

**Nebraska Information Technology Commission**

**Project Proposal Form**

**New or Additional State Funding Requests  
For Information Technology Projects**

**FY2007-2009 Biennium**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Student Information Administrative System</b>
<b>Agency/Entity</b>	<b>Nebraska State College System</b>

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**Notes about this form:**

1. **USE.** The Nebraska Information Technology Commission (“NITC”) is required by statute to “make recommendations on technology investments to the Governor and the Legislature, including a prioritized list of projects, reviewed by the technical panel, for which new or additional funding is requested.” Neb. Rev. Stat. §86-516(8) In order to perform this review, the NITC and DAS Budget Division require agencies/entities to complete this form when requesting new or additional funding for technology projects.
2. **WHAT TECHNOLOGY BUDGET REQUESTS REQUIRE A PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM?** See the document entitled “Guidance on Information Technology Related Budget Requests” available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/forms/>.
3. **DOWNLOADABLE FORM.** A Word version of this form is available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/forms/>.
4. **SUBMITTING THE FORM.** Completed project proposal forms should be submitted as an e-mail attachment to [rick.becker@nitc.ne.gov](mailto:rick.becker@nitc.ne.gov).
5. **DEADLINE.** Completed forms must be submitted by September 15, 2006 (the same date budget requests are required to be submitted to the DAS Budget Division).
6. **QUESTIONS.** Contact the Office of the CIO/NITC at (402) 471-7984 or [rick.becker@nitc.ne.gov](mailto:rick.becker@nitc.ne.gov)

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**Section 1: General Information**

Project Title	Student Information Administrative System
Agency (or entity)	NE State College System

Contact Information for this Project:

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**Section 2: Executive Summary**

Provide a one or two paragraph summary of the proposed project. This summary will be used in other externally distributed documents and should therefore clearly and succinctly describe the project and the information technology required.

Nebraska State College System (NSCS) is requesting \$6 million in year one of the 07-09 biennium and an additional \$4 million in year two of the same biennium for the purpose of purchasing student information administrative software system (referred to in this document as an enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution) and necessary supporting hardware. The existing student information system was purchased and implemented in 1987 and is now dated, lacking necessary function to provide appropriate administrative support to students, faculty, and provide accountability reporting. Year one dollars will provide for planning and vendor selection, software and hardware purchase, training, and initial migration to a modern system. Year two will continue with training and implementation efforts.

The request will allow the Nebraska State College System to maintain its essential administration system. New software and hardware will provide online functions necessary to meeting the needs of students, faculty, and administration. Among the components considered are: recruiting, admissions, registration, student accounts, financial aid, housing, grade reports, transcripts student access to records, faculty advising, class scheduling room assignments, departmental budgeting and accounting, key control, parking, alumni functions, document imaging, and electronic transcript exchange.

**Section 3: Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes (15 Points)**

1. Describe the project, including:
  - Specific goals and objectives;
  - Expected beneficiaries of the project; and
  - Expected outcomes.

Ultimately the goal of this project is to replace an existing, outdated and functionally limited student information system with a modern, scaleable ERP system that can provide for student need, information reporting, and integrated operational support. It will be essential that this system support all existing

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student information services while adding integrated system wide compliance reporting and Nebraska Information System integrated business function. To that end this project's objectives include systems directed to:

- \* Student Information
- \* Financial Aid
- \* Financial Management
- \* Human Resources
- \* Institutional Advancement
- \* Analytic Reporting
- \* Data Warehousing

The primary benefactor of this investment will be the students served by the NSCS. Enhanced information and operating systems will assure on-going access to student information, financial aid functions, and business operations. Additional benefit will be evident to faculty, staff, and the System in the form of enhanced reporting methodology making compliance and accountability reporting less onerous and more reliable. Finally the state of Nebraska will realize benefit resulting from enhanced reporting and data management in academic and business performance areas as well as creating an interface with the Nebraska Information System which will eliminate multiple data entry requirements and enhancing information reliability.

