



UNIVERSITY OF  
**NORTHERN  
COLORADO**

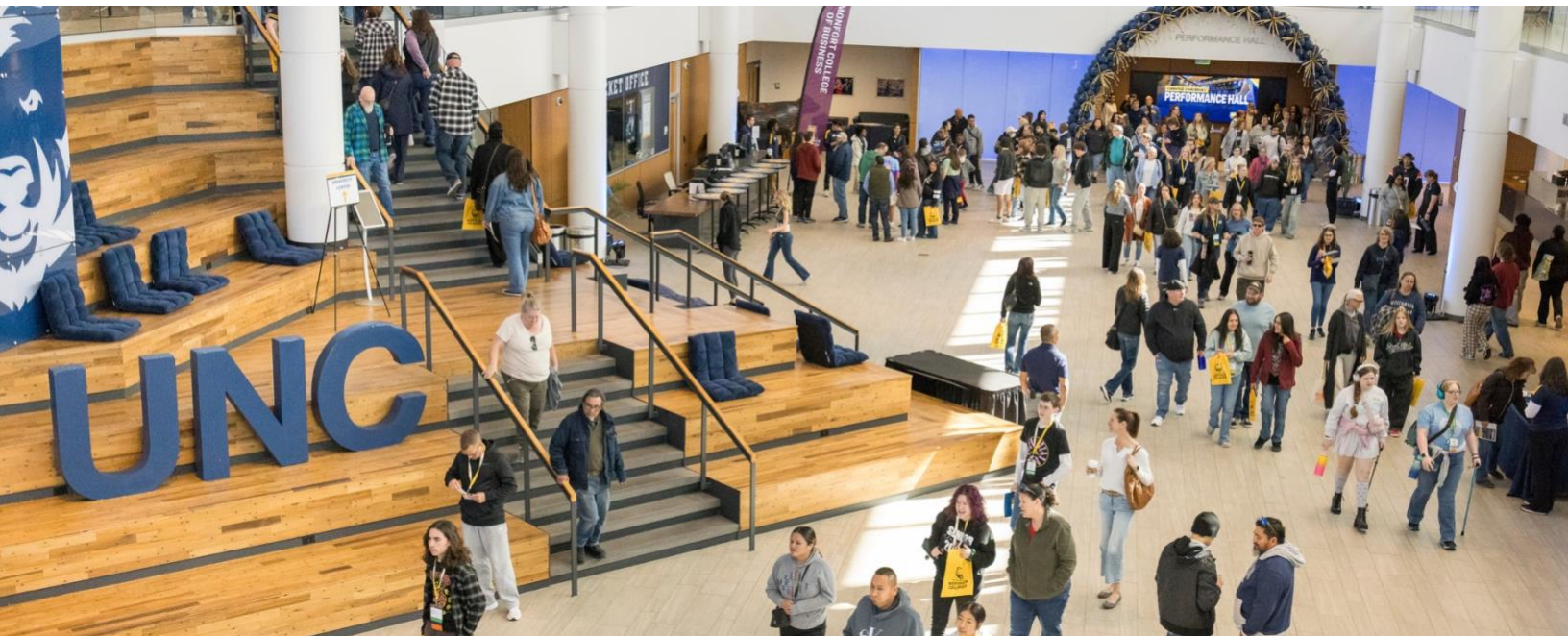
Search for the President

Greeley, Colorado

## UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO SEARCH FOR THE PRESIDENT

The University of Northern Colorado (UNC) invites nominations and applications for an exceptional leader to serve as its next President.

UNC is a public doctoral research university serving approximately 8,500 students with a deeply rooted commitment to student success, access, and social mobility. With a long-standing reputation for preparing educators, a robust portfolio of programs in the health sciences, business, and the arts, an educational ethos that fosters an educational experience that is both personalized and impactful, and a location at the center of one of the nation's fastest-growing regions, UNC combines a proud history with a forward-looking trajectory.



