

# NSU Institutional Profile for fall 2011

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## History

The South Dakota Legislature established Northern State University in 1901 in response to the need for an institution of higher education to serve northern South Dakota. NSU offers degrees at the associate, bachelor and master's level. NSU celebrated a century of leadership during the 2001-2002 school year.

According to U.S. News and World Report and for the fourth year in a row, NSU is regarded to be one of the best undergraduate institutions in the Midwest. Some of the criteria the magazine uses are: Percentage of full-time faculty, Student-faculty ratio, Percentage of classes with fewer than 20 students, Percentage of classes with 50 or more students, Quality of students admitted by the University, Freshman retention rate, and Reputation, which is based on a survey of other college presidents throughout the country.

Northern State University President James M. Smith announced a fall 2011 headcount of 3,580. The 2011 headcount figure is an increase of nearly 9% over 2010, which was the highest at the Aberdeen institution in the past forty years.

“We are delighted with the enrollment growth, again, for Northern State University. The new enrollment figure is a direct reflection of our work in strategic planning and targeted recruitment,” said Smith. “Of course, the recent publicity in US News & World Report, on both our low cost and high quality factors, have been very meaningful to these efforts. I look forward to continued work to make NSU the absolute best institution of its size and type in this region.”

Smith began as NSU President in June of 2009. The new NSU Strategic Plan was released to all faculty and staff on August 24, 2010.

## Governance

A nine-member Board of Regents composed of members appointed by the Governor for six-year terms, and one student regent appointed for a limited term provides governance for public higher education in South Dakota. The Board of Regents employs a full-time staff at its offices in Pierre. The Board of Regents executive director is Jack R. Warner.

## Academic Organization

NSU includes the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Education, the School of Fine Arts, the University College, the Graduate School, and the recently created State-Wide Center for E-Learning.

## Accreditation

Northern State University holds accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. In addition, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education accredits the School of Education. The National Association of Schools of Music accredits the NSU music program. The School of Business is also home to the Center of Excellence in International Business.

## Degree Programs

NSU offers the associate degree in eight areas of study and the bachelor degree in forty-two areas of study. The Master of Science in Education is offered in Guidance and Counseling, Leadership and Administration, Teaching and Learning, and E-Learning Design and Instruction. NSU also offers a Master of Science degree in E-Learning Technology and Administration.

## Faculty

Northern State University employs 90 full-time teaching faculty members. Over 78 percent have earned a doctorate or other appropriate terminal degree; 50 percent are tenured; 63 percent are male. The student/faculty ratio is approximately 20:1.

## **Students**

In the fall of 2011, Northern State University enrolled 3,580 students. 90 percent of those students were undergraduate students. Sixty-nine percent of the NSU students are from South Dakota with 10 percent of its students coming from North Dakota and Minnesota. Fourteen percent of NSU's students are minorities and 7 percent are international.

## **Student Activities**

A variety of successful student activities are available for NSU students including opportunities to participate in student government, student newspapers, choral groups, concert and marching band, small music ensembles and symphony, and drama and theater as well as intramural sports, student organizations and religious organizations. NSU's student-athletes successfully compete at the NCAA Division II level (The men's basketball team has been conference champions many times with one of these teams making it all the way to the NCAA Division II Elite 8 Championship Tournament -- The football team has been conference champions several times as well). For the Women's basketball team, head coach Curt Fredrickson ranks second on the active NCAA II women's basketball win list. NSU is a member of the best NCAA Division II athletic conferences in the nation, the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC Conference).

## **Campus and Facilities**

NSU proudly claims one of the most beautiful campuses in the Midwest. Trees shade its 72 acres and 21 buildings with flowers blooming in the spring, summer and fall. The Statewide Center for E-Learning implements the latest distance education technologies with 28 "smart" classrooms and 11 Dakota Digital Network classrooms. Distance Delivery technology is a core mission for all degree programs, especially all levels of teacher preparation. The Beulah Williams Library and Learning Resources Center houses group study rooms and multi-media stations as well as other instructional technologies. NSU's newest facility, the Technology Center, is located on the north side of MeWaldt-Jensen and houses the offices of NET Services personnel to include computer center, media services, instructional technology staff, the help desk and its personnel, College of Arts and Sciences faculty offices, computer labs, and classrooms. The location of the new facility makes the Technology Center a prominent focal point of the NSU campus and provides a most effective connection to the campus electrical and information technology infrastructure. The Johnson Fine Arts Center is the hub of the arts in Northeast South Dakota with its 1,000-seat Theater, recital halls, and newly renovated band and choir rehearsal halls. The Joseph H. Barnett Physical Education and Convocation Center is one of the finest athletic facilities in the state. The multi-use building features an 8,000-seat arena, classrooms, six-lane Olympic swimming pool, 160-meter track, wrestling and weight-lifting facilities, and basketball, tennis, volleyball, and handball/racquetball/squash courts. As a demonstration of NSU's commitment to serving its students, the campus also includes 29 computer labs, the NSU Child Care Center, six residence halls, including 2 all-suite halls, and the NSU Student Center and Student Recreation/Fitness Center for student activities. Every point on campus is within easy walking distance of downtown Aberdeen.

## **Finance**

State appropriations (30 percent) and tuition and fees (30 percent) are NSU's primary sources of support. Other major sources include federal funds (grants, awards, and stimulus), room and board and auxiliary services.

## **Location and Travel**

Aberdeen, a city of 30,000, is located in the northeast part of South Dakota. Aberdeen's regional airport is host to Delta Airlines. Delta has service to the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. US highways 12 and 281 give Aberdeen's citizens easy driving access to all parts of the state and region.

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