

# THE CURRENT SAUCE

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## NSU sees fall enrollment increase; the highest in years

BY DAKOTA THOMAS

**N**orthwestern State University of Louisiana announced an increase in student enrollment after years of decreasing numbers. The announcement made by NSU states this fall's student population is the highest it's been in five years.

According to the press release, NSU currently has 8,523 students enrolled for the Fall 2024 semester.

Vanner Erikson, director of Enrollment Management at NSU, said the enrollment decline NSU has experienced in the past years had much to do with outside factors, which other universities experienced as well.

"I think we're seeing more students not wanting to go to school, we're seeing lower birth rates from 18 years ago, so there's a population cliff that we're facing, so there's a lot of things that we're fighting against," Erikson said.

Erikson said the efforts of NSU's Recruiting Team had an impact on the increase in enrollment at NSU.

"Throughout the year, we do about 90-plus events that focus on recruiting or assist with it, plus we do tours every day," Erikson said.

NSU's Recruiting office works to promote an increase in enrollment through events such as N-Side View Day, Literally Rally, STEM Day and All-State Choir Day. Events like these allow for high school students across the state of Louisiana to visit NSU's campus and experience their prospective fields, Erikson said. The team also visits in-state high schools to reach out to students who want help planning for college.

For further outreach, recruiting works with the Marketing and Communications office to strategically promote the university, the director of University Marketing and Branding said.

"As the director of marketing, my role involves a blend of strategic leadership and hands-on creativity," Amy Lee said. "I work closely with our team to develop and execute innovative campaigns that effectively promote NSU's programs, events and values."

Lee said her office targets prospective students through campaigns and engaging content to encourage them to consider NSU for college.

"I think that marketing has had a strong influence on enrollment at NSU. We strive to utilize our marketing strategies to help increase visibility, communicate the university's strengths and connect with prospective students in meaningful ways," Lee said.

The marketing team has implemented two new campaigns to highlight the student body with hopes of inspiring prospective students. "Demons on Fire" is all about sharing student testimonials and showcasing their successes, and "Campus 2 Community" bridges any gap between NSU and the local community by celebrating the alumni.

"By highlighting real stories from current students, prospective students can see themselves in the NSU community and feel inspired to pursue their own academic and personal goals here," Lee said. "It's a powerful way to connect on a personal level and show the transformative impact that NSU has on its students."

Erikson said by targeting prospective high school students through the efforts of both the NSU recruitment and marketing teams, enrollment of first-time freshmen has shown growth.

"Our housing occupancy is up by 98 to 99% right now - which hasn't been that way in a few years - so we're trending upward when it comes to students returning to campus and getting back to where we were and I think that's an important thing," Erikson said.

Brooke Jones, senior vocal performance major, explained the effect she has seen in her classes.

"Personally, enrollment in the vocal music department seems to increase each year I've been here," Jones said. "I don't know about all the programs of course, but ours has been growing rather than declining."

Jones compares NSU enrollment numbers to that of other universities such as Louisiana State University.



Photo by Lia Portillo. NSU currently has 8,523 students enrolled for the Fall 2024 semester.

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"No we don't have numbers like LSU, but that's what gives us a different charm and quality of life," Jones said.

Jay Clark, junior addiction studies and psychology major, also said she enjoys attending a smaller university.

"I absolutely love having smaller classes because I feel like all of the professors' attention can be more individualized, and professors can form better relationships with their students," Clark said.

Clark is glad to see an increase in enrollment as she said she feels it will benefit the culture of NSU's student body.

"The diversity drops significantly when you have smaller classes and you also have less students who can help contribute to campus organizations which affects that aspect," Clark said. However, she said she has not seen the impact of the increased enrollment numbers in her classes.

Niklaus Jordan, sophomore nursing major, has also not seen a significant change in class attendance.

"Personally, I have not noticed a difference in my classes," Jordan said.

"As a nursing major, classes are always full because of limited time and space."

Jordan specified that, though nothing has changed within his classes, he has seen differences around campus.

"I do feel that this semester in general, campus has seemed much busier and just more people in general, but that is not a complaint. I am happy to see the school growing," Jordan said.

In previous years, the enrollment decline NSU experienced can be due to issues such as decreased interest among graduating high school students to attend college and financial struggles, Jordan said.

"These are issues NSU may not be able to fix because it is a national problem. I'm sure the decline in numbers in the US can and will affect NSU, but that is a broad scope," Jordan said. "If you look at just NSU, our freshman class numbers have been steadily increasing every year."

With the new enrollment data, the recruiting and marketing team will analyze strategies that worked and continue to reach higher enrollment numbers.

# SGA announces NSU's 2024 homecoming election results; runoff election to follow

BY NINA OVALLE



**N**orthwestern State University of Louisiana's Student Government Association has announced the members of the homecoming honor court, Mr. and Miss NSU and freshman senators following the Fall 2024 election. A runoff election for Mr. and Miss NSU will take place on Monday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The constitution changes made by SB.S. 2024-01 in Spring 2024 created a senate composition of 19 senators: three from each of the four academic colleges and four senators at large and announced three freshmen which would be inducted with the Fall 2024 homecoming election.

