



North Alabama Online  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

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## OVERVIEW OF ONLINE PROGRAMS AT UNA

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*\*Programs launching in 2021 - 2022*

*†Featured Programs*





# NORTH ALABAMA ONLINE THRIVES

The second North Alabama Online Report finds UNA thriving in a year of great uncertainty for colleges and universities around the country. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported more than 650,000 lost jobs in the higher education sector as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the past several years, UNA has invested strategically in the expansion of online programs, with great success. As a result, during the pandemic, UNA finances have remained strong, and no Lion has had his or her employment adversely affected. Additionally, and notably, the University has celebrated record enrollment every consecutive term since Summer 2018, including this past Fall and Spring during the pandemic, as a direct result of online education.



**Dr. Ross Alexander**  
*Provost and Executive  
Vice President for Academic Affairs  
University of North Alabama*

At the outset of the pandemic, UNA was at the forefront of decision-making that set our institution apart and kept enrollment strong and growing. UNA was the first university in the state to announce that all of its summer courses would be offered 100 percent online. More than half of UNA's full-time faculty were already teaching at least one online course per year. The offices of Educational Technology Services and Information Technology Services worked quickly to equip the remaining members of our campus with the tools they needed to make a seamless transition to a fully online format.

Online education is flourishing at UNA and is one reason we have not only endured this current crisis better than most, but have actually thrived. During the last year, enrollment in online undergraduate and graduate programs have both increased more than 35 percent, and we look forward to continued growth as a leader in online education, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

**ROAR LIONS!**

# COLLEGE OF BUSINESS 2020 – 2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) accreditation was extended in Spring 2021 for another five years.
- The ABET Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC) reaffirmed accreditation in 2020 for the BBA in Computer Information Systems and B.S. in Computer Science; initial accreditation was received for the B.S. in Information Technology.
- COB online graduate enrollment increased over 30%.
- The MBA Program is once again the largest in the state of Alabama as reported by Birmingham Business Journal in December 2020, with 1,075 students.
- MAcc enrollments have grown to 130 students in the first 3 years of the program.
- Online BBA Flex enrollment has increased by 50%.
- Online Graduate Micro-credential programs were developed in:
  - Leadership
  - Health Care Management
  - Human Resource Management
  - Information Systems
  - Financial Analysis
  - Professional Selling
  - Global Business

**“I chose this program at UNA because of the affordability and flexibility of the online program’s 8-week courses. My favorite things so far include the flexibility the program allows, tuition payment plans, and the responsiveness of professors. I plan on becoming an operations manager.”**

**Alvina Pruitt**  
Master of Business Administration '21  
Heflin, AL



## BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (*Online BBA Flex*)

The University of North Alabama’s new Bachelor of Business Administration Flex (Online BBA Flex) degree is 100% online and designed to provide a faster, more economical student experience for working adults. BBA Flex provides adult learners the opportunity to develop their skills and complete their degrees while working full-time with this flexible, user-friendly program. The program allows students to move at their own stride through the eight-week, self-paced business courses or get more hands-on direction with 16-week, instructor-guided business courses – or a mixture of both.

## RANKINGS

- Ranked No. 9 Best Online Executive MBA in the nation for 2021 by Great Business Schools
- Ranked No. 12 Best Online EMBA Program for 2020 by College Consensus
- Ranked No. a12 for Best Online MBA in International Business Degree programs by Intelligent.com for 2021



**I chose to pursue my MAcc degree at UNA primarily because of the people and professors. I knew I would receive a quality education, while also staying connected to the people that made UNA my home while pursuing my undergraduate degree."**

