

## Northeastern State University Demographics (Fall 2006)

Northeastern State University has a history dating back to 1846 when the Cherokee National Council authorized establishment of a National Male Seminary and National Female Seminary to fulfill the stipulation in the Treaty of 1835 between the United States and the Cherokee Nation that public and higher education be provided for the Cherokees. This makes Northeastern State University the second oldest institution of higher education west of the Mississippi. NSU was changed to a state institution in 1909, and still has a proud heritage of serving the Native American people. According to the *Winds of Change Magazine, 11<sup>th</sup> Annual College Guide for American Indians*, NSU ranks highest in the following categories:

- Largest number of baccalaureate degrees conferred to Native Americans
- Largest number of full-time Native American undergraduates
- Highest percentage of full-time Native American undergraduates
- NSU ranks second highest in the percentage of baccalaureate degrees conferred to Native Americans

NSU has also graduated over ½ of the Native American Optometric Physicians in the United States. Students from at least twenty-nine different American Indian tribes are enrolled at NSU for Fall 2006. This number is low, as students with dual tribal membership are only given the opportunity to select one tribal affiliation and some native American tribes are not specifically identified.

The main campus of Northeastern State University is located at Tahlequah, Oklahoma, in the heart of what is known in the state as “Green Country” and the capitol of the Cherokee Nation. Nestled in the Ozark Mountains, famous for their beauty and gentle rolling hills, and surrounded by lakes and rivers, the area offers a wide variety of outdoor activities including

backpacking, camping, horseback riding, fishing, boating, scuba diving, water skiing and many others.

Northeastern State University has two branch campuses located in Muskogee, Oklahoma and Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. The NSU-Muskogee branch was opened in April 1993 following the construction of a 27,700 square foot state-of-the-art facility that was funded by a sales tax voted on and approved by the citizen of the city of Muskogee. The 23-acre campus now includes a second building, the Mike Synar Building, which was partially funded with State Capital Bonds and Section 13 Offset funding. This facility opened in the Fall of 2002. Courses for five undergraduate, five graduate, and five certificate programs are offered at the Muskogee branch. Following an initial enrollment of around 900 students, enrollment at the NSU-Muskogee branch has stabilized over the last four years from 719 students in Fall 2001 to 640 in 2002, 709 in 2003, 784 in 2004 and 666 students in Fall 2005.

The NSU-Broken Arrow campus was constructed following legislation in 1998 that allowed NSU to create a separate branch campus in the Tulsa metropolitan area. For many years, NSU provided undergraduate and graduate classes and programs in the Tulsa area through a consortium of four universities, known as the University Center at Tulsa. On December 8, 1998, the citizens of Broken Arrow approved a one-half percent sales tax increase and authorized the use of the city's land for a new college campus. The \$16 million project began in May 2000 with three buildings being constructed. Classes began on the new NSU-Broken Arrow campus in August, 2001. Phase II of the NSU-Broken Arrow campus construction has just recently begun. As part of the Vision 2025 package passed by the voters in Tulsa county, NSU-Broken Arrow will receive \$26 million to add nearly 300,000 square feet of space which will double the

size of the current campus. Construction of science, library and classroom facilities began in Spring 2005 with completion anticipated during the 2006-2007 school year.

Enrollment on the NSU-Broken Arrow campus has grown exponentially. Since opening in August 2001 and serving 1,050 students it has grown to 2,765 students for Fall 2005. Over 1,800 students have received degrees from NSU-Broken Arrow over the last four-years. NSU-Broken Arrow offers 45 degree programs including 12 master's degree programs and 3 certification programs.

While enrollments on the NSU-Broken Arrow campus have shown tremendous growth, the positive aspect is that enrollment on the NSU home campus in Tahlequah has also shown growth over that same time period. The Tahlequah campus enrolled 6,904 students in Fall 2001 and has increased to 7,300 students for Fall 2005. The unprecedented growth includes a total headcount enrollment of 9,702, full-time equivalent enrollment of 7,698, first-time freshman enrollment of 1,102 and student credit hours exceeding 113,094.

Opening enrollment statistics published by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shows that Northeastern State University is the fastest growing four-year public university in the state of Oklahoma over the past six years. This data excludes one four-year institution that was converted from a two-year to four-year institution during this time frame. Northeastern State University has shown a 17.7 percent increase in headcount enrollment over the past six years with other four-year institutions in the state experiencing between -21.2 to 17 percent decreases/increases. The chart on the following page demonstrates this data.

