



# The University of Nebraska Report from the Board of Regents

November 2007

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*A report of the November 2007 meeting of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents.*

## **University enrollment numbers reveal more good news: increases in top scholars, freshmen, international students**

University of Nebraska's student enrollment increased to 47,062 this fall, a 2.7 percent increase over last year – exceeding the 1.5 percent accountability goal set in the NU Strategic Framework – and university officials shared even more good news about student numbers at the November Board of Regents meeting.

- This fall almost half of the state's top scholars – those who graduated in the top 25 percent of their class – chose to attend the University of Nebraska.
- Numbers of first-time freshmen increased by 5.1 percent over last year.
- Numbers of graduate students increased by 4.5 percent.
- More than 2,500 international students – from 122 countries – are attending NU campuses this year, an increase of 6.6 percent.
- The number of students of color at NU increased 4.8 percent.

“Congratulations to all the campuses for a great job,” NU President James B. Milliken said. “These are some of the most dramatic changes I’ve seen at the university. And these numbers speak to some of our basic goals: the need for an educated workforce, educated citizenry, and increasing the state’s college-going rate.”

## **Regents take close look at North Carolina research campuses**

Chuck Wilson, chair of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents, reported the Regents had a “significant and fruitful” trip to North Carolina this fall, visiting several university research campuses and a prominent research park.

“Our goal was to take a close look at how North Carolina leverages its significant state support of university research through the development of successful public-private development, and consequently expands the regional innovation-based economy.”

The Regents visited:

- Centennial Campus, North Carolina State University's 1,130-acre R&D campus, developed/managed by the university with campus, corporate and government R&D facilities, offices, classrooms/labs, incubation and private companies.
- Carolina North, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a 900-acre site now under development for a research and innovation campus, as well as a compact-mixed-use academic community.
- Research Triangle Park, one of the oldest, largest and most prominent high-tech research parks in the country.

Wilson said: “We wanted to examine and consider these kinds of bold, successful models for each of our own university's campuses, especially in light of the growing awareness of the serious role the University of Nebraska plays in research and economic development, and the impact research and development can have throughout our state.”

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## Two new NU facilities approved

The Board of Regents approved new facilities for campuses at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and the University of Nebraska Medical Center:

- A 17,200-square-foot Excavation Building at Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park near Royal, Nebraska. The Park is owned by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and operated by UNL as a branch of the University Nebraska State Museum used for paleontological research, informal science education and outreach. The new building – the Hubbard Family Foundation Rhino Barn – will allow for decades of additional excavation work and protection of the fragile, unique fossil resources housed there.
- A two-story, 28,000 square-foot Geriatric Center building at UNMC. The new structure is intended to better serve the needs of Nebraska’s aging population, and will house a multi-faceted program including academic programs and faculty practice clinics for geriatric medicine and psychiatry, expanded outpatient service, faculty offices, lab research space, and a community education and outreach center for older people.

## Regents recognize urgent need for Student Information System

The University of Nebraska Board of Regents have approved a budget deficit request that will allow the purchase of a new university-wide Student Information System (SIS), a system critical to the daily operation and institutional data of the university.

“We’re not talking about a simple little computer that sits on your desk, this is a complex system that impacts all our students, staff and faculty,” said Dr. David Crouse, who chairs the Steering Committee to study the university’s SIS.

In fact, every aspect of a student’s relationship with the university is supported by the system, he said, including key academic and student-related administrative functions such as recruitment, admissions, registration, billing, degree audit, housing and financial aid activities.

Officials from the current SIS vendor have warned they cannot support the university’s system beyond 2011, because it is quickly becoming technologically obsolete and more difficult and costly to maintain. The \$16 million budget deficit request will cover software, hardware and consulting costs needed immediately to begin the complex and lengthy replacement process.



Criss Library at UNO



Bennett Hall at UNMC



Sheldon Gallery at UNL

**Update on 605:** The University of Nebraska Regents received a November update on 13 renovation and repair projects funded through LB 605, which provides state matching funding for maintenance and improvement projects for facilities on the four NU campuses. The projects are generally on budget and on schedule.

- **Construction phase:** Criss Library, UNO; Bennett Hall, UNMC; and Sheldon Gallery, UNL
- **Design phase:** Physical Sciences, Keim Hall, Animal Science, UNL; Central Utilities, Bruner Hall, UNK; College of Dentistry, Poynter Hall, UNMC; and utility infrastructure, UNO
- **Planning phase:** Wittson Hall, Eppley Cancer Center, UNMC