

# campus report

A NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS OF

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA STUDENTS

FALL 2004 • VOL. 21 • NO. 1

## University of Nebraska Parents Association

### Executive Officers 2004

**President**  
Sandy Wolfe  
Norfolk, NE

**President Elect**  
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Lincoln, NE

**Secretary**  
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Vermillion, SD

## Dates to Remember!!

**Parents Association  
Fall Meeting**  
October 30, 10:00 A.M.–Noon  
Visitors Center

**Fall Break**  
October 18–19

**Thanksgiving Vacation**  
November 24–28

**Final Exams**  
December 13–17

**Commencement**  
December 18

## LOOKING FORWARD

# State of the University

UNL Chancellor Harvey Perlman delivered his annual State of the University Address September 9 at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

Perlman dispensed with the traditional listing of previous year's achievements, referring listeners to a newly published special edition of the Scarlet, to instead focus on the future. Among items discussed with the 1,500 faculty, staff and students present were:

1. Announcement of a universitywide strategic planning initiative that will coincide with an upcoming accreditation self-study and review. Programs are to have strategic plans completed by March 15, 2005.
2. An outline of what he perceives as UNL's core values as a context in which planning decisions should be made. They are the uncompromising pursuit of excellence; the integration of teaching, research and service; the need to support, engage, and challenge every member of the university community; continuous improvement measured by performance indicators and a meaningful process of self-assessment and self-improvement; and diversity.
3. Five campuswide initiatives and challenges. They are:
  - a. Enrollment. He emphasized the need to increase our enrollments.
  - b. Teaching and Learning: He will dedicate as much as \$625,000 to efforts to improve undergraduate teaching. He will ask the NU Foundation to endow two faculty positions dedicated to the scholarship of teaching.
  - c. Fiscal Challenges. He stated the need to increase research space and the need of the State to improve funding support for salaries and facilities.
  - d. Collaboration. He announced a faculty task force will be developed to study ways to increase cross-disciplinary collaboration.
  - e. Outreach: Economic enhancement, rural revitalization and water resources research were mentioned as critical to the state.
  - f. Communications. He encouraged programs to work towards a unified voice and message.

Full text of the 2004 State of the University Address is on the Web: [www.unl.edu/pr/chancellor/sua2004/](http://www.unl.edu/pr/chancellor/sua2004/)

## U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT'S ANNUAL AMERICA'S BEST COLLEGES

# UNL in top 50 universities

UNL made U.S. News and World Report's annual America's Best Colleges rankings' Top 50 list for public national universities.

Showing improvement in several key categories, UNL was listed as tied with seven other universities at 98th place overall in the magazine's "Best National Universities" list. Among public national universities, UNL is tied with five other universities at 46th, placing it in the "Top 50 Public National Universities." Last year, UNL was 107th overall and 52nd among the public universities.

In each category, data on up to 15 indicators of academic quality are gathered from each school and tabulated, according to the magazine's methodology. Schools are ranked within categories by their total weighted score. UNL's total weighted score was 43.

Among the key data, UNL's graduation rate improved to 59 percent, from 54 percent the year before. UNL's acceptance rate decreased to 76 percent from 78 percent the year before (low acceptance rates improve rankings). UNL reported losing ground slightly in other areas compared to previous years: in class size under 20 (32 percent vs. 36 percent); class size over 50 (14 percent vs. 13 percent) and freshmen in top 10 percent



## UNL Parents Association

2004 Executive Committee  
Approved October 18, 2003

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## campus report

*Campus Report* is a publication of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Parents Association.

Advertising in *Campus Report* is subject to approval of the editor.

Rates and schedules available from:

University of Nebraska–Lincoln  
Parents Association  
PO Box 81688, Lincoln, NE 68501

## STUDENT ENROLLMENT

# 2004 Freshman Class is Number One!

Official new student enrollment figures have not yet been released but it appears the University of Nebraska–Lincoln has enrolled its most talented freshman class in the school's 135 year history based on high school class ranks and test score averages. This is the third straight

freshman class to distinguish itself in this way. In addition, this year's class is also the most diverse in school history. The class features more out-of-state and ethnic minority students than ever before. All 50 states and a number of foreign countries are represented on campus.