2. Describe the measurement and assessment methods that will verify that the project outcomes have been achieved.

Outcomes will be evident as the existing system's history is migrated to the new system. Specific performance measures will be defined within the request for proposal (RFP) with input from key individuals at each college, the Nebraska State College System office, and the Nebraska State College Board of Trustees. Areas to be measured include:

- \* Student Information
- \* Financial Aid
- \* Financial Management
- \* Human Resources
- \* Institutional Advancement
- \* Analytic Reporting
- \* Data Warehousing
- \* Technical Performance

3. Describe the project's relationship to your agency comprehensive information technology plan.

Reference to the replacement of the legacy student information system appears in each of the college's comprehensive technology plans as a new project.

**Section 4: Project Justification / Business Case (25 Points)**

4. Provide the project justification in terms of tangible benefits (i.e. economic return on investment) and/or intangible benefits (e.g. additional services for customers).

Today, colleges cannot function without operational information systems. Systems such as student information, financial aid, financial management, human resources, institutional advancement, analytic reporting, and data warehousing are critical to the mission of the institutions. Ensuring reliability of these systems is also critical to the college's daily operations. Basic to the tangible benefit is a consideration of the future reliability of the existing system. NSCS institutions currently utilize a SungardSCT SIS Plus student information system which dates back to a 1987 installation. SungardSCT has made numerous statements about its intent to continue support for the Plus system, but at the same time it is aggressively

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encouraging its' client base to migrate to their flagship product, Banner. As of fall 2006, SungardSCT has approximately 40 "Plus" customers, compared to a Banner base of approximately 1,000 customers. The current Plus system operates on an HP AlphaServer system. HP plans to phase out HP AlphaServer and to migrate customers to their new Itanium platform. The operating system (VMS/OpenVMS) which currently runs the legacy system is an additional concern. VMS, originally developed by Digital Equipment (DEC) in the late 1970s, peaked in market share in the late 1980s and has since been declining. The labor pool for OpenVMS and COBOL programmers is becoming increasingly small and difficult to hire. The question of reliability is relative to availability of support for both software and hardware applications to the current system. Functions currently provided by the existing system and the proposed replacement system are critical to the mission of the institutions. Expected benefit from the migration will be defined in the RFP.

5. Describe other solutions that were evaluated, including their strengths and weaknesses, and why they were rejected. Explain the implications of doing nothing and why this option is not acceptable.

The Nebraska State Colleges are currently engaged in a process, that involves key individuals from each of the three colleges in areas of academics, business operations, student services, alumni services, and technology support for the development of a system based needs statement. That statement includes review of need for students, the institution, the system, and higher education partners. Once need is fully defined the colleges and system office will cooperatively develop a request for proposal (RFP) based on need with consideration for:

- Efficient, intuitive workflow solutions
- Migration, implementation, and training need and cost
- Hardware and software product need and cost
- Annual maintenance costs
- Scalability potential for each campus
- Customizable options to satisfy varying campus needs
- Security of files and the reliability history of product

On-going effectiveness of this replacement product will also be considered relative to:

- Work flow productivity across involved groups
- Efficiency (how well will human and financial resources be utilized)
- Cost (initial and on-going)
- Time (relative to migration, training, and continuous operations)

Once developed the RFP will provide an evaluation format open to qualified, integrated solutions providers. Failure to take action directed at the replacement of the legacy system will likely result in reduced system function, higher maintenance costs at the time of maintenance contract renewal, staffing concerns as fewer knowledgeable personnel are available to work with existing technology, incompatibility with new auxiliary systems, and an unmanageable migration schedule if change is not embraced in a timely manner.

6. If the project is the result of a state or federal mandate, please specify the mandate being addressed.

No particular mandate has required this update of existing software, but it should be noted that on-going reporting at both the state and federal level is supported by data generated from this resource.

### **Section 5: Technical Impact (20 Points)**

7. Describe how the project enhances, changes or replaces present technology systems, or implements a new technology system. Describe the technical elements of the project, including hardware, software, and communications requirements. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed solution.

