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OKLAHOMA BUSINESS LEADERS

Preparing the Future

With robust online programs and faculty to suit, Northeastern State University leads the way in equipping the region's workforce.



Founded in 1846, Northeastern State University's (NSU) reputation as a regional tour de force began long before the union of education and the World Wide Web. Now with campuses in Tahlequah, Muskogee, and Broken Arrow, degree programs spanning the gamut, and plans to remain on the cusp of higher education, it's the institution's rooted past that continues to fuel its drive to educate and supply the local workforce.

"We are Oklahoma's immersive learning institution," says Dan Mabery, vice president for university relations. "Our students get a wide range of experiences by doing. We want to be an online education and workforce solutions partner for everyone in our region."

Going Online

As ways of learning change, so too do NSU's modes of educating. With more than 13 bachelor's degree programs, 14 master's degree programs, and a slew of certificates, NSU Online is as vast as it is technologically advanced. Tailoring programs to meet students' needs, the institution offers remote courses that fit students' schedules while supplying the same accredited education in-person learners receive.

"Smaller class sizes and highly trained faculty accommodate students in our region. Faculty can better prepare material and teach students how to be productive citizens in the local workforce," says Jerol Skinner, executive director of NSU Online and the Center for Teaching and Learning. "Our faculty are constantly looking to improve their skill set to cater to the online classroom."

Subject-matter experts in their respective fields, faculty members are trained in NSU's learning management system and online

pedagogy, as well as certified by Quality Matters to enhance their digital skill set and the students' educational experience. Faculty desire to elevate their online curriculum, combined with the university's array of resources, has led to a vetted online program.

"It's not easy to be an online instructor, but with training and certification, the result is a better learning experience for students," Skinner says.

Collaborating for Success

NSU creates leading programs by retaining top-tier scholars, but collaborating with regional businesses and organizations who seek well-equipped employees is just as vital. These partnerships not only provide opportunities for students to gain hands-on experience through internships, but they also give the university insight into the knowledge and skills students will need to succeed.

"Whether students are online or on campus, there are ample opportunities to maximize their experience through partnerships and to test the workforce waters before starting their careers," says Mabery.



With 80% to 85% of NSU graduates employed upon graduation, the university's passion for its region and for the future of education is an asset for both students and businesses.

"It's all about conversations," concludes Skinner, "and making a connection with students so we can tailor their program to help them succeed in their academic pursuits."



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