The three freshman senators elected are Madison Boutte, Jhelea Dawson and Ty Phillips. These newly elected SGA members will be sworn in on Sept. 23 during the SGA meeting at 6 p.m. in the Student Union Lucille Hendricks Ballroom.

SGA announced the 2024 male honor court members as Chris James, Kameron Burns, Christopher Compas, Alexander Engstrom, Bryce Juneau, Tyler Melna, Coree Nash, Christopher Richard, Chris Soileau, James Taylor and Terrell "TJ" Woodard Jr.

The 2024 female honor court members are Kaley Koss, Makayla Boudreaux, Abigail Chevalier, Madison Cook, Hannah Davis, Peyton Fuller, Linzi Lampert, Brooke Straight, Avery Tullios, Lauryn Vernon and Kacy Young, according to SGA.

The candidates who made the runoff for Mr. NSU are Chris James and Terrell Woodard. The candidates who made the runoff for Miss NSU are Hannah Davis and Kacy Young.

SGA will post a link to the purple portal as well as their Instagram for students to vote in the runoff. Students can vote online via the SGA Purple Portal page located in the SGA Instagram bio.

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Current Sauce is the official student-run newspaper for Northwestern State University. The content and stories within the paper may not necessarily reflect the views of administration, faculty and staff.

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# NSU's Speech and Debate Team is seeking new members, why join?

BY ISABEL JUAREZ RUBIO

Northwestern State University of Louisiana houses a variety of different recognized student organizations, one of many is the Speech and Debate Team.

The Speech and Debate team at NSU focuses on members developing speaking and research abilities through debates and competitions. Their goal is to give members real life experiences and communication skills to apply to their future careers.

"The style of debate that we do is called IPDA (International Public Debate Association); it's an international organization that is trying to develop speaking skills first and research skills second," Dorian E. Eaton, a communication professor at NSU and coach of the team since 2018, said.

The team is funded through an endowment fund and the Department of New Media, Journalism and Communication Arts.

"It helps anyone that has any type of career where they plan on communicating with other people, so it helps with their confidence," Eaton said. The Speech and Debate Team is ideal for those wanting to increase their communication skills and build their confidence especially for those with speech impediments or people whose second language is English, Eaton said.

"It's not about winning so much as it is about giving students the tools to be successful in whatever they want to do, and to be a successful individual you need to communicate effectively," Eaton said.

Members of the team explained the impact Speech and Debate has had on them.

"I recommend people to join the Speech and Debate team for the same reason I joined; it built my confidence and introduced me to a new demographic of people," Phillip Parker, a senior history major and returning team member, said.

Membership is open to any active student enrolled at NSU. Practices occur every Tuesday at 3:30 p.m. in John S. Kyser Hall room 337 and on Thursdays before tournaments at the same time.

The practice process ranges from performing various mock rounds during which the team selects a random topic to debate to just analyzing debates online.



Photo Courtesy of Speech and Debate Team. The Speech and Debate Team will be hosting an interest meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 24 at 3:30 p.m. in Kyser Hall room 225.

During the actual tournaments, each debater picks from five topics, cross eliminates each one off and debates in front of a small crowd and a judge.

The team competes in different places and states such as Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi. This is a good and budget friendly opportunity for college students to travel and get out of their comfort zone, Parker said.

Joining this team opens new opportunities and connections for students to grow as professionals, Eaton and members expressed.

"I wanted to put this skill under my bill," Teldrick Cooper, a junior with a major in communication, said. Cooper has been a part of this team since his freshman year.

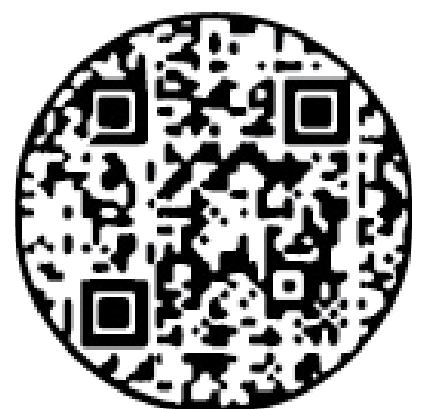
The Speech and Debate team is currently seeking new members and will be hosting an interest meeting on Sept. 24 at 3:30 p.m. in Kyser Hall room 225.

## DOSE OF SAUCE Newsletter Sign up

Join The Current Sauce's weekly newsletter: Dose of Sauce. Each Friday at 1 p.m., the newsletter will feature the stories posted in the past week and highlight photos and things happening around campus. Use the link below to sign up or use the link on our Instagram bio!

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SCAN ME



# Demon football to play Weber State University this weekend after a rocky start to the season

BY CHRISTIAN ROBINSON



Photo by Tyra Jones.  
NSU to play Weber State at home this weekend for Family Day.

