they may have.

Outreach, Access, and Resources

1:45 – 2:15 p.m.

Catherine Medici-Thiemann, PhD, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

In this session, you'll meet the Outreach, Access, and Resources (OAR) team and learn about the confidential support services available to all UNMC students. We'll discuss practical resources that can help you stay safe, navigate difficult situations, and access support for basic needs, academic success, and personal well-being. Topics include victim and survivor advocacy, resources for pregnant and parenting students, assistance with food, housing, and emergency funding, and ways to help create a safer, more supportive campus community through bystander intervention and allyship. Our goal is to ensure you know where to turn if you or someone you know ever needs help.

Immigration Basics and Q&A

2:15 - 2:45 p.m.

Dan Teet, Office of Global Engagement

This session will go over your responsibilities as F-1 or J-1 visa holders. Maintaining your immigration status is one of the most important responsibilities of studying in the United States. In this session, Dan Teet from the Office of Global Engagement will provide an overview of important information for F-1 and J-1 international students, including visa regulations, maintaining status requirements, enrollment expectations, employment rules, travel considerations and required immigration documents. Students will also learn about common immigration mistakes and where to go for support when questions or concerns arise.

This session is designed to help students better understand their responsibilities while studying at UNMC and feel more confident navigating the U.S. immigration system. There will also be time for questions and answers, and students are encouraged to ask questions throughout the session.

Coffee Break

2:45 – 3:00

Title IX Training

3:00 - 4:15 p.m.

Jamie Wangler, Title IX Investigator & Educational Specialist

This required training provides important information about sexual violence prevention, consent, healthy relationships, reporting options and campus support resources available to students and employees at UNMC. All UNMC students and employees are required to complete this training as part of the university's commitment to creating a safe, respectful and supportive campus environment.

The topics discussed during this session may include sensitive or difficult content. It is normal for some students to find this material emotionally heavy or challenging. Students are welcome to step out briefly if needed and are encouraged to access support resources or speak with staff if they need assistance.

The goal of this session is not only to explain university policies and expectations, but also to help students better understand their rights, available resources and ways to support themselves and others within the UNMC community.

CAPS Wrap-up Session

4:15 - 4:30 p.m.

Pedro Tostes Ribeiro, PLMPH, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

Catherine Medici-Thiemann, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

After an afternoon of learning and discussing important topics, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) will lead a brief wellness-focused session to help students decompress, reflect and transition out of the day in a supportive environment. This session may include guided mindfulness, breathing exercises, meditation, or other grounding activities designed to help students process information, reduce stress and practice self-care.

End of Orientation Day 1



Friday, August 14

Orientation Day 2 – *Just the Basics*

Check In

7:45 - 8:00 a.m.

Williams Science Hall 1.0.009

Check in with the Office of Global Engagement staff and orientation ambassadors to begin your day at orientation. During this time, students can pick up orientation materials, ask questions and connect with fellow students before sessions begin. This is also a great opportunity to get settled, meet new people and prepare for the day's activities.

Breakfast Across Borders with University Leadership – with Orientation Ambassadors

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

Start the morning with breakfast and conversation alongside H. Dele Davies, MD, UNMC chancellor, and Jane Meza, PhD, interim vice chancellor for academic affairs. This informal gathering provides international students with an opportunity to connect with university leadership in a relaxed and welcoming setting while learning more about the UNMC community and campus culture.

Students are encouraged to ask questions, share their experiences and engage in open conversation about life at UNMC, academic success and opportunities for involvement on campus. This session is designed to foster connection, build community and help students feel welcomed and supported as valued members of the UNMC community.

Orientation Plan for the Day

9:00 - 9:15 a.m.

Get an overview of what the day holds and what you can expect.

Get to know UNMC

9:15 - 9:30 a.m.

Hannah Tong, PhD, Office of Global Engagement

UNMC is made up of multiple colleges, programs, offices and support systems, which can sometimes feel confusing for new students, especially those navigating a new academic environment in the United States. In this session.

This session is designed to help students better understand where they fit within the university, reduce confusion about campus resources and processes, and prepare students for the upcoming “Meet Your College” session.

Meet your College

9:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Representatives from College of Public Health, Graduate Studies, College of Nursing

During this session, students will break into smaller groups based on their college or program to meet with college representatives, staff and fellow students from their academic area. This is an opportunity to learn more about your specific program, academic expectations, important deadlines and the resources available within your college.

Students will also have the opportunity to ask questions, clarify who to contact for different needs, and better understand how their college fits within the larger UNMC community. Because many students are still learning how UNMC is organized, this session is designed to help students feel more connected to their academic home and more confident navigating their program.

Break time

10:00 -10:15 a.m.

Library Tour and IT Check

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

McGoogan Health Sciences Library

During this session, students will rotate through two important orientation activities designed to help them prepare for academic success at UNMC. One group will participate in a guided tour of the McGoogan Health Sciences Library, where students will learn about library spaces, study areas, research support services and other academic resources available to them throughout their time at UNMC.

Students will also rotate through an IT support session with the UNMC Information Technology team. During this time, students should bring their laptop and mobile device to ensure proper access to university systems, applications, Wi-Fi, email, Canvas and other essential technology resources. IT staff will be available to troubleshoot issues, answer questions and help students feel more confident using UNMC technology systems before classes begin.

Because students will rotate between activities, orientation ambassadors and staff will help guide students throughout the session.

Lunch

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Nebraska Café

Enjoy lunch at the Nebraska Café, one of our cafeterias on campus, with our team of Orientation Ambassadors.

Transportation

1:15 - 1:45 p.m.

