

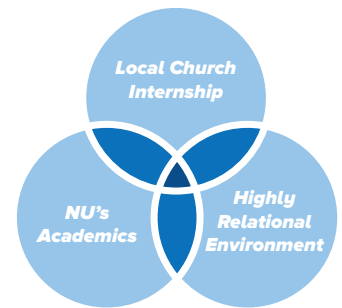
# THE NORTHWEST PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

## WHAT IS THE NORTHWEST PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM?

**NU Comes to You** – The Northwest Partnership Program (NPP) is a unique partnership between Northwest University and your church or organization. Through the NPP, Northwest University comes to you. NPP students earn college credits toward AA and BA degrees that can be completed at your NPP, at Northwest University's Kirkland campus, or even transferred to other public and private colleges or universities, all from home, while serving in their local church internship program (if they choose to).

**Academics, Internships, Relationships** – The NPP blends the best of what Northwest does (accredited academics) with what local churches and ministries do best (practical leadership training) in the environment of life-changing relationships found in local churches and nonprofit organizations.

**Northwest University** is a Christian university located in Kirkland, Washington. NU was founded in 1934 and has more than 20 years of experience in non-traditional education. Our goal is to provide a quality Christian education that prepares leaders for the new horizons of this ever-changing world.



## HOW GOOD CAN THE NPP BE?

Northwest offers the same degrees through the NPP as offered on the Kirkland campus, but with far more personal support. In fact, when a local NPP is running well, it may be the best learning environment Northwest has to offer.

**What Northwest Brings to the Partnership** – Northwest University brings accredited academics and a successful system to the partnership. Northwest University is accredited by the Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities. This is regional accreditation, the highest level of accreditation available. Regional accreditation has the following benefits:

- **Courses Transfer** – Courses taken through the NPP transfer to other public and private colleges and universities. Students can earn an AA through the NPP and finish at the college of their choice or through the NPP.
- **Federal Financial Aid** – The NPP is eligible for federal financial aid in the form of grants and loans.
- **No Asterisks** – The courses taken and degrees earned through the NPP are the same courses and degrees students earn on the Kirkland campus. There are no asterisks on NPP transcripts.
- **Transfer Students Welcome** – Our accreditation allows Northwest to welcome students with previous college experience from other accredited colleges and universities to finish their college degrees. We also consider previous credits from non-accredited institutions.



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**History** – The NPP started in the fall of 2014 with 100 students in 10 active NPP partners covering four states. Currently, the NPP has over 400 students in more than 75 local NPP partner programs covering over 20 states from Alaska to Florida. We also had 100 students graduate with an AA or BA degree this year. NPP students are finding success, and local NPP partners who start a program stick with the NPP and love it.

**Successful System** – The NPP is working for students, not just partners. The combination of a familiar academic structure, freedom of online classes, and personal support in the local NPP has proven to help formerly struggling students learn study skills and habits, personal leadership, and successful academic performance.

**Multiple Degrees** – NPP students can choose from multiple degrees to pursue as part of their local NPP.

- Associate in Arts
- Associate in Ministry Leadership
- Bachelor of Arts in Business Management
- Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies
- Bachelor of Arts in Ministry Leadership
- Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership
- Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Management
- Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
- Certificate in Ministry Leadership

**Free Practicum Credits** – Northwest University offers three free practicum credits per semester as students serve in their NPP's approved internship program. This means NPP students can get free credit for the learning attained in their local church internship or leadership development program. There is a limit to the amount of practicum credit available (varying by degree), and this is an optional benefit—not all NPP students choose to receive practicum credit.

**Low Cost** – As of fall 2020, the NPP costs \$316 per credit, plus a \$1,300 program fee per semester (to cover the costs of the coordinator and of hosting the program at the local partner's facility). There are no additional fees (application fee, technology fee, etc.), which means the NPP costs just over \$10,000 per year for a full-time student—one quarter the cost of the average traditional degree.



## WHAT MAKES THE NPP DIFFERENT?

**What Local Churches Bring to the Partnership** – The NPP is an online program with unique aspects of personal support provided by the local partner (church or other organization). This is what makes the NPP different from other online programs. The local partner provides hands-on training in skills for leadership and life, personal academic support, and an environment of life-changing relationships. There may be no better environment to teach leadership than serving in a local church. Factoring in the lifelong friendships built in the typical NPP, and it provides a life-changing experience.



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**The NPP Coordinator** – The NPP coordinator makes the NPP different from a simple online program. The NPP coordinator is provided by the partner and trained by Northwest to provide personal academic support and life coaching to every student. The coordinator provides personal support from the moment a student applies to Northwest through graduation. In the enrollment process, the coordinator helps the student submit transcripts, complete the FASFA, and prepare for the first day of class. Once class starts, the coordinator provides personal help with study skills, accountability, and using online study tools. Because of the all-inclusive nature of the program, the coordinator often becomes a personal mentor. While most coordinators serve as academic coaches, some NPPs have a separate person in that role.

**Student Cohorts** – Even though the NPP courses are online, students emphasize the importance and impact of having other students from their NPP in their courses, or even just going through the same program together. Plus, the time spent together in leadership training, serving in the church, and the relationships built with church staff cultivate life-changing relationships. Students say this is one of the greatest strengths of the NPP.