**Lauren Nuwayhid**  
Master of Accountancy '21  
Madison, AL

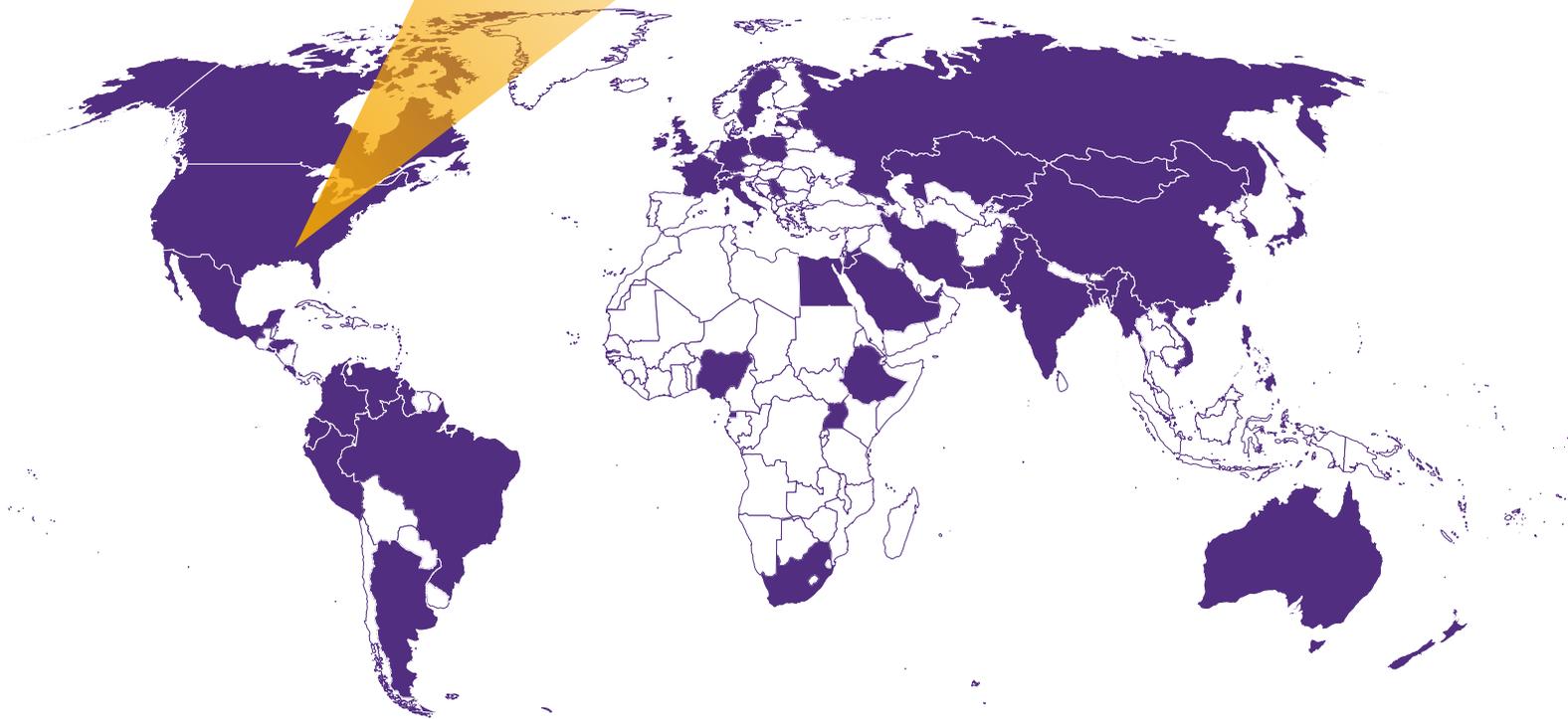
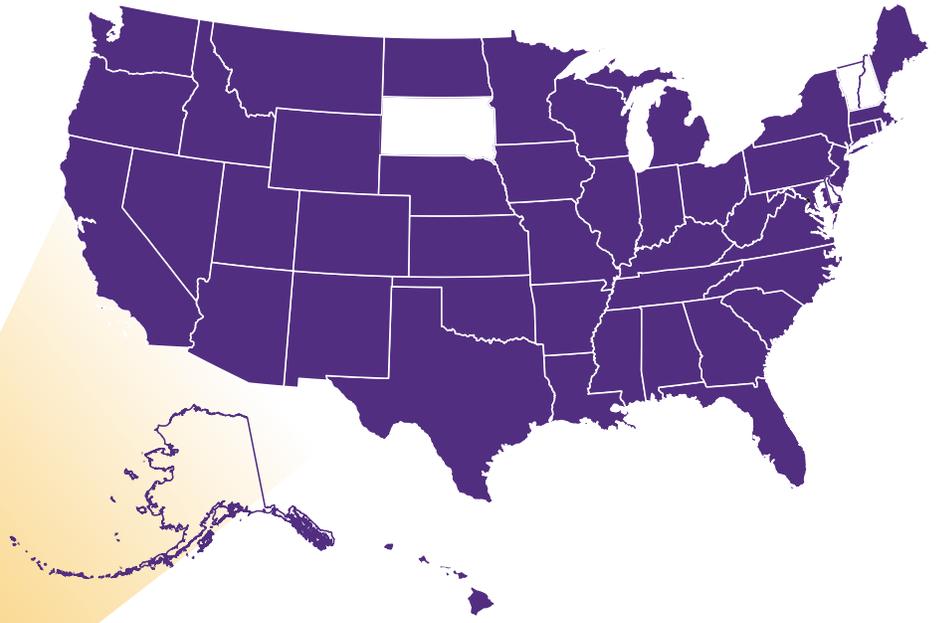
*Master of*  
**ACCOUNTANCY**  
(MAcc)