**Enrollment Changes for Oklahoma 4-Year Institutions\***

**Fall 1999- 2004**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>First-time Freshmen</b>
OU	23,837/27,280 14.4%	18,336/21,691 18.3%	3,233/3,614 11.8%
OSU	20,822/23,330 12%	17,176/19,353 12.7%	2,954/3,264 10.5%
UCO	14,247/15,574 9.3%	10,500/11,923 13.5%	1,979/2,148 8.5%
ECU	4,004/4,691 17%	3,242/3,682 13.6%	581/653 12.4%
NWOSU	1,913/2,200 15%	1,472/1,797 22%	320/306 -4.4%
SEOSU	3,751/4,070 8.5%	2,972/3,263 9.8%	571/630 8.4%
SWOSU	4,903/5,426 10.7%	4,216/4,691 11.3%	901/1,067 18.4%
Cameron	5,092/5,779 13.5%	3,506/4,127 17.7%	906/925 2.1%
Langston	3,926/3,092 -21.2%	2,988/2,509 -16%	508/568 11.8%
Panhandle	1,139/1,277 12.1%	1,020/1,143 12%	220/195 -11.4%
USAO	1,393/1,419 1.9%	1,026/1,062 3.5%	288/262 -9%
NSU	8,121/9,562 17.7%	6,250/7,760 24%	905/1,258 39%

\*Does not include RSU which changed from 2-year to 4-year during this time frame

Northeastern State University is one of four major employers in the Tahlequah area. The nearly 10,000 students enrolled at NSU plus over 1700 full-time and part-time employees provide a significant economic impact on the community and state. A study conducted in 1999 by Dr. Thomas Wier, NSU economics faculty member, showed that for every \$1 invested in NSU by the state of Oklahoma, a return of \$16 was realized. This benefit/cost ratio of 16 to 1 is obviously a very good return on the state's investment. The total local, regional and state economic impact of NSU in 1999 was \$474,378,989. Over one half of this amount, \$257,871,624 was being pumped into the local economy in the Tahlequah community. In the Tulsa/Broken Arrow area, NSU's impact reached just over \$128 million. With the growth of NSU operations in Broken Arrow, it is a certainty that these numbers have increased dramatically. NSU had another \$88,235,027 impact on Muskogee and the greater Oklahoma area. The initial investment by the state of Oklahoma of nearly \$30 million in Northeastern State University in 1999 showed a nearly one-half billion dollars return. NSU along with the other three major employers, the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, Tahlequah City Hospital and W. W. Hastings Indian Hospital, provide significant economic assets to the community and the entire northeastern part of Oklahoma.

For Fall 2005, the NSU student demographic profile indicated a total enrollment of 9,702 students with 89.0 percent undergraduates and 11.0% graduate and professional students. The demographic data showed the following ethnic breakdown: Caucasian 61.2%; Black 5.8%; Native American 28.0%; Asian 0.7%; Hispanic 1.5%, and International 2.6%. 75.5% of our undergraduate students attend full-time compared to only 34.4% of graduate students attending full-time. Female students make up almost 62 percent of the student population with an average

female age of 26 and average male age of 25. Sixty-three percent of our students are age 25 and under.

Of particular note regarding the student demographics of NSU is that students of Native American heritage now comprise 28.5% of the total student population. Another interesting piece of data is that NSU now enrolls 264 international students from 46 different countries, an increase of over 200 percent over the past five years. This increase is primarily due to the cooperative agreements with the National Collegiate Network (NCN) which brings approximately 40 new Japanese freshmen students to our campus each fall and the Japan College of Foreign Language which provides Japanese students that transfer to NSU after one or two years of study in Japan.

The percentage of students that receive financial aid at Northeastern State University is 71%. Last year, 7,525 students received over \$152,099,731 in student aid. Based on self reporting of parent's educational level on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), approximately 52% of our undergraduate students are first generation students and of these students approximately 50% receive financial aid. With this high percentage of first-generation students, compounded with low-income students, and minority students, we have an at-risk student population that is dependent upon financial aid for continuing their education. The *US News and World Report* (America's Best Colleges Class of 2003) ranked Northeastern State University the third lowest among Master's Universities in the West region with regard to the average amount of debt incurred by students at graduation. NSU students (those receiving aid) incur an average debt of \$7,500. The debt load ranged from \$6,319 at California State-Long Beach to \$29,483 at University of Great Falls.

Nearly half of the students enrolling at Northeastern State University come from the three counties where our campuses are located: Cherokee (16.8%); Muskogee (9.9%); and Tulsa (23.3%). Northeastern State University has traditionally served a 20 county area in the northeastern corner of Oklahoma. Students from this area, as well as the neighboring states of Arkansas, Missouri and Kansas make up over ninety percent of the student body. This area is one of the fastest growing parts of the state according to the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. The 2000 Census showed that the population change over the last decade in nine of the twenty counties was between 11.91% and 32.09%, the highest in the state.