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As noted earlier the NSCS is currently in the process of defining need associated with development of and RFP for this acquisition. The defined components of the RFP will include technical elements identified in the following areas:

- \* Student Information
- \* Financial Aid
- \* Financial Management
- \* Human Resources
- \* Institutional Advancement
- \* Analytic Reporting
- \* Data Warehousing
- \* Technical Performance

Technical drivers include:

*Replacement of an Aging System* - The current Plus system operates on an HP AlphaServer system. HP plans to phase out HP AlphaServer and to migrate customers to their new Itanium platform. The operating system (VMS/OpenVMS) which currently runs the legacy system is an additional concern. VMS, originally developed by Digital Equipment (DEC) in the late 1970s, peaked in market share in the late 1980s and has since been declining. Gartner Inc., a leading provider of independent research and analysis on the global IT industry indicates, the issue for most OpenVMS users is not whether to migrate, but when. Additionally, the labor pool for OpenVMS and COBOL programmers is becoming increasingly small and difficult to hire. The question of technical impact becomes directly related to availability of support for both software and hardware applications to the current system.

Decommissioning the legacy system and capturing those maintenance funds will help the institutions to offset costs to install a real-time web based enterprise resource and planning platform including primary operational and reporting systems that comprise the core information processing functions for the NSCS. Those core functions will be identified from the RFP components listed above.

*Web Access* – The current system has many administrative applications that do not run in a browser. The RFP for the new system will address accessibility.

*Availability* - The current system is not available in a 24 hour per day 7 days per week mode. Down time is required for back-ups, batch processing, and system maintenance creating interruptions to system access.

*Incompatibility with New Systems* – The existing system runs a traditional flat file system, a dated architecture in which a single piece of data may be stored multiple times in different systems. Most new systems utilize relational database platforms. The RFP for this project will include the requirement of a relational database environment.

8. Address the following issues with respect to the proposed technology:
  - Describe the reliability, security and scalability (future needs for growth or adaptation) of the technology.
  - Address conformity with applicable NITC technical standards and guidelines (available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/standards/>) and generally accepted industry standards.

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- Address the compatibility with existing institutional and/or statewide infrastructure.

Reliability, security and scalability as well as workflow solutions, migration and other practical considerations are addressed in Section 4 of this document and will be given a high level of consideration within the finished request for proposal.

Conformity with applicable NITC technical standards and guidelines will also be addressed in the request for proposal.

Institutional infrastructure will be given a high level of consideration in this process including an understanding of the potential for compatibility with existing systems currently in use at various campuses dedicated to on-line learning, electronic payment, and admissions processes. It is anticipated that very little of the existing administrative software will remain beyond those named elements. An additional goal of this project will be to create a seamless interface between each college and the state's existing Nebraska Information System. The goal of this interface will be to eliminate multiple data entry requirements and enhance information reliability.

**Section 6: Preliminary Plan for Implementation (10 Points)**

9. Describe the preliminary plans for implementing the project. Identify project sponsor(s) and examine stakeholder acceptance. Describe the project team, including their roles, responsibilities, and experience.

Preliminary plans for implementation of this project are described in section 4, item 5. Briefly those plans include identification of key personnel, development of a needs statement, and development of a request for proposal. The request for proposal may take one of three alternative courses:

1. Master RFP open to integrated solutions only. The intent here is to ensure overall suite integration and manageability.
2. RFP by module open to integrated and/or best solution vendors. This process can open the field to best solutions and heighten competition.

Actual implementation process and schedules will be developed in conjunction with the development of the RFP and refined after a system vendor has been selected.

Stakeholders in this process, with the exception of students, are also the cross-section of individuals from each college that has identified a need to update and improve the existing system. As stated earlier it is anticipated that students will find the process and resulting upgrade to be somewhat transparent. The real concern will come if the existing system is allowed to reach an age where it is no longer supported by its parent company.

The project team is currently being identified and will consist of individuals from each effected area across the three campuses. Those identified areas include:

- \* Student Information
- \* Financial Aid
- \* Financial Management
- \* Human Resources
- \* Institutional Advancement
- \* Analytic Reporting
- \* Data Warehousing
- \* Information Technology

10. List the major milestones and/or deliverables and provide a timeline for completing each.

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Planning timeline is as follows:

Identify Participant List	July 2006
Define Need	September 2006
Develop RFP	October 2006

Major milestones and deliverables are to be determined.

