

NEBRASKA INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION

Project Proposal - Summary Sheet  
Biennial Budget FY2007-2009

Project #51-01  
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Project #	Agency	Project Title
51-01	University of Nebraska	Student Information System

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST (Executive Summary from the Proposal)**

[Full text of all proposals are posted at: <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/nitc/documents/fy2007-09/index.html>]

The University of Nebraska currently operates separate student information systems for each of our four campuses. A vendor developed student information product, the SunGard SCT SIS PLUS system, is utilized by our UNL, UNO, and UNK campuses. UNMC operates an in-house developed student information system. These SIS systems are running on a variety of database management products, operating platforms, and hardware environments.

The SCT SIS PLUS system was developed in the 1970s and is based on dated design principles and technologies (e.g. terminal access and batch processing) that are becoming technologically obsolete. The SIS PLUS vendor announced 5 years ago they would continue to provide basic system maintenance to comply with federal and other higher education regulatory requirements but would not implement any significant PLUS system enhancements in the future. SCT is no longer actively marketing the PLUS system and the PLUS client base has declined from a peak of approximately 450 schools in 2000 to less than 70 and this number continues to decline. Indications are that SCT will likely terminate maintenance for PLUS in the 2009 – 2010 timeframe.

Additionally, PLUS provides limited support in a number of areas that are becoming increasingly important in the higher education arena – e.g. prospecting and recruiting, 24x7 availability, the ability to offer and administer courses that are not term-based, web-based access to data and services, workflow support, reporting capability, decision-support, and flexibility in registration and billing. These functionality “gaps” are addressed either through the purchase of additional function specific software products that must be integrated with PLUS, a costly process, or through in-house developed applications. Enhancements to PLUS developed in-house often require complex interfaces due to the lack of technical integration in the PLUS system. It is becoming more and more expensive to implement and maintain these “external” applications to provide functionality the base PLUS system does not offer.

As we face increasing competitive pressure to provide any time any place access to information and enhanced services we are finding it more and more difficult, and in some cases virtually impossible, to implement new desirable features and functionality due to the PLUS system architecture and technical limitations.

If the University of Nebraska is to remain competitive in the future we must implement new student information systems which allow us to be more innovative, responsive, and effective in meeting these challenges.

**FUNDING SUMMARY**

(revise dates as necessary for your request.)

	**ADDITIONAL NOTES PROVIDED IN PROPOSAL**	Request for FY2007-08 (Year 1)	Request for FY2008-09 (Year 2)	FY2009-10 (Year 3)	FY2010-11 (Year 4)	Future (Year 5)	Total
1. Personnel Costs		\$ 970,000.00	\$ 981,100.00	\$ 992,533.00	\$ 404,309.00	\$ 416,438.00	\$ 3,764,380.00
2. Contractual Services							
2.1 Design							\$ -
2.2 Programming							\$ -
2.3 Project Management							\$ -
2.4 Other		\$ 7,395,000.00					\$ 7,395,000.00
3. Supplies and Materials		\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00			\$ 4,500.00
4. Telecommunications		\$ 21,600.00	\$ 25,200.00	\$ 21,600.00			\$ 68,400.00
5. Training			\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 320,000.00
6. Travel							\$ -
7. Other Operating Costs		\$ 662,150.00	\$ 647,150.00	\$ 647,150.00	\$ 595,150.00	\$ 595,150.00	\$ 3,146,750.00
8. Capital Expenditures							
8.1 Hardware		\$ 1,739,386.00	\$ 558,486.00	\$ 226,785.00	\$ 253,999.00	\$ 284,479.00	\$ 3,063,135.00
8.2 Software		\$ 7,491,470.00	\$ 1,358,265.00	\$ 1,600,952.00	\$ 1,887,324.00	\$ 2,225,242.00	\$ 14,563,253.00
8.3 Network		\$ 180,000.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 324,000.00
8.4 Other							\$ -
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>		\$ 18,461,106.00	\$ 3,707,701.00	\$ 3,626,520.00	\$ 3,276,782.00	\$ 3,577,309.00	\$ 32,649,418.00
General Funds							\$ -

**PROJECT SCORE**

Section	Reviewer 1	Reviewer 2	Reviewer 3	Mean	Maximum Possible
3: Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	15	14	14	14.3	15
4: Project Justification / Business Case	25	24	24	24.3	25
5: Technical Impact	15	19	14	16.0	20
6: Preliminary Plan for Implementation	10	9	8	9.0	10
7: Risk Assessment	10	10	9	9.7	10
8: Financial Analysis and Budget	20	20	17	19.0	20
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>92</b>	<b>100</b>

