

III | NORTHWESTERN STATE



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JAMES T. GENOVESE

September 6, 2026

Dear Faculty and Staff,

I hope you are enjoying the Labor Day weekend and have an opportunity to rest and spend time with family and friends. As we move further into the fall semester, I remain encouraged by the energy across our campuses and grateful for the commitment you demonstrate each day to our students and University.

Fall 2026 Enrollment

Northwestern welcomed 1,120 first-time entering freshmen this fall, an increase from 1,065 last year and our largest entering freshman class in three years. This class also brings a strong academic profile, with an average ACT score of 21.7 and an average high school GPA of 3.4. Graduate enrollment increased to 904 students, and we enrolled more dual enrollment students than in Fall 2025. These gains reflect

continued efforts to expand graduate education, strengthen partnerships with Louisiana high schools and provide flexible pathways for students seeking college credit and advanced credentials.

Our overall Fall 2026 enrollment is 8,245 students across our campuses and online programs, compared with 8,402 students last fall, with the decline attributable largely to increased degree completion, including students progressing more quickly through accelerated programs. While we must continue working to grow overall enrollment, the increases among freshmen, graduate students and dual enrollment students provide encouraging signs of momentum. These results reflect expanded outreach to high schools and community colleges, stronger dual enrollment partnerships, more effective use of enrollment data, enhanced financial aid communication and individualized support for prospective students.

We are pairing those recruitment efforts with initiatives designed to improve persistence and degree completion, including FLAME tutoring, proactive advising, financial aid outreach and additional support for students beyond their first year. Thank you to everyone whose work contributed to these gains. Recruitment, retention and student success are university-wide responsibilities, and continued progress will depend on the engagement of our entire Northwestern family.

Faculty Senate Leadership

Last week, I had the opportunity to visit with Faculty Senate President Dr. Benjamin Forkner. I was impressed by his thoughtful vision for the Faculty Senate and his commitment to strengthening communication,

collaboration and shared governance across the University. Dr. Forkner is a dedicated advocate for our faculty and understands the essential role they play in the academic mission and future of Northwestern. I appreciate his willingness to serve in this important leadership position and look forward to working closely with him and the Faculty Senate throughout the year.

Strengthening Our Partnership with LSMSA

Dr. Greg Handel and I met last week with Dr. Jason Anderson, the new executive director of the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts. Dr. Handel serves on the LSMSA Board of Directors, and Northwestern and LSMSA share a longstanding connection that has benefited both institutions and the students we serve. We discussed opportunities to continue strengthening that partnership and supporting the outstanding students, faculty and staff at LSMSA. Dr. Anderson and I also enjoyed sharing stories about growing up in Acadiana. We look forward to working with him as he begins his leadership of this exceptional institution.

Reflecting on Two Years of Progress

Last week, the University published a story reflecting on the progress Northwestern has made during my first two years as president. While the article bears my name, the accomplishments it highlights belong to our faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors and partners. From improvements in student persistence and academic outcomes to new workforce-focused programs, enhanced facilities, increased private support and athletic success, this progress has been possible only because of your dedication to Northwestern and its mission. I am

deeply grateful for your work and proud of what we have accomplished together. We have built meaningful momentum, but much remains to be done. We will continue focusing on enrollment growth, degree completion, academic excellence, workforce responsiveness and the student experience as we prepare Northwestern for an even stronger future.

[Click here to read the full two-year story.](#)

Athletics Update

Saturday night's football game at Louisiana Tech provided an opportunity to visit with alumni and friends from the northeastern part of our state and enjoy an impressive halftime performance by the outstanding Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band. The game also provided valuable financial support for our athletic program. Despite a relentless effort, our Demons were outmatched on the field. With 10 games remaining, they will begin Southland Conference play next Saturday at East Texas A&M in Commerce. Kickoff is scheduled for 6:00 p.m.

Sunday brought a soccer victory over Louisiana Tech as our Demons found their offensive rhythm, scoring five unanswered goals in their home debut to defeat the Bulldogs 5-2. It was the first win of the season for Coach Ian Brophy's team, which returns home Thursday at 7:00 p.m. to face Arkansas-Pine Bluff.

Our volleyball team will play its first home match Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. against Jackson State in Prather Coliseum. During tournament play at Missouri State on Friday and Saturday, the Demons suffered losses to

Indiana State and the host team before falling to Little Rock in their final match.

Four returning Demons, Andrew Kent, Kaden Elliott, Mason Bayne and Selton Sanders, recorded personal bests when the cross country season began Friday evening at the McNeese Season Opener. A Lady Demon team composed entirely of first-time collegiate runners also earned praise from Coach Alex Wills. Our teams will compete at home Friday afternoon in the NSU Demon Invitational, with the races finishing at the Walter P. Ledet Track Complex.

As we continue to explore innovative ways to support our student-athletes, I encourage everyone to take advantage of two exciting opportunities that directly benefit Northwestern State Athletics.

Tickets are on sale for the [Top of the Boot Music Festival](#), North Louisiana's premier music festival, which will take place October 16–17 at Turpin Stadium. The festival will bring nationally recognized artists and visitors from throughout the region to our campus this fall.

The [Rhodes Properties & Development Demon Dream Home Giveaway](#) offers participants the chance to win a brand-new home valued at \$265,000 with the purchase of a \$100 raffle ticket. Proceeds support Northwestern Athletics through the Demons Unlimited Foundation and help provide resources that enhance the student-athlete experience across all 14 athletic programs. The drawing will be held on November 6.

Both initiatives showcase the creativity and community support that continue to strengthen Northwestern Athletics while generating excitement for the University.

For more information on upcoming events and activities, please visit our [What's Happening at NSU](#) webpage.

Thank you again for your dedication to our students and to one another. The progress we are seeing across Northwestern is a direct reflection of your hard work, and Martha and I appreciate all that you do. I hope you have a productive and rewarding week.

Fork 'Em Demons



James T. "Jimmy" Genovese
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Northwestern State University

Northwestern Now

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