UNC stands at a pivotal moment in its development. In recent years, the University has taken meaningful steps to advance its academic profile, strengthen student success outcomes, and position itself for future growth, including progress on key strategic initiatives and record-high student persistence and retention rates. This work is reflected in recent institutional milestones, including UNC's 2025 reattainment of Carnegie R2 designation and its 2024 federal designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution. A defining feature of this moment is the launch of the College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM), a transformative initiative that is already elevating the University's profile and creating opportunities for academic innovation, strategic partnerships, and workforce development.

The University's progress has been accompanied by significant changes shaped by broader shifts in higher education, including demographic pressures related to the "enrollment cliff," evolving student

expectations, and a constrained public funding environment. Against this backdrop, UNC seeks a President who can lead effectively in a complex and changing landscape. This role requires both strategic vision and strong financial and operational leadership, including the ability to strengthen financial sustainability, advance enrollment growth, align academic priorities, and make informed, disciplined decisions that support the institution's long-term success. At the same time, the University's culture and spirit demand a President who is relational, authentic, and highly visible, able to build trust, foster collaboration, and unite diverse constituencies while engaging meaningfully with the campus and broader community. The next President will have a rare opportunity to shape the future of a university where leadership impact is both immediate and enduring. By aligning strategy, resources, and community engagement, the President will guide UNC into its next chapter, defined by stronger enrollment and financial performance, clarified institutional positioning, and expanded impact within Colorado and beyond.

For more information about the University of Northern Colorado, see the Appendix to this document.



## ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT

The President of the University of Northern Colorado serves as the institution's chief executive officer and is responsible for advancing the University's mission, strengthening its strategic direction, and ensuring long-term institutional sustainability. Reporting to and working in close partnership with the Board of Trustees, the President provides leadership across all aspects of the University, guiding academic, financial, and operational priorities while representing UNC at the state, regional, and national levels. The President oversees financial planning and the development and execution of the University's operating budget of approximately \$215 million. The President also serves as President of the UNC Foundation,

working closely with Foundation leadership and the Board to advance fundraising priorities and strengthen philanthropic support for the University.

The President's direct reports include the Provost and Executive Vice President; the Vice President for Finance & Administration and Chief Financial Officer; the Vice President for University Advancement; the Vice President for Student Affairs; the General Counsel and Secretary to the Board of Trustees; the Director of Athletics; and the Chief of Staff. The Faculty Senate Chair also serves as a member of the President's Cabinet, reflecting the University's commitment to shared governance and faculty engagement in institutional decision-making.



## QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The University of Northern Colorado seeks a President who brings a compelling combination of strategic vision, operational discipline, and relational leadership to guide the institution through a period of significant change and opportunity. The next President will be expected to lead with clarity, authenticity, and resolve, advancing UNC's commitment to student success, social mobility, and regional impact. The successful candidate will possess most, if not all, of the following qualifications and characteristics:

### STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND FISCAL DISCIPLINE

- Demonstrated executive leadership and a proven ability to manage a complex organization, including experience making strategic decisions, driving organizational performance, fostering innovation, navigating change, and holding senior leadership accountable for results;
- Sharp ability to articulate and execute a clear, long-term strategic vision, including a willingness to make and implement difficult decisions in support of institutional sustainability and focus;

- Resilience, determination, and the ability to lead organizational integration across complex systems through ambiguity and competing priorities, bringing together distinct units into a cohesive whole;
- Sophisticated financial and operational acumen, with experience aligning resources, enrollment strategy, and programmatic investments in a constrained and evolving environment;
- Demonstrated entrepreneurial orientation, including the ability to creatively identify new revenue streams, pursue innovative partnerships, and respond to emerging trends in higher education.

#### ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

- Deep commitment to student success, access, and social mobility, particularly for first-generation and economically diverse student populations;
- Experience leading within a public university or similarly complex organization, with a deep understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing regional comprehensive institutions;
- Demonstrated success in guiding new or evolving programs, divisions, or organizations through initial approval processes and continuous improvement cycles;
- Experience in the design and implementation of innovative educational or workforce programs, preferably in the health sciences, with a track record of driving growth aligned with market and community needs;
- An earned terminal degree and a record of accomplishment that commands credibility within an academic community.

#### UNIVERSITY, COMMUNITY, AND GOVERNMENTAL ENGAGEMENT

- Proven capacity to lead in complex political and public environments, including effective engagement with state government, policymakers, and system-level stakeholders;
- Demonstrated success as an external leader, including fundraising, partnership development, and serving as a visible and effective ambassador;
- Strong relational leadership skills, with the ability to build trust across diverse constituencies, communicate clearly and effectively, and engage faculty, staff, students, trustees, alumni, and community partners;
- Commitment to shared governance and ability to engage faculty meaningfully while maintaining forward momentum on institutional priorities;
- Appreciation for and willingness to engage deeply with the local community, including an understanding of relevant cultural, political, and economic dynamics.

## KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE PRESIDENT

UNC's next President will assume leadership at a consequential moment in the University's evolution. The role requires a leader who can navigate a complex higher education environment by strengthening financial sustainability, driving enrollment growth, and aligning institutional strategy with available resources to position the University for long-term success. This includes working closely with the senior leadership team to ensure coherence across academic priorities, programmatic offerings, and resource allocation. The President will also serve as the University's principal external representative, advancing UNC's priorities with state policymakers, alumni, donors, and community partners, while strengthening institutional visibility and support. In a constrained public funding environment, sustained engagement with the Colorado legislature and effective advocacy will be essential.



The University seeks a President who is visible, accessible, and deeply engaged in the life of the campus and the Greeley community. Success in the role will require authenticity, trust-building, collaboration, and a willingness to engage directly with diverse constituencies, alongside the capacity to make difficult decisions and guide the institution through change with clarity and resolve. The next President will be expected to address a focused set of key opportunities and challenges central to UNC's future, as detailed below:

### **Steward Financial Sustainability and Resource Alignment with Sharp Financial Acumen**

Ensuring financial sustainability is the University's most immediate and pressing priority. UNC operates within a constrained funding environment shaped by enrollment volatility, state policy limitations, and rising costs. The next President will provide disciplined financial and operational leadership to align resources with institutional priorities, guide budget strategy, and make difficult decisions necessary to ensure long-term stability. This includes strategically allocating resources to support the academic mission, strengthening financial planning, and identifying opportunities to diversify revenue streams in a rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

This work is closely tied to enrollment performance and academic focus. Long-term sustainability will depend on aligning enrollment growth, programmatic priorities, and resource allocation. By strategically investing in areas of strength and opportunity, the President will improve student outcomes, enhance institutional effectiveness, and build a stronger financial foundation.



### **Shape a Coherent Institutional and Academic Strategy that Reflects Mission, Demand, and Opportunity**

The next President will partner broadly across the University to articulate a clear, differentiated institutional identity and align it with a focused academic portfolio that reflects UNC's strengths, mission, and market opportunity. Building on a legacy as a student-centered, access-oriented institution, with notable strengths in educator preparation, health-related fields, business, and the arts, UNC is well-positioned to sharpen its value proposition in an increasingly competitive landscape.

Clarifying this identity will be central to driving both enrollment growth and long-term financial sustainability. A more focused and cohesive articulation of UNC's strengths will not only support student

recruitment and retention but also inform decisions about programmatic investment, institutional positioning, and resource allocation. Advancing this work will be essential to supporting enrollment growth and long-term financial sustainability, requiring thoughtful prioritization to strengthen programs central to UNC's identity and future, while evaluating those less aligned with institutional priorities.