## REAL NEBRASKA ONLINE

# REAL Nebraska Website Shows Real Student Experience

The Office of Admissions, working with the Office of University Communications, will launch Season Two of "REAL Nebraska" this fall. REAL Nebraska was launched in 2003 as a unique way to show prospective students what life is really like on campus through the eyes (and video camera lenses) of current students.

The project was an instant success — garnering national news coverage from CNN Headline News and USA Today. Six students

— three in the fall semester and three in the spring — chronicled their 2003–04 UNL experience through video, weblogs and email responses to users with questions. The new season will feature student groups on campus.

You can visit REAL Nebraska online at <http://realnebraska.unl.edu>



## FIVE \$1,000 AWARDS

# Undergraduate Studies Essay Contest

The Office of Undergraduate Studies has announced an essay contest for UNL undergraduate students. The 'Engage. Connect. Balance.' contest, sponsored by Subway, will award \$1,000 each to authors of the top five essays, as judged by members of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Chancellor's Leadership Class.

The student's essay entry would explain in 250 words or fewer how they have been helped by a UNL professor to engage, connect and balance in order to better succeed in school. The deadline for essay entries is Saturday, October 2. For more information, including an online entry form, go to [engage.unl.edu](http://engage.unl.edu).

**Encourage your student to enter.**

## UNL in top 50 universities

*(continued from page 1)*

of their high school class (25 percent vs. 26 percent). The improvements in key data upped UNL's overall score from 42 to 43 this year. Other categories remained nearly the same as last year, including the freshman retention rate, at 81 percent.

"While I remain skeptical about the accuracy and fairness of these rankings, I know many families use this survey in their assessment

of universities, and I am pleased that we are among the 50 top public universities, and more importantly, moving upward," UNL Chancellor Harvey Perlman said.

In other U.S. News listings, as in last year's edition, UNL's biological systems engineering program is listed as a top program specialty, and in "Best Undergraduate Business Programs," UNL is listed 68th in a pool of 120.

# Student Involvement Makes it Easy

UNL students will hear three key words multiple times throughout the 2004-2005 academic year: Engage, Connect, and Balance. The words are based on extensive research both nationally and at UNL about student success, and they're meant to provide students with proven strategies that help students complete their degrees and make the most of their time at the university.

Although many departments at UNL can help students put those words into action, the university's Student Involvement (SI) office is a key resource for students looking to connect their interests and abilities throughout the UNL community. Their mission states, "As an essential partner in the educational experience, Student Involvement provides co-curricular opportunities that complete the academic process, foster student development and prepare students for life beyond the university." More than a traditional Student Activities office, Student Involvement serves as a central location for co-curricular activities on campus, including all recognized student organizations, leadership development, volunteer/service learning, gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender programs and services, and the Women's Center.

Three grant projects also make their home in the department: the NU Directions campus-community coalition, a group of UNL students, parents, faculty, and community leaders who work to reduce high-risk drinking on campus, the UNL Task Force to End Violence Against Women on Campus, and the Midwest Consortium for Service Learning in Higher Education, a collection of colleges and universities across Nebraska and South Dakota that promotes and coordinates service learning opportunities to faculty members at member institutions.

Student Involvement utilizes web technology to help students find new and different ways to make connections. E-involvement is a database of the 400 recognized student organizations (RSO) on campus that students can search by their interests. The web site provides information and contacts for the club, but also allows students to submit their own e-mail to receive information about upcoming meetings and events. Students interested in short-term volunteering or long-term service learning projects can access an on-line database of volunteer opportunities across the community. Community Challenge, SI's short-term volunteer program, allows students to discover opportunities, sign-up, get reminders, and even track their community service hours for use in classes or resumes.