11. Describe the training and staff development requirements.

Training and staff development requirements are to be determined within the development of the RFP.

12. Describe the ongoing support requirements.

Elements of ongoing support will be defined in the needs statement and will become a requirement of the RFP. It is anticipated that elements of those requirements will include a maintenance agreement, annual training, and equipment. The existing system has been in service at each of the colleges since 1987, ongoing maintenance agreements currently exist for each component of the system at each college. It is anticipated that funds currently ear-marked for maintenance on the legacy system will be applied to ongoing costs for the new system. Impact on personnel staffing requirements cannot be determined until core components of the system have been defined.

**Section 7: Risk Assessment (10 Points)**

13. Describe possible barriers and risks related to the project and the relative importance of each.

The most likely barrier to the execution of this plan will be availability of funds. The next most apparent concern is to build a sense of user confidence in the selection process and final determination.

14. Identify strategies which have been developed to minimize risks.

The NSCS has a well defined, broad, and inclusive process intended to determine the best suited ERP solution for the System. That process has been explained throughout this form.



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**Section 8: Financial Analysis and Budget (20 Points)**

15. Financial Information

Financial and budget information can be provided in either of the following ways:

- (1) If the information is available in some other format, either cut and paste the information into this document or transmit the information with this form; or
- (2) Provide the information by completing the spreadsheet provided below.

**Instructions:** Double click on the Microsoft Excel icon below. An imbedded Excel spreadsheet will be launched. Input the appropriate financial information. Close the spreadsheet. The information you entered will automatically be saved with this document. If you want to review or revise the financial information, repeat the process just described.



Excel Spreadsheet  
(Double-click)

**Financial information from the embedded spreadsheet appears at the end of this PDF version of the document.**

16. Provide a detailed description of the budget items listed above. Include:

- An itemized list of hardware and software.
- If new FTE positions are included in the request, please provide a breakdown by position, including separate totals for salary and fringe benefits.
- Provide any on-going operation and replacement costs not included above, including funding source if known.
- Provide a breakdown of all non-state funding sources and funds provided per source.

Hardware and software will be identified in conjunction with the selection of a vendor at the close of the RFP process.

New FTE requirements will be determined in conjunction with defined core components of the ERP solution. Because this is a replacement system on-going maintenance costs from the legacy system will be applied to the new system.

No non-state funds are requested for this project at this time.

17. Please indicate where the funding requested for this project can be found in the agency budget request, including program numbers.

State Building Fund, program #500-914

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Section 8: Financial Analysis and Budget

(Revise dates as necessary for your request.)

	Estimated Prior Expended	Request for FY2007-08 (Year 1)	Request for FY2008-09 (Year 2)	FY2009-10 (Year 3)	FY2010-011 (Year 4)	Future	Total
1. Personnel Costs							\$ -
2. Contractual Services							
2.1 Design							\$ -
2.2 Programming							\$ -
2.3 Project Management							\$ -
2.4 Other							\$ -
3. Supplies and Materials							\$ -
4. Telecommunications							\$ -
5. Training							\$ -
6. Travel							\$ -
7. Other Operating Costs							\$ -
8. Capital Expenditures							
8.1 Hardware							\$ -
8.2 Software							\$ -
8.3 Network							\$ -
8.4 Other							\$ -
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	\$ -	\$ 6,000,000.00	\$ 4,000,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000,000.00
General Funds (SBF)		\$ 6,000,000.00	\$ 4,000,000.00				\$ 10,000,000.00
Cash Funds							\$ -
Federal Funds							\$ -
Revolving Funds							\$ -
Other Funds							\$ -
	\$ -	\$ 6,000,000.00	\$ 4,000,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000,000.00

Note: Request is based on information gathered from informal presentations provided to each campus. Detail will be available after completion of the Request for Proposal process.