### **Engage Community, Strengthen Partnerships, and Advance UNC's External Impact**

UNC's connection to Greeley and Weld County is a defining aspect of its identity and impact, and the University is well-positioned to serve as a central partner in advancing educational opportunity, workforce development, and community wellbeing in a region experiencing significant growth and demographic change. The next President will build on this foundation by deepening relationships with local schools, community colleges, employers, and civic organizations, while also expanding engagement with the region's diverse and growing populations. Strengthening these partnerships will support enrollment, enhance student success, and reinforce UNC's role as a responsive and engaged regional institution.

At the same time, UNC operates within a complex state policy and funding environment that requires sustained engagement and effective advocacy. The President will serve as the University's principal external ambassador, strengthening relationships with state leaders, advancing UNC's priorities within Colorado's higher education landscape, and securing the resources necessary to support its mission. In close partnership with the UNC Foundation, the Board of Trustees, and University Advancement, the President will also expand philanthropic support by cultivating relationships with donors, alumni, and community partners. Together, these efforts will enhance institutional visibility, generate critical resources, and position UNC for long-term success.

### **Sustain a Deep Commitment to Students, Access, and Social Mobility**

UNC's mission as a student-centered institution dedicated to access and social mobility remains at the core of its identity and impact. The University has a strong record of serving first-generation students and those seeking an affordable, high-quality education in a supportive and engaged environment.



Looking ahead, the next President will build on this foundation by further strengthening student outcomes (including retention, graduation, and post-graduate success), expanding career pathways, and ensuring that graduates are well prepared for life and work. Maintaining accessibility and affordability are essential to UNC's ethos, and by aligning institutional strategy with student success priorities, the President will sustain UNC's mission while advancing long-term impact for its students and communities.

### **Leverage the College of Osteopathic Medicine to Advance Growth, Partnerships, and Reputation**

The COM represents a significant opportunity to elevate UNC's academic profile and expand its institutional impact. As a highly visible and strategically important initiative, the COM has the potential to enhance the University's reputation, broaden its role in health-related fields, and deepen partnerships across the region. Realizing this potential will depend on how effectively the College is integrated into the broader University.

The next President will play a central role in ensuring that the COM is leveraged as a strategic catalyst for institutional growth. This includes expanding complementary programs, strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration, and creating clear pathways for students pursuing careers in health and allied professions. By aligning the COM with broader academic priorities and external partnerships, the President will

advance UNC's visibility, strengthen regional impact, and contribute meaningfully to the University's long-term success.



### **Strengthen Leadership Capacity and Institutional Effectiveness**

UNC's continued progress will depend on the strength, alignment, and effectiveness of its leadership and organizational structures. As the University advances its strategic priorities, there is an opportunity to strengthen coordination across divisions, enhance communication, and ensure more consistent execution of institutional goals. The next President will play a defining role in building and leading a high-performing senior team, establishing clear expectations, and modeling a collaborative leadership approach that fosters shared understanding and commitment across the institution.

This work will require cultivating a culture of accountability and collaboration while actively engaging campus stakeholders to build alignment around key priorities. By fostering trust, encouraging open communication, and building broad-based support for institutional direction, the President will help ensure that strategy is translated into action. Strengthening organizational effectiveness in this way will enable UNC to sustain momentum, respond effectively to a dynamic environment, and advance its long-term strategic goals.

### **COMPENSATION**

The anticipated salary range for this position is \$500,000-\$550,000, commensurate with experience and qualifications. In addition to base compensation, the selected candidate will be eligible for a range of

benefits and incentives, including housing support and standard executive benefits. Performance-based incentives may also be considered, aligned with achievement of key institutional priorities. Further, UNC offers a comprehensive and competitive [benefits package](#).

## APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/university-northern-colorado/president>. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a cover letter addressing the key themes outlined in this profile. **For best consideration, please submit materials no later than August 31, 2026.**

Cati Mitchell-Crossley, Managing Partner  
Joe Kralick, Partner  
Evan Layne, Managing Associate  
Rachel Banderob, Senior Search Coordinator  
Isaacson, Miller

*The University of Northern Colorado is an equal opportunity/affirmative action/Title IX employer committed to a culturally diverse staff, faculty, and student body. In accordance with established laws, the University prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, military service, or political affiliation for employees in all aspects of employment and for students in academic programs and activities.*

*This document has been prepared based on the information provided by University of Northern Colorado. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by University of Northern Colorado would supersede any conflicting information in this document.*

## APPENDIX

### ABOUT UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Founded in 1889 as the State Normal School of Colorado, the University of Northern Colorado has evolved into a public doctoral research university with a strong and enduring commitment to student success, access, and social mobility. UNC now serves approximately 8,500 students across undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs and currently offers more than 200 areas of study.



UNC maintains a distinctive position within Colorado’s higher education landscape. While it has expanded well beyond its origins as a teacher preparation institution, the University continues to be the state’s largest producer of educators. While this strength is nationally recognized, UNC has broadened its institutional profile, emphasized by its Carnegie-designated R2 status reattained in 2025. The University’s scale and culture create an environment that is both academically rigorous and highly personalized. Close relationships between students, faculty, and staff are central to the UNC experience and contribute to a strong sense of community and a shared commitment to student success.

UNC’s strategic plan, *Rowing, Not Drifting 2030*, reflects a commitment to a student-centered, inclusive, and forward-looking educational experience. Developed through broad institutional engagement, the plan emphasizes personalized learning, critical and creative inquiry, career readiness, and strong connections between academic programs and the needs of Colorado’s communities and employers.

Recent years have seen progress on several of these priorities. UNC has launched initiatives such as the [UNC Tuition Promise](#), the [Colorado First-Year Admission Guarantee](#), and a local [Direct Admissions partnership](#), while also investing in infrastructure, technology, and student support systems.

## Academics

UNC's academic enterprise reflects both a deep institutional legacy and a broad set of contemporary ambitions. The University's six Colleges include: [Education and Behavioral Sciences](#); [Humanities and Social Sciences](#); the [Kenneth W. Monfort College of Business](#); [Natural and Health Sciences](#); [Performing and Visual Arts](#); and the [College of Osteopathic Medicine](#). The colleges collectively offer more than 200 undergraduate and graduate programs and serve a diverse student population pursuing a broad range of academic and professional interests.



Teacher preparation remains the University's defining strength and a central pillar of its identity. In recent years, this foundation has been complemented by the expansion of programs aligned with student and workforce demand, particularly in the health sciences. At the same time, UNC has sustained a commitment to the arts, humanities, and social sciences, with strong programs in the performing and visual arts contributing to both the academic experience and the cultural life of the region. Across disciplines, the University's programs are designed to combine intellectual rigor with applied learning, positioning graduates for meaningful employment and civic engagement.

UNC's nursing programs are a particular area of strength, with the BS in Nursing ranking in the top 8% of programs in the country according to *U.S. News & World Report*, with graduate nursing programs also earning national rankings and recognition. The Monfort College of Business also distinguishes UNC

nationally, holding dual AACSB international accreditation in both business and accounting – an honor achieved by fewer than 2% of business schools worldwide.

The College of Osteopathic Medicine marks a major expansion of UNC’s academic portfolio and health sciences presence. With pre-accreditation granted and the inaugural fall 2026 class enrolled, the College will prepare Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine through a mission-driven, community-focused medical education model. The program is centered on patient care, health equity, and service to Colorado, the High Plains, and the Intermountain region, with a particular emphasis on preparing physicians to practice in rural and underserved communities. When fully operational, the College will graduate 150 Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine per year, adding an important dimension to the University’s contribution to the state and region.



As UNC continues to transform, its academic portfolio offers both a platform of established strength and an opportunity for greater focus and differentiation. The next phase of leadership will require aligning academic offerings more deliberately with student demand, workforce needs, and institutional identity to ensure that breadth is matched by long-term sustainability and the public purpose of higher education.