The MAcc is a 30-semester hour online graduate program designed to provide learners with the professional skills and business knowledge essential for success in contemporary professional accounting and business careers. Most states, including Alabama, require 150 semester hours of education before you can be licensed as a CPA. UNA's MAcc program provides the remaining courses required for the CPA exam for students who have the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in accounting. UNA's MAcc graduates boast some of the highest pass rates in the state of Alabama on the Certified Professional Accountancy (CPA) and Common Final Exams (CFE) exams.



# A UNIQUE YEAR FOR ONLINE LEARNING

The worldwide pandemic impacted everyone's daily lives in myriad ways and increased the need more than ever for quality online learning opportunities for students of all ages. As a leader in online learning, the University of North Alabama was uniquely equipped to transition all of its courses to an online environment, which allowed students to continue progress toward degree completion without interruption. UNA's enrollment continued to thrive, and the institution has set enrollment records for every consecutive term since Fall 2018.



*Our students represent 58 countries around the globe, including:*

Argentina	Brazil	Egypt	Guyana	Jordan	New Zealand	Saudi Arabia	United Arab Emirates
Armenia	Burma	El Salvador	Honduras	Kazakhstan	Nigeria	Serbia	United Kingdom
Australia	Canada	Equatorial Guinea	India	Korea, South	Pakistan	Singapore	Uzbekistan
Bahamas, The	China	Ethiopia	Iran	Kyrgyzstan	Peru	South Africa	Venezuela
Bahrain	Colombia	France	Ireland	Latvia	Philippines	Sweden	Vietnam
Bangladesh	Costa Rica	Germany	Italy	Lebanon	Poland	Switzerland	
Bermuda	Ecuador		Japan	Mauritius	Russia	Taiwan	
				Mexico	Saint Kitts and Nevis	Uganda	
				Mongolia			

# ANDERSON COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS 2020 – 2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- The college celebrated its 20th year of offering online nursing education.
- ACONHP online graduate programs grew more than 20 percent in enrollment and online undergraduate programs grew in enrollment by nearly 50 percent.
- With the assistance of dedicated faculty, all post-licensure nursing students were able to complete clinical hours during the pandemic.
- The first cohorts of the BS in Applied Health Sciences, Post-Master's Certificate (PMC) Program, and the MSN-Family Nurse Practitioner track graduated in Fall 2020.
- More than 50 RN-BSN/MSN students received funds to support their education through a Department of Labor Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC) grant.
- More than 40 MSN students participated in the Nurse-Faculty Loan Program (NFLP).
- The college hosted a virtual evaluation site visit with Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) for the purposes of accreditation. An announcement of reaffirmation is anticipated in Summer 2021.

