

## **Report of Northwestern College**

After moving to online classes in March 2020 due to the global pandemic, Northwestern College began the semester in person in the fall with record enrollment. This spring's enrollment was an all-time high, including graduate programs, with 1,482 students enrolled. In addition, 99.5 percent of 2020 graduates were employed or continuing their education within six months of graduation.

### **Software Engineering Major Launching Fall 2021**

A new major in software engineering will launch in the fall of 2021, designed to prepare students for careers in software engineering and development, database administration, and web and mobile app development. The program will focus on how software is developed in industry.

The new major is based on standards recommended by the Association for Computing Machinery. It will include required courses in such areas as web development, data management systems, principles of software engineering, cybersecurity, management, and calculus. Students will learn how to write code in a variety of programming languages and develop efficient algorithms to solve problems.

Additionally, students will study best practices for project management, design, testing, documentation, verification, and quality assurance. Large-scale projects and teamwork are integrated throughout the curriculum to provide hands-on experiences simulating real-world practices. This program will offer preparation, bridging the skills gap between what academics is producing and what industry wants: the ability to design, test, validate, calibrate, and work with teams.

The new major will join a major in computer science, designed to prepare students for graduate school or research-oriented industry positions, as well as a minor in computer programming and a career concentration in computer science.

### **New MEd in Teaching History**

Northwestern College began offering two new graduate education programs in teaching history in January 2021. The online master of education (MEd) in teaching history features 18 graduate credits in history and is specifically designed for current K–12 social studies and history teachers.

Completion of the program will qualify educators to teach dual-credit history courses or in a community college setting. Educators will take 33 total credits for the MEd degree, which can be completed in two years or less. Teachers interested in completing the 18 graduate credits in history without earning a master's degree can pursue the option of a graduate certificate in teaching history.

Rebecca Koerselman, director of Northwestern's graduate programs in teaching history, is a 2003 Northwestern College alumna who earned a doctorate in U.S. history at Michigan State University. She has taught at Northwestern since 2014.

## **Northwestern Online MEd Program Ranked among Top 100 by U.S. News**

Northwestern College's master of education program is ranked 91st out of more than 300 schools in U.S. News & World Report's 2021 Best Online Programs ranking. Only two Iowa schools have higher rankings than Northwestern's program, and only one Council for Christian Colleges & Universities program across the country is ranked higher. Northwestern places a high value on our students' experience online. The programs are high quality, relevant, and taught by experienced and caring faculty, at an affordable price, in a flexible format for working adults.

Northwestern offers the MEd degree in eight tracks: early childhood, early childhood + endorsement, educational administration + K–12 principal endorsement, master teacher, special education, special education + endorsement, teacher leadership, and teaching history. Graduate-level endorsements and certificates are also available. Northwestern began offering online graduate programs in education in 2015 and now has 446 students enrolled.

Northwestern is also tied for 102nd in the online bachelor's degree program category out of more than 360 schools. Northwestern offers two degree-completion online programs: early childhood and RN to BSN.

## **Center for Innovation and Leadership Launched**

Northwestern College has begun a new Center for Innovation and Leadership. The center seeks to connect students' ingenuity and organizational leaders' insight to create shared opportunities that serve Christ's kingdom and the common good.

The center will invest in communities, organizations, and initiatives through collaborative, innovative, Christ-centered leadership development, and problem-solving services and opportunities—under the direction of Erica Vonk, with the assistance of a proven innovative businessperson in Josh Van Es.

The Center for Innovation and Leadership features five launch programs:

- **Accelerate Siouxland:** a regional leadership development program focused on linking community members, college students, and resources for the common good
- **Learner to Leader:** curriculum and mentoring programs that connect visionary students and organizational employees with innovative role models
- **Research and Consultancy:** access to the opinions, ideas, and imaginations of college students for research, assessment, and product or service development
- **Entrepreneur/Business Leader in Residence:** bringing experienced and emerging leaders together both in the classroom and community
- **Innovation Sandbox:** an inspiring space for collaboration, creative thinking, and problem solving for both students, alumni, and regional organizations.

Vonk, a Northwestern business professor since 2015, played a role in developing the college's interdisciplinary entrepreneurship minor and has connected students with Siouxland organizations through her courses in leadership, organizational behavior, and entrepreneurship. She also has experience in agricultural finance and management as well as economic and community development. Her community contributions have included serving as a foster parent,

as a member of her church's leadership team, and as a board member and volunteer with the Seahawks Swim Team. A 2000 Northwestern alumna, she holds an MBA from the University of South Dakota and is earning a doctorate in organizational leadership from Concordia University Chicago.

Van Es, a 2009 Northwestern graduate who owns Orange City's Ben Franklin-Crafts Central, serves as the center's assistant director and program coordinator for Accelerate Siouxland. He has 11 years of management experience with Walmart in Sioux Center and Storm Lake.

### **Faculty Book on Servant Leadership**

Jiying (Jenny) Song, assistant professor of business and economics at Northwestern College, served as first editor of a newly published anthology, *Servant Leadership and Forgiveness: How Leaders Help Heal the Heart of the World*.

Published by SUNY Press, the volume includes chapters written by 21 authors from around the world. Many of the authors, like Song, are alumni of Gonzaga University's School of Leadership Studies or are on its advisory board. The book draws upon contexts from personal, organizational, and global levels to engage a deeper conversation about the role of leadership and forgiveness in the midst of political and social upheaval.

Chapters cover the theories of servant leadership and apply them to life. The book includes a number of personal forgiveness stories, including accounts of people who forgave the murderers of their children, a survivor of clergy sexual abuse who forgave his abuser, healing that took place in families rocked by alcoholism and dysfunction, and executives who both sought and granted forgiveness from coworkers. Two chapters address the need for servant leadership and forgiveness in law enforcement.

In addition to serving as first editor, Song wrote the first chapter, "Awareness, Healing and Forgiveness: Servant Leaders Help Heal the Heart of the World."

### **Building Women Leaders**

This year, Northwestern opened the Koinonia House, a new living opportunity for women on campus. It's designed to help its residents develop their leadership skills and grow in their Christian identity.

Named after the Greek word for Christian fellowship, the Koinonia House is home to six students. The living-learning community provides a space for a small cohort of women to be intentionally mentored so they will leave Northwestern as confident women, prepared for their workplaces, relationships, and the kingdom of God.

Throughout the year, the women read books about community, being unified in Christ, and expressing honesty and vulnerability. They focus on building their identity in Christ in the fall semester and move to hands-on leadership on campus in the spring. The women also each mentor a first-year student. One of the women participating in the Koinonia House this year shared, "I feel a lot more confident in my strengths as a leader as these women have spoken out against my insecurities and reassured me of my unique abilities, while still challenging me to take risks."