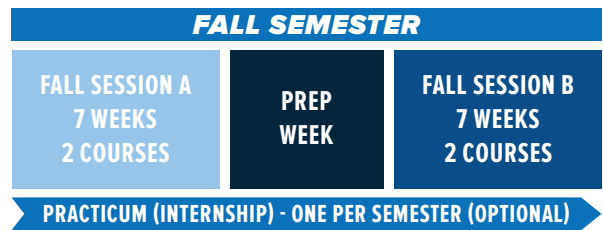


**More Than Just a (Free) Internship** – While developing ministry leadership skills in practicum is a primary part of the program (and a source of three free credits a semester), most NPPs offer much more. Students learn organizational leadership skills as they work in the church. There may be no better place to learn these skills hands-on than a local church. Many NPP partners offer other training such as life skills (adulting classes – how to budget, take care of your body, etc.), leadership forums with local leaders, and other practical training to help students prepare for life after college.

## MORE ON NPP ACADEMICS

**Academic Structure** – Students consistently say their favorite part of the program is the academic structure. This is one of the reasons many NPP students who struggled in high school or previous colleges are finding academic success in their NPP.

At Northwest University, the academic year is divided into two 15-week semesters. Fall semester typically starts just before Labor Day and ends mid-December. Spring semester runs from mid-January to mid-May every year.



The NPP further divides each semester into two seven-week sessions (session A and B). This means, while a full load is 15 credits, a full-time student will not take more than two three-credit courses at one time (plus three free practicum credits per semester).



**Weekly Schedule** – The second unique aspect of the NPP academic structure is the consistent weekly schedule. Almost every NPP course has the same weekly structure of assignments (the exceptions are upper division classes, offered after students are acclimated to the program). Here is the typical weekly assignment schedule:

- **Monday–Wednesday** Reading and Viewing Assignments
- **Wednesday** Reading and Viewing Practice Quiz
- **Thursday** Reading and Viewing Quiz and First Discussion Post
- **Saturday** Replies to Discussion Posts from Other Students
- **Sunday** Applied Learning Activity (ALA – usually an essay)
- **Week Seven** Summative Project

Students say this leads to success because they never have to change their study schedule from session to session. A new course means learning new material, not a new assignment schedule.

**Academic Support, Accountability, and Tools** – The academic coach provides both accountability and help using the online study tools. The accountability comes in the form of weekly study halls, grade and assignment checks, and personal problem solving. The online study tools include the online writing center (where students submit rough drafts for input), online tutoring in every subject, and the NU library and reference librarians for research help. Many of these tools are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## WHO IS THE PROGRAM FOR?

**Who Can Be an NPP Student?** – Although designed for student-interns in their 20s, the NPP is a benefit for many types of potential students.

- **Recent High School Grads and Gap-Year Students** – This is who the program was originally designed for and who the NPP serves best.
- **Four-Year Students** – The NPP was originally envisioned as serving primarily students pursuing a two-year AA degree, with a plan of finish their BA in a traditional, campus-based program. We have found that the reasons most students choose the NPP for their first two years still exist at year three and four, so we now have a growing number of students pursuing a four-year degree through their NPP.
- **FLEX Students (Adult Learners)** – When first launched, the NPP received overwhelming interest from adults with college experience but no degree. We now call them “FLEX students” because the NPP can flex with your family and your job while you pursue your degree. These FLEX students account for a large percentage of NPP students. FLEX students can earn practicum credits too.
- **People on Staff** – Many churches offer degrees through the NPP as a staff benefit. Like the typical FLEX student, many staff pastors are not in a position to put life on hold while they earn a degree. The NPP allows them to pursue their degree as they continue to do their jobs. Pastors can even earn practicum credit for achieving specific learning objectives as part of their current role.



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## OTHER BENEFITS

**Northwest Partnership Programs** provide benefits a traditional academic program cannot. NPPs provide these benefits at a key time in the lives of many students: when they are taking their first step out of the home, toward independent adulthood.

- **Academic Skills and Experiences** – One NPP student who earned an AA at an NPP program and then finished his BA at a Pac-12 university said his two years as an NPP student prepared him for a major university. He doesn't think he could have succeeded without the academic training, writing and study skills, and personal habits he learned at his NPP.
- **Roots** – The NPP provides a highly nurturing first step into adulthood for younger students. The environments at many colleges and universities typically do not foster good life decisions. A couple years as an NPP student provides the opportunity to establish roots in student faith, values, life goals, and personal habits before taking a full step into independent adulthood.
- **Real Responsibility and Experience** – The opportunity to serve in ministry leadership in a local church and influence the lives of others, combined with the coaching of church leaders, their NPP coordinator and other students, gives NPP students invaluable experience and confidence in their own leadership abilities.
- **Progress** – Most importantly, because all NU courses and degrees are regionally accredited, NPP students make real progress toward AA and BA degrees while in the program. They will leave the NPP with transferable credits toward their degree.

## WHAT NPP STUDENTS AND LEADERS ARE SAYING

- Four students [share](#) the impact of the NPP on their lives – One Church Modesto, CA
- Pictures of NPP students and programs from all over the country – [NPP Look and Feel](#)
- An NPP Coordinator [talks](#) about her role – Life Church Tacoma, WA
- [Vision for Internship Program](#) – Anthem School of Leadership at Living Water Olympia, WA

## COST

The NPP tuition is \$316 per credit plus a \$1,300 program fee per semester. The program fee goes to the NPP Partner to help with the cost of hosting a program, including hiring an on-site NPP coordinator. This makes the cost to a full-time student \$10,184 per year. Remember, students receive three free credits for their internship service and there are absolutely no additional fees from Northwest University.

## NEXT STEPS

- Talk to your NPP coordinator or director
- If your church does not have an NPP, email us at [npp@northwestu.edu](mailto:npp@northwestu.edu).
- Attend an NPP interest meeting or preview event at your church.
- Fill out an interest card at your church or at [northwestu.edu/partnership/students](http://northwestu.edu/partnership/students).
- Apply to the NPP at [northwestu.edu/partnership/apply](http://northwestu.edu/partnership/apply).
- Apply to your church's internship or leadership development program.



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