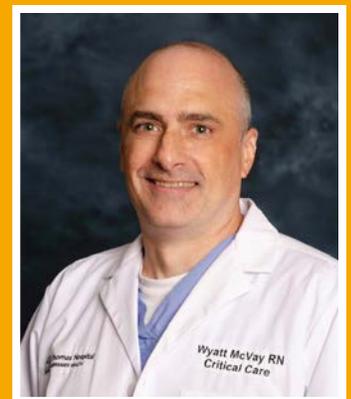
## MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING (MSN)

The ACONHP offers a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree with three tracks for registered nurses:

- Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Track
- Teaching/Learning Track
- Leadership Track

All tracks are offered online, asynchronous in nature, and in an eight-week term. Admission to the FNP track occurs each fall and spring; the other tracks offer admission five times per year.

"I had researched several programs, and I had received some great word-of-mouth recommendations regarding UNA. They offered the program in which I was interested and at a very reasonable cost. The flexibility of the program was very conducive to my professional schedule as well. I have really enjoyed the interactions with my classmates. Most classes have regular discussion assignments and group projects; even though I am in a Leadership track, many of the classes cross over the NP or educator track, so I've been able to interact and collaborate with fellow students from various clinical backgrounds. The discussions are great opportunities to share and discover new perspectives and improve professional communication skills."



**Wyatt McVay**  
Master of Science in  
Nursing (MSN) –  
Leadership Track '21  
Daphne, AL

"I chose to pursue my master's degree at UNA because I had an excellent experience for my undergraduate career at UNA where I obtained my bachelor's in nursing in May 2014. The staff are excellent, very knowledgeable, and always so helpful. They want to see us succeed, and that is a really valuable asset to find in your professors."

**Samantha Bowles**

MSN - Family Nurse Practitioner '21  
Florence, AL



# RECORD ONLINE ENROLLMENT

The University of North Alabama celebrated record enrollment during the past academic year, and much of those gains were the result of strong online enrollment.

From Fall 2019 to Fall 2020:

- Enrollment in online undergraduate programs increased 44 percent
- Enrollment in online graduate programs increased 35 percent
- Online undergraduate CHP increased 44 percent
- Online graduate CHP increased 52 percent

All classes in Summer 2020 were offered 100 percent online and summer session enrollment increased 20 percent in comparison to the previous year.

All classes in winter session 2020 - 2021 were offered 100 percent online, enrollment increased 34 percent compared to the previous year.

In response to COVID, during Summer 2020, the institution offered several online Early College classes at a significantly reduced rate, which resulted in a 2,000 percent increase in early college admissions.