## Research and Innovation

The reattainment of Carnegie-designated R2 doctoral research university status in 2025 marks a significant milestone in the institution’s trajectory and affirms a growing commitment to research, scholarship, and creative activity. While UNC remains teaching-focused in its ethos, its [research enterprise](#) has expanded in both scale and ambition, with more than 100 doctoral degrees awarded annually and

research expenditures of nearly \$10 million. The University's approach to research is notably applied and engaged, often focusing on issues of direct relevance to Colorado and the surrounding region.

Faculty and student research activity spans education, health sciences, business, environmental sustainability, the arts, and emerging fields such as artificial intelligence and data analytics. Much of this work is conducted in partnership with community organizations, school systems, healthcare providers, and industry partners, reinforcing UNC's role as a leading contributor to regional problem-solving and economic development.



## Faculty

The faculty at the University of Northern Colorado is central to its identity as a student-centered institution. UNC employs nearly 400 full-time faculty, supported by additional instructional and adjunct faculty who contribute to the University's teaching-focused model and broad academic offerings. UNC's faculty are widely recognized for their commitment to student success, particularly through engagement with first-generation and working students. A student-to-faculty ratio of 14:1, small class sizes, and accessible faculty contribute to a learning environment in which individualized attention and sustained faculty-student relationships are foundational. Many faculty deeply engage in scholarship and creative activity that advances both disciplinary knowledge and regional impact.

Faculty also play a central role in institutional governance. Through established representative bodies and participation in key decision-making processes, they contribute meaningfully to academic planning, program development, and broader institutional priorities. This tradition of shared governance is a hallmark of UNC's culture and underscores the importance of leadership that is both collaborative and consensus-building as they make thoughtful, often difficult decisions. Maintaining this culture of engagement and trust will be essential to advancing the University's strategic direction.

## Staff

UNC employs approximately 700–750 staff across classified and professional roles, who are essential to the University’s daily operations and long-term success. Staff work across academic and administrative units to support core functions including student services, enrollment management, financial operations, and institutional advancement, contributing directly to UNC’s student-centered mission.

As part of UNC’s collaborative culture, staff are closely integrated into the life of the institution and partner with faculty and leadership to support student success and advance institutional priorities. Staff also participate in institutional governance through representative bodies, including the Professional Administrative Staff Council and the Classified Staff Council. All staff play a key role in ensuring effective coordination, communication, and execution across campus.



## Students and Student Experience

Fall 2025 enrollment totaled 8,443 students, including 5,555 degree-seeking undergraduates and 2,159 graduate students. The composition of this population reflects both regional demographics and UNC’s longstanding commitment to expanding educational opportunity. Approximately 43% of students are the first in their families to attend college, while roughly 42% of new students are Pell-eligible. Hispanic/Latino students account for approximately 29% of undergraduate enrollment, reflecting the University’s recent designation as a federally recognized Hispanic-Serving Institution.

UNC has emphasized affordability, access, and student support through initiatives such as the UNC Tuition Promise, Direct Admissions partnerships, and expanded advising and student success services. These efforts are contributing to improved student outcomes, with UNC reporting a record 77.8% retention rate for first-time students and an 85.4% persistence rate for all degree-seeking undergraduates. The UNC

student experience is defined by scale and connection. Small class sizes, accessible faculty, and a strong advising infrastructure enable personalized engagement, while the University's location and partnerships provide pathways to internships, clinical experiences, and early-career opportunities.

Athletics are an important part of student life and of UNC's institutional visibility. The [UNC Bears](#) compete at the NCAA Division I level, with most programs participating in the Big Sky Conference. Marquee programs include football, basketball, volleyball, soccer, softball, golf, cross country, track and field, wrestling, baseball, and swimming and diving, with 17 total Division I teams fielded across men's and women's sports. Athletics play an energizing role in connecting the University to the broader Greeley community and region. Game days at Nottingham Field and the Bank of Colorado Arena draw students, alumni, and local residents alike, reinforcing UNC's presence as a visible and engaged community anchor.