**REVIEWER COMMENTS**

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
3: Goals, Objectives, and Projected Outcomes	<p>- A variety of assessment methods are listed and each can realistically be used to understand the effectiveness of the new system. The interrelationships between the measures can also be examined for a more comprehensive understanding.</p> <p>- The goals and objectives clearly reflect the improvement a new administrative computing system would provide. The positive outcomes will impact the beneficiaries of the project in noticeable ways in today's instant access climate and 24/7 expectations of students, faculty, staff and administrators. The growth and impact upon FTE, retention and revenues are measurable and a reasonable expectation of the project.</p> <p>- The described Student Information System would eliminate the aging legacy campus systems and unite all four campuses under one enterprise system.</p>	<p>- The change of a SIS results in changes to many business practices. It would be helpful to see some of those listed; however, the reviewer recognizes that this project is still in the formative stages.</p> <p>- The measurement and assessment instruments were not described in detail but can be inferred from the general methods listed.</p>
4: Project Justification / Business Case	<p>- It is clear that the present SIS is outdated and the risk of this system will grow moving forward since the vendor will remove support. There are many tangible benefits listed that are appropriate targets and objectives to be achieved. Risk avoidance is another and moving forward that will be addressed with a new system.</p> <p>- The justifications clearly identify the benefits desired with a new integrated SIS administrative computing system. The project positions those working within the information system to be proactive in regard to serving customers anytime anywhere rather than reacting to customer requests using older technology pieces that are not fully integrated.</p> <p>The section evaluating solutions and options makes clear the cost of maintaining and</p>	<p>- The return on investment was described but not quantified or estimated.</p>

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<p>patching the current system. Maintenance costs, enhancing an old product, skill sets of support staff, and poor service of the existing product were clearly weighed and evaluated. Doing nothing does not seem a viable option.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The existing SIS system is definitely reaching the end of its useful lifespan and must be replaced.</li> </ul>	
5: Technical Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The present technology is very dated and a new system like those under consideration will provide many benefits and allow a much greater degree of integration with other systems. There are real savings associated with better system integration so this move has the benefit of impacting the budget in a positive fashion.</li> <li>- The proposed technology addresses the short-coming of the existing systems, with improvement to accessibility, reliability, security, and scalability.</li> </ul> <p>Conforms to NITC standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is difficult to adequately speak to the technical merits of the proposal when the decision process is still unfolding.</li> <li>- The strengths and weaknesses of the proposed solution were not evaluated. The technical elements of the project were not described in detail.</li> </ul>
6: Preliminary Plan for Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assembling the many groups will be critical to the success of this project so that there is buy-in to the strategic vision and tactical plans to be undertaken. The milestones are well laid out and clearly defined.</li> <li>- The implementation plan has administrative support, realistic timeline, and project teams to support a successful implementation and migration to a new system. Hiring and training of key staff are covered in the proposal. The milestones seem reasonable but do point out the fact that project approval means real benefit realization is 3 to 4 years from approval.</li> <li>- Although a complex and sizable undertaking, the University-wide committees and work groups should help unify the approach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A mention of the willingness and commitment of the stakeholders (students, administrators, faculty, and staff) to the project would have been nice,</li> <li>- Support requirements should involve more than just 'programmers on each campus'. How about back up data systems, additional hardware beyond that currently in existence, redundancy, etc..?</li> </ul>
7: Risk Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The document clearly outlines the risks associated with adoption and implementation of a system of this magnitude. Of particular note is the recognition of the critical nature of data migration and the use of vendor toolkits that will ensure the process is done in a systematic fashion that can be successful and timely.</li> <li>- The barriers and risks to a successful implement are mitigated by enhancements to software, flexibility of the system, sharing of knowledge from other large universities who have already made the change, and the experience of the UNL staff who will be relied upon for implementation of the software.</li> </ul>	

Section	Strengths	Weaknesses
	The strategies to minimize risk appear to be thorough and address the many conversion challenges an implementation provides. The tools, processes, and technical support are on target. - Very complete analysis.	
8: Financial Analysis and Budget	- All expenses are listed and realistic for an undertaking of this magnitude. - The budget reflects the reality and cost of the project. The detailed description and costs indicate that proper homework and planning have occurred. Very impressive! - Very complete listing of proposed hardware and cost estimates.	- Consulting and travel expense seems high; at almost 25% of the total project cost. An additional 20 new positions is required of the project. Where is the eventual cost savings that was promised earlier in the proposal? Question 17 (where in agency budget request) is not answered.

**TECHNICAL PANEL COMMENTS**

Technical Panel Checklist				Technical Panel Comment
	Yes	No	UNK	
1. The project is technically feasible.	✓			
2. The proposed technology is appropriate for the project.			✓	Unknown until the agency completes the RFP process.
3. The technical elements can be accomplished within the proposed timeframe and budget.			✓	Unknown until the agency completes the RFP process.

- The Technical Panel concurs with the Education Council recommendation that encourages collaboration and partnership between the University of Nebraska's and State College System's SIS projects.

**EDUCATION COUNCIL COMMENTS**

- The Education Council recommends this project be categorized as a highly recommended project.
- Both SIS projects are of equal importance for their sectors due to the discontinuation of support of the existing systems.
- The Education Council encourages collaboration and partnership between the University of Nebraska's and the State College System's Student Information System projects in the procurement, implementation, and training and other areas that provide efficiency and cost effectiveness.
- The Education Council disregarded the technical review scores due to the apparent inconsistencies in scoring.

**NITC COMMENTS**

- Tier 1 (Highly Recommended. Mission critical project for the agency and/or the state.)
- Regarding Projects 50-01, State College System-Student Information Administrative System, and the collaboration with Project 51-01, UN-Student Information System, Commissioner Peterson moved:

- To leave the project in Tier 1.
  - That the NITC strongly recommends that the University of Nebraska and the State College System collaborate on these projects in the areas of data element definitions, data warehouse design, data sharing, networking, hardware, and implementation.
  - That the systems should be interoperable.
  - That the University of Nebraska and the State College System work closely with the Technical Panel and provide periodic project reports to the NITC.
- Commissioner Hedquist seconded. Motion passed.