**70%**

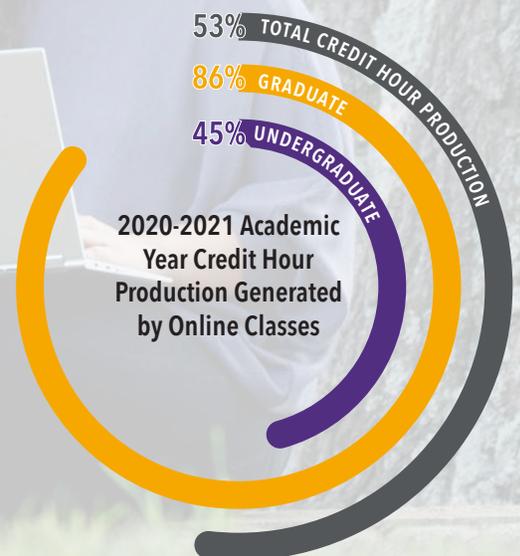
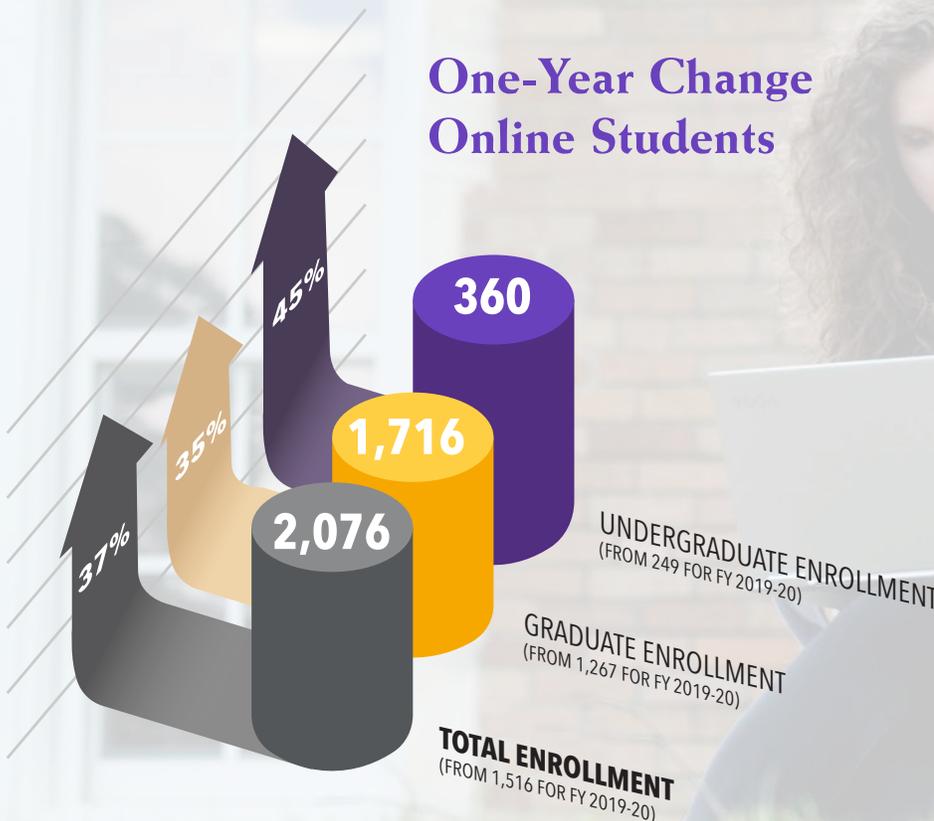
of full-time faculty members taught at least one online class



**99%**

of the 2020 - 2021 graduating class took at least one online course during their academic career

## One-Year Change Online Students



# INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT

The University of North Alabama worked tirelessly during the past year to find ways to support its students. Several initiatives were developed that focused specifically on supporting our growing population of online learners.

## SUMMER 2020 COURSES OFFERED 100 PERCENT ONLINE

The University of North Alabama was the first university in the state to announce that all of its summer courses would be offered 100 percent online. As a result of its quick response, summer session enrollment and credit hour production increased by more than 20 percent and set an enrollment record for summer term for the institution.

## EXPANDED EARLY COLLEGE AND DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSE OFFERINGS

As a result of the pandemic, many high school students were seeking additional learning opportunities. In response, the University of North Alabama significantly expanded its online offerings for high school students and signed learning agreements for dual enrollment with more than a dozen local high schools, which allowed students the opportunity to earn high school and college credit simultaneously.



"As an international student, I love that UNA is cost-efficient. I have loved studying about sustainability and am fascinated with the software programs we are learning to use. Upon graduating from UNA, I hope to pursue a job in the field of Environmental Sustainability."

**Ashlee Romer**  
Master of Science in  
Geospatial Science '20  
Bahamas

# ONLINE LEARNERS

## NEW START SCHOLARSHIP

In order to encourage students to take the leap and begin a new online degree program, in summer 2020, the University of North Alabama began offering a new scholarship opportunity. The New Start Scholarship provides the first course free to any new student who enrolls in at least two courses in an online degree program.

## ACCELERATED FORMATS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

In order to allow online learners the opportunity to accelerate their paths to graduation, all of the university's general education courses required as part of an online degree program are available in a variety of formats to allow adult learners to move more quickly through their bachelor's degree programs.

