

NEWS RELEASE

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603 West Park Street, Sheldon, Iowa 51201
Phone 712-324-5061 or toll free 1-800-352-4907, Ext. 105

Northwest Iowa Community College Ranks Number 12 Nationally for Premier National Online Associate Degree Program

BestColleges.com, a leading provider of higher education information and resources, published its annual ranking of [America's Best Online Colleges Offering Associates Degrees](#). Northwest Iowa Community College is ranked number 12 nationally.

“The Best Online Colleges ranking is intended to inform and guide prospective students toward institutions that provide a quality education and a meaningful learning experience at an affordable cost. As online higher education demand grows and more schools bring programs online, it’s important and necessary to hold institutions to a standard of excellence that students can depend upon when making their college choice,” said Stephanie Snider, General Manager of BestColleges.com.

Adds Snider: “Like so many institutions, higher education is undergoing significant disruption from a technological and access perspective. At BestColleges.com, we believe distance learning is a powerful educational opportunity for schools and students. It serves as a flexible option for students who cannot attend traditional campus classes, like those working full-time or with childcare restrictions. We want to give those individuals who might miss out on an opportunity to go back to school, or advance their career, the information needed to start their college search.”

Dr. Alethea Stubbe, NCC President, commented, “Our reputation for high-quality teaching and our outstanding student support services appeals to a broad scope of students. There is nothing more satisfying than empowering students to reach their goals through quality, accessible, and affordable programs available in a flexible environment wherever they live. At Northwest Iowa Community College –Your Success is Our Story.”

BestColleges.com expanded the requirements for eligible schools to reflect the increasing interest and opportunities students are seeking when it comes to online higher education. Each institution included in the rankings must now offer at least six associate degree programs online. Four-year colleges that offer associate degrees were also considered for the first time. Furthermore, affordability metrics, which utilize National Center for

Education Statistics (NCES) data to show a school's return on investment for potential students, played an expanded role this year.

BestColleges.com Methodology

The methodology behind our rankings is grounded in statistical data and a few consistently applied guiding principles. Our 2017 rankings reflect the most recent data compiled from IPEDS and the College Navigator, both of which are hosted by the National Center for Education Statistics. Our goal is to objectively assess relative quality based on academic outcomes, affordability, and the breadth and depth of online learning opportunities. The following criteria was used to make these assessments:

ACADEMIC QUALITY – 50% OF TOTAL SCORE

- Admissions Rate
- Full-Time Retention Rate
- Part-Time Retention Rate
- Graduation + Transfer Rate
- Number of associate degree graduates in the given program

AFFORDABILITY – 25% OF TOTAL SCORE

- Average Net Price
- Percentage of Enrolled Students Taking Federal Loans
- Retention Rate
- Loan Default Rate

ONLINE PROGRAMMING – 25% OF TOTAL SCORE

- Number of Online Programs Offered
- Percentage of Enrolled Students Taking Online Courses

2017 Best Online Colleges offering Associate Degrees:

1. Florida Institute of Technology
2. Southern New Hampshire University
3. Minnesota West Community and Technical College
4. Northcentral Technical College
5. University of Alaska Fairbanks
6. Thomas Edison State University
7. Foothill College
8. Excelsior College
9. Pennsylvania State University – World Campus
10. Liberty University
11. Wake Technical Community College
12. Northwest Iowa Community College

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13. Bismarck State College
14. Shoreline Community College
15. Western Wyoming Community College

View the complete ranking at: <http://www.bestcolleges.com/features/top-online-schools/>

NCC has been the recipient of several national awards over the past several years. In 2016, 2014, 2012 and 2011 NCC was recognized by the Aspen Institute as one of the Best 150 Community Colleges in the nation. 2016 - Best Two Year College in Iowa, *BestColleges.com*; 2015 - 3rd Best Online College in the U.S., *BestColleges.com*; 2015 - Top 45 Colleges in the Nation, *College Scorecard, U.S. Department of Education*.

Quick facts about NCC:

- 11,500+ College Alumni since 1966, of which over 7,614 live in Iowa
- 96% Placement Rate for College Alumni in 2015
- Average first-time wage of our 2014 graduates was \$16.49/hour
- 40+ Programs of study including career & transfer and applied technology
- NCC offered 486 scholarships totaling \$369,745 to our students last year.
- Have served 800,000 + students taught through the Continuing Education and Workforce & Economic Development Departments
- Spending by NCC and its students adds an estimated \$24.2 million in economic output to the region, 372 jobs and increased tax revenues of \$1.4 million

To find out more call 800-352-4907, email studentservices@nwicc.edu, or visit our website at www.nwicc.edu. At NCC – Your Success is Our Story!