Students that are already involved in an RSO can utilize a wide range of services provided by the Student Organization & Activity Resources (SOAR), including instruction on how to plan, register, and publicize a club event, ways to increase membership, and applying for office space in the Nebraska Unions. Most of these resources are on-line as well and available to students at a click of a button. Offices located in both the City and East campus Unions also have "creation stations" where students can make publicity posters, and an Event Planning and Registration desk where students can arrange for free Pepsi products, make reservations for meeting space, and seek authorization from university authorities for upcoming events.

Students wishing to explore and develop their leadership skills can do so through the Emerging Leaders Class, or the six-day LeaderShape retreat. Both opportunities allow students to connect to leaders on campus and in the community while exploring their own potential.

The Women's Center, located on the third floor of the city union, has a variety of programs, workshops, discussion groups and resources for

both men and women that help students explore gender and relationship issues. Students interested in women's or men's issues can also volunteer at the Center throughout the year. SI works to ensure that all students have equal access to programs and services, and that all students are given opportunities to succeed at UNL.

Students living on East Campus also can enjoy a variety of involvement opportunities through SI's East Campus office. While maintaining all of the programs and services of Student Involvement, the East Campus SI office also creates programs that are of special interest to students living and studying in Agricultural Sciences and other academic offering specific to the area.

Research indicates that students who become involved in co-curricular activities have a greater likelihood of enjoying their college experience and completing their degree than those who simply attend class. Many students claim that they manage their schedules and class work better when they are involved in other activities. Students who are involved also have more experience to offer potential employers and graduate programs. To help students make the important next step after college, Student Involvement offers an on-line portfolio program, where students can digitally record and store samples of their class and co-curricular work experience, making it available to employers and graduate admissions programs.

But there are other important reasons for college students to become involved, such as the opportunities that co-curricular activity provides in developing real-life applications to the concepts learned in the classroom and developing an understanding of the role each of us play as citizens of the community. Many students who become involved have a keener sense about the ways in which they'd like to apply their knowledge in a career, or have developed connections throughout the campus and Lincoln community that they can utilize for years to come.

Parents play a critical role in helping students balance their academic work with co-curricular involvement by talking about ways to explore interests and talents through student organizations or co-curricular activities. Remind your son or daughter about the opportunities that exist, and encourage them to visit the Student Involvement website ([www.unl.edu/involved](http://www.unl.edu/involved)) or stop by the offices at 200 Nebraska Union or 300 East Campus Union if they have questions or need to explore options.

"Not having enough time" is one of the most common reasons that students give when asked why they are not involved, and a parent can also help by talking through schedule demands and priorities. Many students discover that the investment in an organization or activity actually saves them time, as they meet other students who offer new resources, or as they develop more structure within their schedule to accommodate the activity. Students with challenging academic schedules are encouraged regularly to set their own pace of involvement, allowing others to play leadership roles during semesters where class demands are especially high, or to use involvement activities as a way to provide balance and a constructive break from the books.

After reviewing all the research on college student success, scholars Kuh, Palmer and Kish provided the ultimate summary: "One thing about the college student experience is certain: Students learn more when they are engaged at reasonably high levels in a variety of educationally purposeful activities, inside and outside the classroom, over an extended period of time." Is your UNL student enjoying those benefits?

# Engage, Connect, Balance

Dear Parents,

In Fall 2003, a special task force was appointed by the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs to review and assess the effectiveness of first-year student orientation programs and courses at UNL (a copy of the full report, *Everyone a Learner, Everyone a Teacher: Report from the Transitions to University Task Force*, is available to view or download at: <<http://www.unl.edu/ous/tutf.pdf>>). As part of their information gathering, **the Transitions to University Task Force** held a series of focus groups with over 150 undergraduate students across campus to find out about the students' UNL academic and social experiences. One theme that emerged from the student focus groups was the need for the institution to provide clear and consistent messages to students about expectations and elements for success at the university. As a result, in the summer of 2004, a campus-wide campaign was established to provide entering UNL first-year and transfer students a clear and simple three-word message about responsibilities and expectations for success.

The three words — **Engage, Connect and Balance** — have been integrated into New Student Enrollment presentations and materials. Academic, student support and services units have also adapted these words as a unifying message.