"I did four years of undergraduate at UNA, and I already knew that UNA's College of Business was very prestigious so I wanted to continue here at my alma mater...it just felt like home. I have some friends in the program, which is nice, but my favorite part about the program is there is no rush of how many classes you have to take because the Master's program is based on how hard you yourself work."

**Maurice Elmore**  
Master of Business Administration '23  
Phenix City, AL





"I chose UNA because this is where I received my Bachelor's in Social Work. I was honored to be accepted in the first graduate social work program at UNA. I am in the advanced standing program, which is shortened into two semesters. I will graduate in May 2021. My favorite thing so far is being able to interact with the new social work professors, who have been so helpful in making connections in the community. After I graduate, I plan to continue my practice in the child welfare system. My long-term goal is to practice therapeutic interventions with at-risk youth."

**Katie Flannagin**  
Master of Social Work '21  
Florence, AL

## *Master of Science in* **SOCIAL WORK** (MSW)

The University of North Alabama's new Master of Science in Social Work (MSW) is a fully online degree program that offers a one-year fast-track option for students who already have a bachelor's degree in social work (BSW). UNA's MSW allows students to gain the professional skills and hands-on experience they need to prepare for an advanced position in social work. The program prepares students to work in all social work settings, including micro, mezzo, and macro practice for advanced generalist social work. This high-quality program is in candidacy for accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Beginning in Spring 2022, the MSW program will offer admission to the program in both the fall and spring terms.



# COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES 2020 – 2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- COAS online graduate program enrollment increased by almost 60 percent, with online undergraduate programs increasing year-over-year by nearly 50 percent.
- Top 20 ranking in the United States by Intelligent.com for our Master's programs in History and in Family and Community Services.
- 65 students enrolled as part of the inaugural cohort for the online Master's degree in Social Work.
- Launched the new online Master of Science degree in Applied Manufacturing Engineering.
- Online micro-credential programs were developed in:
  - Public Relations for Nonprofits
  - Communication Studies for Nonprofits
  - Media Writing
  - Higher Education Administration with emphasis on Student Development
  - Higher Education Administration with emphasis on Organizational Support Structures
- Online certificate programs (undergraduate and post-baccalaureate) were developed in:
  - Remote Sensing
  - Culinary Arts Management – Food Management
- Developed an Accelerated Master's Program (AMP) in Criminal Justice.
- Developed 38 new courses through Educational Technology Services' (ETS) Quality Matters Program across 14 departments.
- In collaboration with ETS, conducted a series of workshops on effective online pedagogy.
- The College offers seven undergraduate (Criminal Justice, History, Hospitality and Events Management, Interdisciplinary Studies, Political Science, Sociology, and Spanish) and nine graduate (Applied Manufacturing Engineering, Criminal Justice, Family and Community Services, Geographic Information Science, History, Mathematics, Professional Studies, Social Work, and Writing) fully online degrees.

## *Master of Science in* APPLIED MANUFACTURING ENGINEERING

The University of North Alabama's new Master of Science in Applied Manufacturing Engineering is 100 percent online and allows students to gain the professional skills in high demand in the manufacturing industry. This fully online engineering degree program is specifically designed for working adults and offers a versatile curriculum based on cutting-edge research and industry demand, flexible admissions with consideration given to all STEM bachelor's degrees, and advising and mentoring support from the university's outstanding faculty.

**"I chose UNA because it was easily affordable and remotely accessible. I do not have to travel hours to and from an in-person class. My favorite part about the program is how the professors promote a coherent environment that is inclusive to everyone, regardless of work experience and time removed from undergrad."**

**Kiana Joseph**

Master of Science in Applied Manufacturing Engineering '22  
San Antonio, TX



# UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

The University of North Alabama is proud to partner with businesses, health systems, school districts, municipalities, professional associations, and other organizations to offer employees a tuition scholarship. By providing more affordable, flexible pathways for adult learners, it is our goal to increase accessibility to high quality learning experiences and meet evolving workforce demands.

