

HISTORY

In March of 1903, House Roll No. 1 of the State Legislature appropriated \$50,000 to build a normal school in western Nebraska. In September of that same year, after 111 ballots, the State Board of Education accepted the City of Kearney offer of twenty acres and Green Terrace Hall at the western edge of the city to become the site. On October 18, 1904, the cornerstone of the first building was laid; in the summer of 1905, Nebraska State Normal School at Kearney offered its first classes in Kearney Public School facilities. The first classes on campus were held that fall.

In 1921, the name of the institution was changed to Nebraska State Teachers College at Kearney. In 1963, it became Kearney State College. Both name changes were a part of system-wide changes for the state colleges.

In 1989, however, a legislative act, LB247, moved the institution from the State College system to the University of Nebraska system. After Supreme Court review, Kearney State College became The University of Nebraska at Kearney on July 1, 1991.

State Representative C.J. Warner of Waverly introduced the 1903 bill creating the institution; his son, State Senator Jerome Warner, introduced the bill making UNK a part of the University.

Nine presidents/chancellors have served the institution:

- A.O. Thomas, Ph.D., 1905-1913
- George S. Dick, Ph.B., 1914-1919
- George Martin, A.M., 1919-1936
- Herbert L. Cushing, D.Ed., 1936-1961
- Milton J. Hassel, Ph.D., 1961-1971
- Brendan J. McDonald, Ph.D., 1972-1982
- William R. Nester, Ed.D., 1983-1993
- Gladys Styles Johnston, Ph.D., 1993-2002
- Douglas A. Kristensen, J.D., 2002 to the present