Beyond athletics, [campus life](#) at UNC offers a wide range of co-curricular and cultural opportunities, with particularly strong visibility in the performing and visual arts. Signature programs include nationally recognized music ensembles, theatre productions, and events such as the UNC/Greeley Jazz Festival. These and other programs contribute to a vibrant campus environment and serve as a point of connection between the University and the broader community. Consistent with its scale and mission, student life at UNC is characterized by accessibility and participation, encouraging students to engage meaningfully in campus activities, leadership opportunities, and applied learning experiences that extend beyond the classroom.

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## Institutional Governance

UNC is governed by a nine-member [Board of Trustees](#) established under Colorado state law, which serves as the University's primary governing authority. The Board includes seven voting members appointed by the Governor to staggered terms, as well as non-voting faculty and student trustees who contribute to institutional dialogue and oversight. At every meeting, the Board includes agenda items for updates from faculty, staff, and students, underscoring the collaborative and transparent nature of UNC's governance structure. The Board is responsible for setting institutional policy, approving budgets, overseeing strategic direction, and appointing and evaluating the President. In this role, it serves as both a fiduciary body and a strategic partner.



UNC maintains a strong tradition of shared governance, with faculty, staff, and students participating in decision-making through formal bodies and representative structures. This approach reflects the University's collaborative culture and reinforces the importance of inclusive leadership. The next President will be expected to operate effectively within this governance environment by partnering closely with the Board, engaging faculty and campus stakeholders, and balancing consultation with the need for clear, purposeful, and well-executed decision-making.

## Finances

UNC's financial profile reflects both recent progress and continuing structural pressure. Operating revenue for fiscal year 2025 was approximately \$215 million, derived from tuition and fees, auxiliary activities, grants and contracts, state support, and other sources. The [UNC Foundation](#) is an independent, nonprofit organization that plays a central role in advancing the University's mission through private

support. The UNC Foundation holds approximately \$210 million in assets, providing important support for institutional priorities through fundraising activity, investment management, and stewardship of donor contributions.

The University's financial position is shaped primarily by student enrollment and state funding. Like many public institutions, UNC has experienced enrollment declines in recent years, though recent data and initiatives suggest emerging stabilization. Strategic enrollment efforts have contributed to improvements in persistence and retention. At the same time, UNC operates within a constrained state funding environment and faces ongoing, increasing cost pressures. The University has taken steps in recent years to right-size operations, strengthen compensation, and stabilize its workforce, even as it manages enrollment variability.



## Location

The University of Northern Colorado is located in Greeley, an historic and growing community on Colorado's northern Front Range. Greeley sits at the heart of Weld County, now the fastest-growing large county in the state, with population growth of 15% since 2020, significantly outpacing neighboring counties along the Front Range. This sustained growth is reshaping the region, driven by a combination of relative affordability, geographic accessibility, and a diversifying economy spanning healthcare, agriculture, energy, life sciences, aerospace, IT, and logistics.

With a city population now exceeding 115,000 residents, Greeley is increasingly recognized as an important economic and cultural center in northern Colorado. Rooted in a tradition of hard work, entrepreneurship, and civic investment, the community is known for its accessibility, authenticity, and

unusually high level of engagement between local institutions and residents. Greeley offers a compelling mix of livability and affordability. Its evolving downtown, growing arts and cultural scene, and robust healthcare and education sectors contribute to a quality of life that is both grounded and forward-looking. Greeley offers access to the broader amenities of Colorado's Front Range while retaining a strong, locally rooted identity, allowing leaders to quickly and genuinely weave into the community's fabric.





  
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BEAR  
COUNTRY**

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OSOS**  




UNIVERSITY OF  
**NORTHERN  
COLORADO**

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