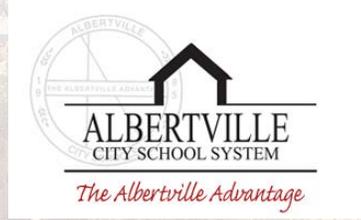
One of UNA's university partners is the Shoals Chamber of Commerce. UNA offers a tuition scholarship to all full-time employees of the Shoals Chamber of Commerce as well as all full-time employees of its members. The Shoals Chamber of Commerce President Caitlin Holland was proud to partner with UNA to bring this opportunity to Shoals Chamber employees and the employees of their membership. Holland, who has an undergraduate degree in Mass Communications as well as law degree, decided to take advantage of the benefit herself and is now pursuing an MBA at UNA.

A portrait of Caitlin Holland, a woman with shoulder-length reddish-brown hair and bangs, smiling warmly. She is wearing a dark blue top and gold hoop earrings. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting.

"I was born and raised in the Shoals and have always loved UNA and what it brings to our community. I began the MBA program this year and hope to finish in four years. I love the flexibility that an online program provides. I work a full-time job, and I am a mother of two small children. Without the ability to work at my own pace and my own time, it would be impossible for me to pursue this dream. I hope that earning my MBA will make me a more well-rounded professional and leader, and I cannot wait to be an alum of UNA."

**Caitlin Holland**  
Enrolled in UNA's Master of  
Business Administration  
Sheffield, AL

# OUR NEW PARTNERS



# COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES

## 2020 – 2021 ACHIEVEMENTS

- COEHS online graduate programs grew by more than 40 percent in enrollment.
- Five additional Leading Educator Advanced Degree (LEAD) Partners signed MOUs in Spring 2021, increasing the total number of P-12 learning agreements to 41 partner schools.
- With the assistance of dedicated faculty, all teacher-education candidates were able to complete their student-teaching internships during the pandemic.
- The online Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction (MACI) welcomed its first student cohort in Fall 2020.
- The first course in the online Instructional Technology and Design (ITD) Micro-credential was offered in Fall 2020.
- A new online Master of Science in Instructional Technology and Design (ITD) has been proposed. Pending approval from SACSCOC, this new degree is scheduled to launch in Fall 2021.



**"During my undergraduate internship, I was able to work in an Education and Training classroom and I fell in love with this pathway. As I began planning what I wanted to do after graduation, I started researching different programs that could fit my needs. I spoke with my advisor at UNA, and she mentioned that they were going to open this [Micro-credential in Instructional Technology and Design]. So far, I have learned a great deal about curriculum design from both the ITD and Education courses I have taken. I am currently finishing up a research course and a technology course, both of which have been very interesting! For the most part, my ITD courses have been project-based, which is also something that I like about the program!"**

**Kyla Slayton**

Microcredential in Instructional Technology and Design '22 • Cherokee, AL

## UNA'S MICROCREDENTIAL IN INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN

Micro-credentials are small programs that allow students to gain relevant skills that are needed in today's workforce. UNA's new Micro-credential in Instructional Technology and Design (ITD) is composed of four fully online courses that are designed to equip professionals with the skills necessary to create and implement successful learning experiences in digital platforms. The Micro-credential in ITD provides advanced skills and training for professional educators and helps them to stay at the leading edge of their fields. The credential is ideal for professional educators in K-12, higher education, corporate training, nonprofit education, and community educators. Beginning in Fall 2022, UNA will offer a fully online Master of Science in Instructional Technology and Design, and professionals who have achieved the Micro-credential in ITD will be able to stack those courses into this new graduate program.

“I chose UNA for this degree because it is an esteemed University. I feel very at home here and wouldn't want to be anywhere else. My favorite thing about this program would be the real-life opportunities we are able to take advantage of. The faculty really show us how our degree can be used in the real world. Upon graduating, my dream is to pursue a career in basketball, but there are so many opportunities within my degree. If you are thinking about grad school, do it!”