- to Engage means to involve oneself intellectually in a course subject matter through class attendance, active participation in class, making the extra effort to go beyond course requirements, and attending university programs designed to expand one's knowledge base, such as the EN Thompson Forum Series on World Issues.
- to Connect is to become an active participant in the UNL community. Students are encouraged to ask questions in class, develop a relationship with a professor or staff member, and become an active member of one of over 400 student organizations at UNL.
- to Balance refers to managing one's lifestyle so that physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs are met. Setting priorities and time management are essential elements of Balance.

The New Student Enrollment (NSE) Leaders will also use these three words in their weekly follow-up communications with our new students and will invite their NSE students to the Mid-semester Checkpoint, to be held in late September. The Mid-semester Checkpoint is another recommendation of the Transitions to University Task Force. Student participants in last Fall's focus groups identified a need for a review of their academic responsibilities and program requirements about five to six weeks after they arrive on campus for their first semester. Academic advisors from the undergraduate colleges will attend, as well as representatives from student support services to answer questions and assist students with their needs.

Our goal is for all our UNL students to have a successful experience, graduate with a degree from UNL and become proud alum! The UNL administration, under the leadership of Chancellor Harvey Perlman, has made significant changes and investments in enhancing the quality and scope of the undergraduate experience at UNL so that our students may successfully **Engage, Connect, and Balance!** I look forward to seeing many of you at Parents' Weekend, September 24 -26! Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Rita Kean  
Dean of Undergraduate Studies  
<[rkean1@unl.edu](mailto:rkean1@unl.edu)>



# OASIS

Welcome to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln! We are pleased that you and your student have selected UNL as your educational institution of choice.

OASIS (Office of Academic Support and Intercultural Services) is here to help your student graduate. We offer tutoring; study skills workshops (how to study, how to take tests, how to avoid test anxiety and stress); educational and entertaining social events (Coffee House events-opportunities to showcase talents or just sit back and listen and enjoy friends); Movie Nights with visits from professors leading movie discussions on some of the latest and greatest in films; ethnic celebrations and more.

OASIS is a part of Undergraduate Studies, and it is our desire and intent to do everything we can to connect with your student, answer any questions, engage them in problem solving, and help them balance the rigor of their social lives for success while at this University. We serve the entire University while placing an emphasis on addressing the specific needs of students of color on our campus.

We encourage you and your student to visit the Culture Center's study lounge and computer lab. While you're here why not stop in and chat with our staff, check out our meeting facilities, and obtain a calendar of events for the coming school year (or visit us [http://www.unl.edu/oasis\\_culturecenter](http://www.unl.edu/oasis_culturecenter)).

We're here to serve you! Let us know how we can help.

OASIS (Office of Academic Support and Intercultural Services)

333 North 14<sup>th</sup> St.

Lincoln, NE 68588-0450

(402) 472-5500

[http://www.unl.edu/oasis\\_culture\\_center](http://www.unl.edu/oasis_culture_center)

# Free Membership

The Nebraska Alumni Association is unveiling a new program aimed to help students build their connection to the University. Through the Student Alumni Association, students are provided with benefits and services that enhance their collegiate experience while they're on campus and prepare them for success when they graduate.

Membership in the Student Alumni Association is free and open to all enrolled students. Some of the benefits include:

- Access to more than a dozen SAA programs such as Home Husker Huddles, the Alumni Advisory Network (a career mentoring program), and the Student Enhancement Fund
- Monthly e-newsletter filled with information about upcoming events, programs, and tidbits about the university's history and traditions
- Discounts at local merchants
- Grand giveaways each month
- SAA t-shirt and other gifts and goodies distributed weekly on "Freebie Fridays"

"Students are alumni-in-residence, so it only makes sense to get them involved with the alumni association now," said Sarah Johnson, a senior advertising major from Omaha and SAA president. "Our ultimate goal is to provide students with opportunities to network with alumni, develop an appreciation for our university, and enhance their student experience in hopes that they will stay involved for years to come."

