

A Brief History of the University of North Florida

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The University of North Florida was authorized in 1965 by the State Legislature to serve the educational needs of Jacksonville and northeast Florida. Responding to this legislative action, the Florida Board of Regents conducted a feasibility study, published in February, 1967. In the report, the Board stated the following basic planning assumptions:

1. Initially, this will be an urban institution which will primarily serve a student population characteristic of a large city.
2. The new university will initially be an upper division and graduate institution which will accommodate area junior college students and thereby fill a most obvious and pressing state supported educational need in the Jacksonville area.
3. Provide facilities to accommodate a metropolitan Jacksonville. Most of the students will be commuters within a radius of 30 miles (approximately 45 minutes driving time) of the campus which includes all of Duval County and the major population centers in the adjacent counties.

4. Instructional offerings of the new institution will initially encompass undergraduate upper division programs in business administration, education, arts and sciences, and technology, with beginning graduate work in business administration and education.

Subsequent sessions of the Legislature appropriated in 1968 necessary planning money (\$225,850) and, in 1969, the City of Jacksonville and area landowners donated the 1,000 acre campus site midway between the beaches and the city.

In July, 1969, Dr. Thomas G. Carpenter was appointed president and staffing began to serve as a nucleus for the institution's central administration. The first offices were opened in September, 1969, in the Florida National Bank building. As faculty and staff increased, the university moved to the Florida State Chamber of Commerce building on the Arlington Expressway in August, 1970.

The groundbreaking ceremony for Phase 1B construction on the permanent campus was held September 18, 1971. Florida governor Rubin Askew was the keynote speaker.

Designed by Reynolds Hill and Smith Architects, Phase 1B was completed in September, 1972, at a cost of \$6,655,000. The complex consisted of four major buildings--an office building, a classroom building, a laboratory/studio building, and a library/bookstore, plus a physical

facilities and central utilities facilities building.

Beginning with an initial faculty of 44, UNF opened its doors on October 2, 1972, to 2,000 students. The first academic year concluded with the commencement of 34 June (1973) graduates, who represented each of the University's three colleges--Arts and Sciences, Business Administration and Education.

The first official University catalog was published on March 1, 1972, listing 25 undergraduate programs. Forty-seven Venture Studies courses were introduced, consisting of electives to provide non-majors a liberal arts base at the upper-level.

To build needed support for the new university, the UNF Volunteer Alumni program was started under the auspices of the UNF Foundation, Inc., on June 4, 1972. More than 250 area citizens responded with gifts totalling \$40,000 for the student financial aid program. This group, spearheaded by the UNF Foundation trustees, pledged their support in the place of alumni in the University's early years.

More than 219 students initially benefitted from the loans, scholarships, and working opportunities funded through gift funds and federal matching funds.

The General Assembly, UNF's legislative body, met for the first time on October 20, 1972. As the institution's governing body, the Assembly has the authority to establish policies of general University interest and make such rules, regulations, and by-laws as deemed necessary to facilitate its deliberations and to effectuate those policies.

The honorary founders of the University were honored December 18, 1972 at the University's first "Open House".

Phase II construction was begun on March 5, 1973. Completion of this construction in late fall, 1974, at an estimated cost of \$4,721,000 doubled the physical size of the University, adding classrooms, offices, student service areas, and expansion room for the library. The UNF library collection contains approximately 130,000 volumes, including copies of the "Codex Atlanticus" and "Madrid Codices," replicas of manuscripts penned by Leonardo da Vinci.

UNF is oriented toward "transfer students" enrolling juniors, seniors, and graduate students. Roughly half of the student body works full-time, attending school on a part-time basis. The typical UNF student is older, more mature, and serious about his or her education.

The University of North Florida is an important part of the growing Jacksonville community and involves itself in community affairs. These efforts provide students with

advantages of drawing from community resources - a vital "living laboratory" of experience and expertise-to supplement and complement classroom work.

June, 1974, marked the commencement of UNF's charter class. At the commencement, 591 bachelor's degrees and 96 master's degrees were conferred. The charter class was comprised of students who first enrolled when UNF opened in October, 1972.

Full accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was announced December 11, 1974. A first in Florida educational history, both the undergraduate and graduate level programs were accredited simultaneously.

Today the university's faculty numbers about 155, with 78 percent having earned the doctoral degree. With an average age of 33, the faculty represents graduates from 101 different institutions and agencies from 41 states and the District of Columbia.

During the 1973-74 academic year, 916 individuals received degrees at UNF, 747 on the baccalaureate level and 169 on the master's level.

The average enrollment for the four quarters of 1973-74 was 2,957 (headcount), with an average age for the academic year of 30. Eighty-four per cent of the students were registered as undergraduates, and 16 per cent were registered in graduate programs. Fifty-three per cent of the registrants were male, and 47 per cent were female.

Eighty-four per cent of the enrollees were from Duval County. Eighty-seven per cent of the enrollment were white Americans, 9.5 per cent were black Americans, 1.5 per cent were other Americans, and 1.5 per cent were from foreign countries.

The University of North Florida is a growing institution. The addition of Phase III, a 750-seat auditorium, is in planning stages and is expected to be under construction by the end of 1975. Phase IV, primarily a laboratory-office building project, is proceeding into design.