**Tanner McGill**

Master of Science in Sport and  
Recreation Management (MS) '21  
Summertown, TN



# ONLINE BUILDS A TRUSTED BRAND

Online learning has grown significantly during the last decade. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, prior to the pandemic 100 percent of all non-profit and for-profit, public and private universities in the United States were already offering online courses and programs. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the demand for online learning has increased exponentially. At UNA, in comparison to the previous academic year, the number of graduate students enrolled in an online program this year increased 35 percent, and the number of undergraduate students enrolled in an online program increased nearly 50 percent.

Despite offering online options, not all universities were able to endure the crisis. Unfortunately, more than 300 universities, many steeped in history, closed their doors as a result of the pandemic. This unique moment in history offers us an opportunity to reflect: what distinguished our brand in the crowded online marketplace and led so many new students to choose North Alabama Online?

During the last several years, UNA has invested strategically in the expansion of its online brand by focusing on three core principles that guide the development and delivery of all of its online courses and programs: reputability, affordability, and flexibility. By focusing on these core principles, North Alabama Online has developed a reputation for offering high-quality, flexible student learning experiences at an affordable price.



**Dr. Amber Paulk**  
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs  
Dean of Graduate and  
Online Education

## CORE PRINCIPLES

**REPUTABLE.** An online degree from North Alabama Online is as valuable and marketable as an on-campus degree, because our online courses and programs are taught by the same award-winning faculty who teach in our campus-based programs.

Many North Alabama Online programs boast premier accreditations, rankings, and honors. For example, the UNA Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions has been a leader in online nursing education for 20 years. The online RN-to-BSN and BSN-to-MSN Bridge programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, and the students regularly earn the highest pass rates in the state on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX).

**AFFORDABLE.** North Alabama Online makes education affordable and accessible for full-time professionals. Lower tuition costs, financial aid, employer reimbursement, learning agreements, and scholarship opportunities keep the cost of attendance at UNA significantly lower than our competitors. Students can earn a graduate degree with North Alabama Online for \$12,000 to \$17,850, which is one of the most competitive price-points nationwide for a master's degree.

**FLEXIBLE.** North Alabama Online is designed to provide a faster, more economical student experience for working adults. UNA offers a diverse catalog of bachelor's, master's, certificate, and micro-credential programs in eight-week formats, as well as a general education curriculum that is offered in a variety of compressed formats (e.g., three weeks, four weeks, and eight weeks). All of our online programs are designed to be taught asynchronously, which means that course content is available 24/7 and learners can work on assignments when it is most convenient for them.

## IN CONCLUSION

By focusing on these core principles, North Alabama Online has developed a trusted brand that is resonating with new audiences regionally, nationally, and internationally. It is extremely rewarding to see how our strategic, student-centered approach has increased our institutional profile and expanded our reach. As a proven leader in online education, North Alabama Online is committed to continuous innovation in online education so that we can increase the accessibility of a quality education and meet evolving workforce demands.



### A TRIBUTE TO THE GRADUATES OF 2020 - 2021

A heartfelt congratulations to the courageous 2020 – 2021 graduates from the University of North Alabama who overcame so many obstacles to complete their degrees.



Under Title IX and UNA Policy, UNA does not discriminate on the basis of sex in university education programs or activities, including admissions decisions. For internal inquiries about the application of Title IX or the University's nondiscrimination statement on the basis of sex, please contact: UNATitle IX Coordinator and Compliance Administrator, Ms. Kayleigh Baker, UNA Box 5023, 207 Guillot University Center, Florence, AL 35632, (256) 765-4223, kbaker5@una.edu. For external inquiries, please contact: Office for Civil Rights (OCR) U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-1100 Customer Service Hotline #: (800) 421-3481 Fax: (202) 453-6012 TDD#: (877) 521-2172 Email: OCR@ed.gov Web: ed.gov/ocr.

All information contained herein is correct as of May 2021.