There is no commitment required from the membership, but students who do wish to get more involved have many volunteer opportunities. Additionally, students can apply for the board of directors, a 35-member group of students from all walks of campus life who coordinate and staff the programs, and assist with alumni association events.

"It's a great organization," said SAA secretary McKinsey Peterson, a senior biology major from Milaca, Minnesota. "Whether students are looking for involvement opportunities or just want to take advantage of the benefits, they can't lose with SAA."

To learn more and/or join the Student Alumni Association, visit [www.saa.huskeralum.com](http://www.saa.huskeralum.com).



# BIG RED ROADSHOW

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

2005 Big Red Roadshow  
February 13 — Quest Center — Omaha  
March 20 — Mitchell Events Center — Scottsbluff



# N

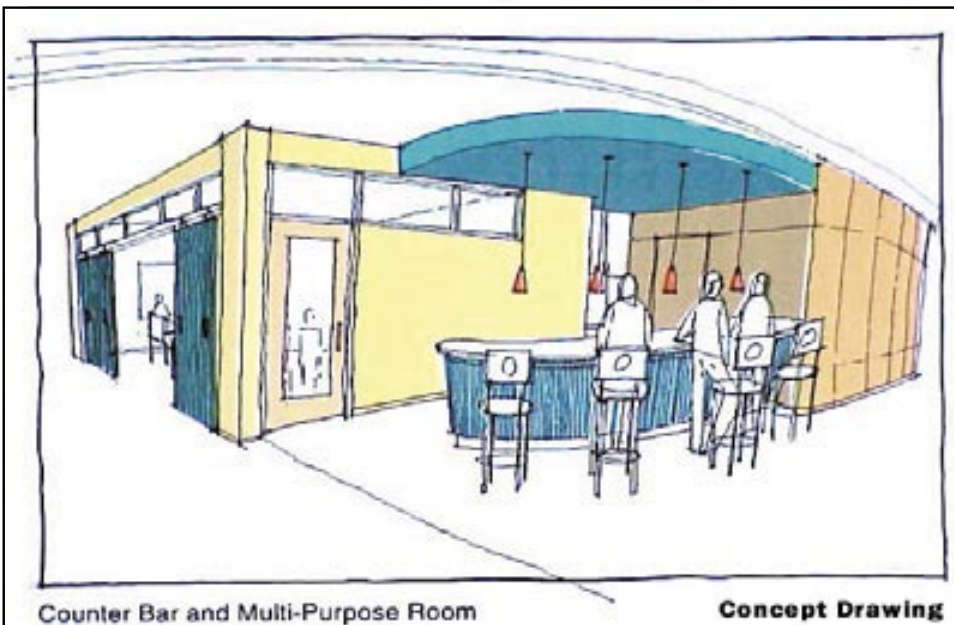
University Housing is proud to announce major renovations and construction in 2004 and 2005.

For details, check out [www.unl.edu/housing/new](http://www.unl.edu/housing/new)



**B**uilt in the 1950's, Selleck Quadrangle has long been popular because of its central location on campus. Now the old favorite is receiving a major facelift and a bold new cosmopolitan look.

**Selleck expanded and renovated dining facility to open August 2004**



**I**n its early days in the 1960s, Harper was one of the new high-rise residence halls which could easily accommodate the growing number of UNL students. Today it's taking on a modern facade once again. University Housing is proud to announce many innovative changes in the HSS complex.

**Harper Hall will have a brand new look August 2004**

# N

University Housing is pleased to offer apartment-style units on campus . . .

**Independent living and a great location.**



## **Husker Courtyards - open August 2004**

UNL Housing now offers the latest in campus living. These two new complexes offer luxury amenities AND the ease of campus life, including . . .

- Fully furnished • All utilities are paid • Full kitchen • Private bathrooms and bedrooms
- Free cable TV (channels 2-72) • Free high-speed broadband internet access • Free phone and voice mail • Elevators • Convenience store & Clubhouse (Husker Village)



## **Husker Village - open August 2005**

**For details, check out [www.unl.edu/housing/new](http://www.unl.edu/housing/new)**