

NEWS RELEASE

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1,032 FTE: UNT Dallas Campus reaches enrollment milestone; Will begin process of establishing independent university

DALLAS – The University of North Texas Dallas Campus has achieved a critical enrollment goal in its quest to become the first public university in the City of Dallas. Administrators at the campus have announced that enrollment has reached 2,333 students, according to unofficial census figures for spring 2009 (taken on the semester's 12th day of classes).

Most important for the campus, however, is the fact that full-time equivalent student enrollment has risen to 1,032. Under current legislation, the UNT Dallas Campus can begin the process of forming an independent university once enrollment has reached 1,000 FTE.

John Ellis Price, UNT System vice chancellor and CEO of the UNT Dallas Campus, said the achievement of the campus' FTE goal is "the most important accomplishment that this campus has achieved in propelling us from a branch campus to status as an independent university."

"This is what so many who had the dream of planting an independent university in Dallas have worked toward," Price said. "We have demonstrated the demand for higher education in Southern Dallas County and now we can begin the process of establishing UNT at Dallas. Meeting this goal will also enhance our efforts to secure transitional funding to open UNT at Dallas and Tuition Revenue Bond funding for the second building in the Texas legislature, currently meeting in Austin."

Price also said that UNT at Dallas' independent status will give the university the ability to respond to the educational and workforce development needs of North Texas and the surrounding region.

“We are working with our educational partners to promote college readiness and student success, to improve the college-going rate, and in the future we will develop degree programs in emerging fields to fill a growing number of jobs in professional fields, industry and health care,” Price said. “By doing this, we will be helping Texas achieve its goals in its ‘Closing the Gaps by 2015’ higher education plan.”

Spring to spring, the increase in student numbers illustrates a dramatic rise in enrollment. The spring 2009 figure of 2,333 students in headcount represents a 26.5 percent increase over the spring 2008 headcount of 1,844. The 1,032 FTE represents a 34.6 percent increase over the spring 2008 FTE figure of 766.3.

The spring 2009 figure of 2,333 students in headcount represents a 5.4 percent increase over the 12th class day headcount of 2,212 in fall 2008. The 1,032 FTE represents a 5.7 percent increase over the fall 2008 figure of 976 (the fall 2008 figure was originally reported as 959).

Price said that one of the telling statistics which illustrates the impact of the UNT Dallas Campus, as well as the future potential of UNT Dallas, is the diversity of the campus’ student body. Among students taking classes at both UNT in Denton and the UNT Dallas Campus, 40 percent were white, 32 percent black, and 21 percent Hispanic. Among students taking classes only at the UNT Dallas Campus, 32 percent were white, 37 percent black and 26 percent Hispanic.

“This data reflects the makeup of the community in which we serve,” Price said. “And it also sends a signal that the future University of North Texas at Dallas will be planted right where future college students are. We will be one of the most diverse campuses in the state, and perhaps the entire nation.”

The first permanent building on the UNT Dallas Campus site was occupied in January 2007. The building sits on 264 acres near the intersection of I-35E and I-20 on Houston School Road. Construction of that building was made possible by a state bond initiative of \$25.5 million. Administrators at the school have requested \$43.5 million for the campus’ second building, and an additional \$6.4 million in transitional funding to hire additional faculty and staff to serve the student growing student population.

The UNT System plans to open UNT Dallas in 2010. Price said the vision for UNT Dallas would not have been possible without “the unwavering support of our community, our donors, our staff and faculty, and our area legislators who also want to see the dream of UNT Dallas fulfilled.”

Until the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board verifies enrollment numbers and certifies them official later in the spring, all enrollment statistics are unofficial, 12th class day numbers.

The UNT Dallas Campus operates under the authority of the University of North Texas in Denton, the state's fourth largest university, and is a component institution of the University of North Texas System. The Campus currently offers junior-, senior- and graduate-level courses leading to bachelor's and master's degrees. The Campus plans to open as the University of North Texas at Dallas, the city's first and only public university, in 2010.