The people at NSU (students, faculty, staff and administrators) make the institution what it is. We aspire to be, and believe we are, the *Premier Regional University in Oklahoma*. Northeastern State University employed 349 full-time individuals with faculty rank for the Fall 2005 semester along with 172 adjunct or part-time faculty and 37 graduate assistants. The NSU professional Optometry program employs 9 resident post-doctorate students. Over 80% of our course credit is taught by regular faculty with adjunct faculty and graduate assistants teaching approximately 20% of the credit hours.

The demographic composition of the full-time faculty includes 56% male and 44% female. This is an increase in female faculty from 35% in Fall 2001. Nearly sixty-eight percent of the faculty has earned doctorates or terminal degrees which are evenly divided between males (68%) and females (66%). Due to a recent retirement incentive, the number of tenured faculty has decreased significantly over the past several years. Currently, 35% of the full-time faculty has tenure.

The academic organizational structure of Northeastern State University consists of four undergraduate colleges, a graduate college, and a professional college of Optometry.

Professional librarians are given academic rank. The graduate college does not have any faculty per se as faculty with graduate status are issued rank within one of the undergraduate colleges or the professional college. The following chart shows the composition of NSU faculty by college, rank and gender for Fall 2005.

**NSU FACULTY BY COLLEGE RANK AND GENDER**

**FALL 2005**

Unit	Professor		Associate Professor		Assistant Professor		Instructor		Lecturer		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Liberal Arts	20	3	9	10	20	7	3	10	6	2	58	32
Business & Technology	4	0	16	7	14	2	6	6	0	0	40	15
Education	10	5	5	13	4	24	19	14	0	0	38	56
Library	0	0	1	0	2	4	2	5	0	0	5	9
Optometry	7	2	3	5	7	3	0	0	0	0	17	10
Science & Health Professions	9	5	4	8	10	7	6	10	1	2	30	32

NSU offers 90 different degree or certificate programs with 62 programs being at the undergraduate level, 19 at the graduate level, 1 professional degree in Optometry, and 8 certificate programs. The most popular undergraduate majors are elementary education, criminal justice, biology, psychology, and early childhood education. The top five graduate majors are school administration, school counseling, library media and information technology, business administration and college teaching. As expected, based on our roots as a “normal” school and teachers’ college, NSU has a large number of education majors (1,499 for Fall 2005). However, a growing number of students are majoring in business and technology areas (1,510 for Fall 20045). Approximately equal numbers (29% each) of students graduate with bachelor’s degrees in education and business/technology. Seventy-two percent of all graduate degrees conferred are to students in education majors. Last academic year (2004-2005) NSU awarded



1410 bachelor's degrees, 258 master's degrees, and 25 Doctor of Optometry degrees. This represents a 13% increase in bachelor's degrees and 21% increase in master's degrees over the last five years.

Transfer students comprise approximately 40% of our student population. For example, of the 9702 students enrolled for Fall 2006, 3863 were transfer students. Of these Fall 2006 transfer students, 2,578 (27% of the Fall enrollment) transferred from a community college and 1,285 (13%) transferred from a four-year institution. Community college transfer students make up 67% of all the transfer students at NSU. By virtue of its location, NSU is surrounded by six major community colleges (TCC, CSC, EOSC, CASC, NEO and NWACC-for our info only) and until recently three additional schools (Bacone, RSU, Westark) that have since changed to four-year institutions. These institutional changes have decreased our transfer population from community colleges from 35% in Spring 2000 to 29% in Spring 2006. The following table illustrates the changes in transfer students over the past ten years.

**Transfer Student Data from 2-yr and 4-yr Institutions**

<b>Semester/Year</b>	<b>Transfer Students from 2-Yr Institutions</b>	<b>Transfer Students from 4-Yr Institutions</b>	<b>Total Transfer Students</b>
Spring 1996	3078-37%	788-9%	3866-46%
Spring 1998	2853-35%	706-9%	3559-44%
Spring 2000	2713-35%	615-8%	3328-43%
Spring 2002	2415-29.5%	1114-13.5%	3529-43%
Spring 2004	2524-29%	1195-14%	3719-43%
Spring 2006	2527-29%	1281-14%	3808-43%

As the table above illustrates, the number and percentage of overall transfer students from community colleges has decreased somewhat over the last ten years while the overall percentage of transfer students has remained stable. Several years of data show that community college transfer students generally have a slightly higher entering G.P.A. than students transferring from

four-year institution. However, the NSU G.P.A. earned by each group is essentially the same at 2.90 – 2.92, with the students originating at NSU with over 60 hours of credit having an average G.P.A. of 2.95. We believe that transfer students are an important component of our student body and efforts to recruit and retain more community college transfer students is a part of our academic priorities.