Timothy Faisetty, Parking and Transportation

Timothy Faisetty, from the UNMC TravelSmart program, will provide students with an overview of transportation options available in Omaha and around the UNMC campus. This session will introduce students to Omaha's public transportation system, including how to use buses, plan routes, understand schedules and access transportation resources available to students.

Students will also learn practical information about getting to campus, navigating the city safely, biking and walking options, rideshare services, parking and transportation apps that can make daily life easier. Because transportation systems in the United States may be very different from those in other countries, this session is designed to help students feel more comfortable and confident traveling around Omaha independently. There will also be time for questions so students can ask about commuting, grocery shopping transportation, airport travel and other transportation-related concerns.

Coffee Break and Group Photo

1:45 - 2:15 p.m.

Panel Discussion

2:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Orientation Ambassadors

The orientation ambassadors will lead this panel. This is a time to ask your questions and learn from their experiences. There will be an opportunity to submit questions anonymously via a QR code or to ask them in-person during the panel session.

Evaluations

3:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Before orientation concludes, students will be asked to complete a written survey about their experience during International Student Orientation. Feedback from students plays an important role in helping the Office of Global Engagement improve future orientation programs and better understand the needs and experiences of international students at UNMC.

The survey will provide students with an opportunity to reflect on the sessions, activities and resources offered throughout orientation and share what they found most helpful, what questions they still have and suggestions for future improvements. Students are encouraged to provide honest and thoughtful feedback to help shape future programs and support services for incoming international students.

Life @ UNMC Introduction

4:00 - 4:15 p.m.

Emily Brandt, Office of Global Engagement

We know that there is still a lot you need to know about life at UNMC. This session will introduce you to our 4-week series designed to help you adjust to your new home and school.

Ice Cream Social

4:15 – 5:00 p.m.

We will wrap up orientation 2026 with an ice cream social!



End of Orientation Day 2

First-Year Club - Life @UNMC Sessions

The Life@UNMC series, an extended orientation program that provides ongoing support during the first four weeks of the semester. Rather than delivering large amounts of information during students' first days on campus, Life@UNMC introduces topics at the time students are most likely to need them. Sessions focus on practical areas such as academic culture, healthcare, financial literacy, finding an advisor and navigating daily life in the United States.

Week 1: Finding an Advisor & Talking to Professors

Week 2: Using the Library + Avoiding Academic Mistakes

Week 3: Health Insurance & Getting Care in the U.S.

Week 4: What's Next? And General Q&A session

Week 1: Finding an Advisor and Talking to Professors

Thursday, August 27

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

DRC I 1005

Finding an academic or research advisor can feel intimidating, especially in a new academic system. This session will help students better understand what advisors do, how to identify potential mentors and how to approach faculty with confidence. Learn practical

strategies for writing emails, starting conversations, asking questions and building professional relationships at UNMC. Orientation ambassadors and staff will also share honest advice about what they wish they had known when looking for an advisor.

Week 2: Using the Library + Avoiding Academic Mistakes

Friday, September 4

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

MSC 2014

The Leon S. McGoogan Health Sciences Library, one of the nation's major health science libraries, serves the information needs of UNMC students, faculty, and staff, as well as licensed Nebraska health professionals and residents of the state. The library staff members will give an overview of the library as well as a presentation on academic integrity. This includes how to avoid plagiarism and ensure the integrity of your research.

Week 3: Health Insurance & Getting Care in the U.S.

Thursday, September 10

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Understanding the U.S. healthcare system can feel confusing and overwhelming, especially for international students who may be navigating health insurance for the first time. This session will provide a practical overview of how student health insurance works, where to go for medical care and what to expect when making appointments or receiving treatment in the U.S.

Students will also learn about the services available through Student Health, how to handle emergencies and common healthcare terms and costs. The goal of this session is to help students feel more confident accessing care and understanding their health coverage while at UNMC.

Week 4: What's Next? And General Q&A session

Thursday, September 17

4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

MSC 2014

Your first semester at UNMC is just the beginning of your experience on campus. This session will introduce students to upcoming opportunities to get involved, build community and continue exploring campus life beyond orientation. Learn about programs and events such as International Education Week, cultural celebrations, student organizations, volunteer opportunities, leadership experiences and campus traditions throughout the academic year.



First-Year Club Excursion: Henry Doorly Zoo

Saturday, September 12

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Spend the day exploring one of Omaha's most popular attractions, the Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium. This fun and relaxed excursion is designed to help students experience more of Omaha while building community outside of the classroom.

Transportation and additional event details will be shared closer to the excursion date.



Pictures from the 2025 Event

First-Year Club Excursion: Nebraska Crossing Outlet Mall

Saturday, October 31

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Join the Office of Global Engagement and orientation ambassadors for a shopping trip to Nebraska Crossing Outlet Mall. This excursion is an opportunity for students to explore one of the area's largest outlet shopping destinations. Students will have time to shop, explore the outlet stores, and pick up seasonal clothing, household items and other essentials as they continue settling into life in Nebraska. Transportation and additional event details will be shared closer to the excursion date.



Pictures from the 2025 Event

First-Year Club Excursion: Durham Museum – Cultural Festival

Friday, December 4

4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Join the Office of Global Engagement for an excursion to the Durham Museum Cultural Festival, a celebration of cultures, traditions, food, music, and communities from around the world. This event provides students with an opportunity to experience one of Omaha's local cultural events while connecting with fellow students and exploring the city beyond campus.

Transportation and additional event details will be shared closer to the excursion date.



Pictures from the 2025 Event