

# Naropa University Grows Enrollment to Over 1000 Students for First Time in 10 Years

*Bucking Nation-Wide Declines in Liberal Arts Enrollment, Naropa Breaks Barriers with New Online Offerings*

BOULDER, CO, UNITED STATES, October 3, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For the second year in a row, [Naropa University](https://www.naropa.edu/) has seen record enrollment numbers for their incoming fall class. With an increase of 24% since 2020, Naropa's total student body has reached 1,058—the largest in over a decade.



Photo by Crystal Street

Located in Boulder, CO, Naropa University was founded in 1974 by Tibetan Buddhist teacher and scholar, Chögyam Trungpa, Rinpoche who aimed to integrate Buddhist teachings and contemplative practices of mindfulness and compassion into traditional western academia. As Naropa approaches its 50th anniversary as an institution, it has grown to an accredited university with more than twenty degree programs and an alumnx network of over 7,000.

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*Ann Marie Klotz, PhD*

Naropa's fall census report reveals interesting data on the shifting demographics of their incoming students. In addition to increasing racial and ethnic diversity, Naropa has also seen a large increase in the number of adult learners—those who are coming back to education after many years away or looking for a career change later in life.

Vice President of Development, Enrollment, and Student

Success Ann Marie Klotz, PhD, said: “In a few short years, our students have gone from an average age of 29 to 34, and I am so thrilled at how many people are choosing to return to school (or start for the first time!) a little later in life. Their wisdom and experience are deeply valued, and their educational journey is enriched by all of the life experiences they bring with

them to the classroom.”

Many of these adult learners are able to attend Naropa due to an increase in online and hybrid programs offered. In addition to graduate degrees in counseling, yoga, creative writing, and divinity, Naropa now offers an [online Bachelor's in Psychology degree](#) and is set to launch an online Bachelor's in Art Therapy later this fall.

Master of Yoga Studies student Kendall Higgins says the option to take her coursework online has given her the opportunity to pursue her studies while maintaining a full-time job in marketing. “You have this time where you’re focusing on this degree, but you also have time to develop your other interests as well. I have found that’s where my magic lies—within that fusion. I really look forward to combining my business side with my academic and spiritual side and seeing where that takes me.”

While the online delivery format has offered increased accessibility to Naropa’s programs, students also report the school’s Buddhist-inspired teaching philosophy—called [contemplative education](#)—is a major draw for them in choosing Naropa. They see Naropa’s emphasis on mindfulness, compassion, and experiential learning as critical to their educational and personal journeys.

Klotz explains, “The past few years have shown us how important mental health and wellness truly is; and our mission continues to resonate deeply with healers, activists, and anyone else who seeks to transform themselves and our world. We have taken the lessons learned in the pandemic and made changes in the way we deliver curriculum therefore offering more options to people who want a Naropa education regardless of where they live.”

Whether they choose to study on-campus or online, Naropa students share a desire to break the mold of traditional higher education and view Naropa as a place where they can achieve that. Many report coming from a more traditional experience elsewhere that left them disheartened, and they see Naropa’s emphasis on cultivating the whole student as a more holistic and meaningful approach.

Assistant Director of Admissions, Peter Lenz, explains, “It is often time spent at another university or in the workforce that shows our students the value in what we do at Naropa. Students want a higher source of fulfillment out of their work, and they see Naropa as a place where they won’t have to sacrifice the spiritual identities or practices they developed later in life.”

As Naropa looks to the next 50 years in their journey as a contemplative university, they plan to continue to provide offerings that meet the needs of these unique students looking for something more from their education.

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