After a tough 0-3 start to the season, Northwestern State University of Louisiana Demon football looks to pick up a win against Weber State University this weekend.

NSU's team lost 31-37 against Prairie View A&M at their first home game of the season at Prather Coliseum on Sept. 7. The Demons were then defeated by South Alabama with a final score of 87-10 on Sept. 12 at the Hancock Whitney Stadium in Mobile.

Blaine McCorkle, head football coach, said he believes in the progress being shown on both sides of the ball and wants to claim the season as the team's own.

He explained that being consistent and technical will lead to success for this upcoming game against the Wildcats and for the future of the season.

"We are looking at constant improvement every day and daily progress," McCorkle said. "I believe we will be in good shape."

Norman Joseph, offensive coordinator, discussed the four things that he looks for in practice every day and what he wants to see in games to drive the team to victory.

Before the start of the season, Joseph sat down with the offensive players and explained to them how they needed to approach the game against their opponents. He also referred to this as the Four F's: focus, fast, physical and fun.

"You need to be focused whether it is execution or just daily practice,"

Joseph said. "In the new era of football, speed kills and players on the other side are faster than ever, and you need to keep up with them."

He shared the importance of playing physically and why having fun can have a huge impact on the game.

"Physical - I know it doesn't have an F but humor me - players need to be physical and ready for a dog fight," Joseph said. "At the end of the day, this is a tough and physical game, and if you are not having fun with it, it can weigh on you."

The coaching staff expects Weber State to bring a physical matchup on both sides of the ball, Joseph said.

Matt Conner, defensive coordinator, discussed what to expect for the team's defense against the offensive side of Weber State.

"They are a physical defense and big in stature, especially their front five," Conner said. "We have to be on our A game to beat them and compete with the physicality they are going to bring this Saturday."

McCorkle acknowledged the Demons are up for a challenge against the Wildcats.

"The fact you can't point to one side of the ball shows how well-balanced they are," McCorkle said. "They are a physical team and well-balanced on both offense and defense."

The Demons coaching staff said they're ready for their game this Saturday at 6 p.m. as they return home to Turpin Stadium.



Photo by Jada Gee.  
The Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band cheer on the Demons.



Photos by Tyra Jones.  
NSU Demon football look to improve their game.



# Starbucks vs. Café Demon: Which is better?

BY VICTORIA RODRIGUE

As a college student, coffee is a must have, and Starbucks is a popular option.

Here in Natchitoches, home of Northwestern State University of Louisiana, we have two Starbucks. One is off campus on Keyser Avenue, and one is on campus attached to the Eugene P. Watson Memorial Library. The Starbucks on campus is named Café Demon, but sells Starbucks products.

When working on group assignments, studying with friends or even just hanging out with friends, Starbucks is a great meeting place. But which Starbucks should students go to? In my three years of being at NSU, I've heard plenty of debate - which Starbucks is better?

On one hand, Café Demon accepts declining balance, a meal plan offered

by NSU for students, and the Starbucks off-campus does not. For many college students, money is tight and not everybody can afford to spend \$7 on coffee. Students can save money by having an option to use their meal plan on campus. When it comes to prices, especially for students with no meal plan, Café Demon is the same as Starbucks. So, if students do not have a meal plan, the price isn't as much of a deciding factor.

The off-campus Starbucks has a wider menu selection with new drink specials and many more food and bakery options. Even though Café Demon has the same drink menu items as Starbucks, Starbucks tends to be more popular when it comes to drink quality. While the drinks might not be as good at Café Demon, the bakery items are just as delicious as Starbucks'. The blueberry muffins are absolutely to die for.

A poll posted on The Current Sauce

Instagram showed that students might prefer the Starbucks off campus with 19 votes for Café Demon and 37 votes for Starbucks. Granted the poll had participants that included graduates and other people that follow our Instagram, so consider our results lightly.

Both options are perfect study spots with plenty of seating options and a peaceful environment for students. Café Demon has an option of two cushioned chairs and a bar facing the window with four seats, as well as a few two-to-four seat tables. Starbucks also has a few two-to-four seat tables, but they also have a couple larger tables for bigger groups. Both have outside seating options which is perfect for studying while enjoying cozy fall weather.

The hours for Café Demon are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday and Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Café Demon is closed on Saturday.

Starbucks hours are from 5:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 6 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Sundays. Café demon is a great place to go in between class during the week to get some homework done, but Starbucks is a better option for early birds who need their coffee before 7 a.m.

While Starbucks is more popular than Café Demon, it lacks convenience for students who live on campus with no transportation. A 10-minute walk to Café Demon is much easier than a 40-minute walk to Starbucks with the danger of traffic. Café Demon is especially convenient for students who live at the University Place residence buildings, being only a 7-minute walk.

In the end, it all comes down to your personal preference and taking in the consideration of money, transportation and taste.

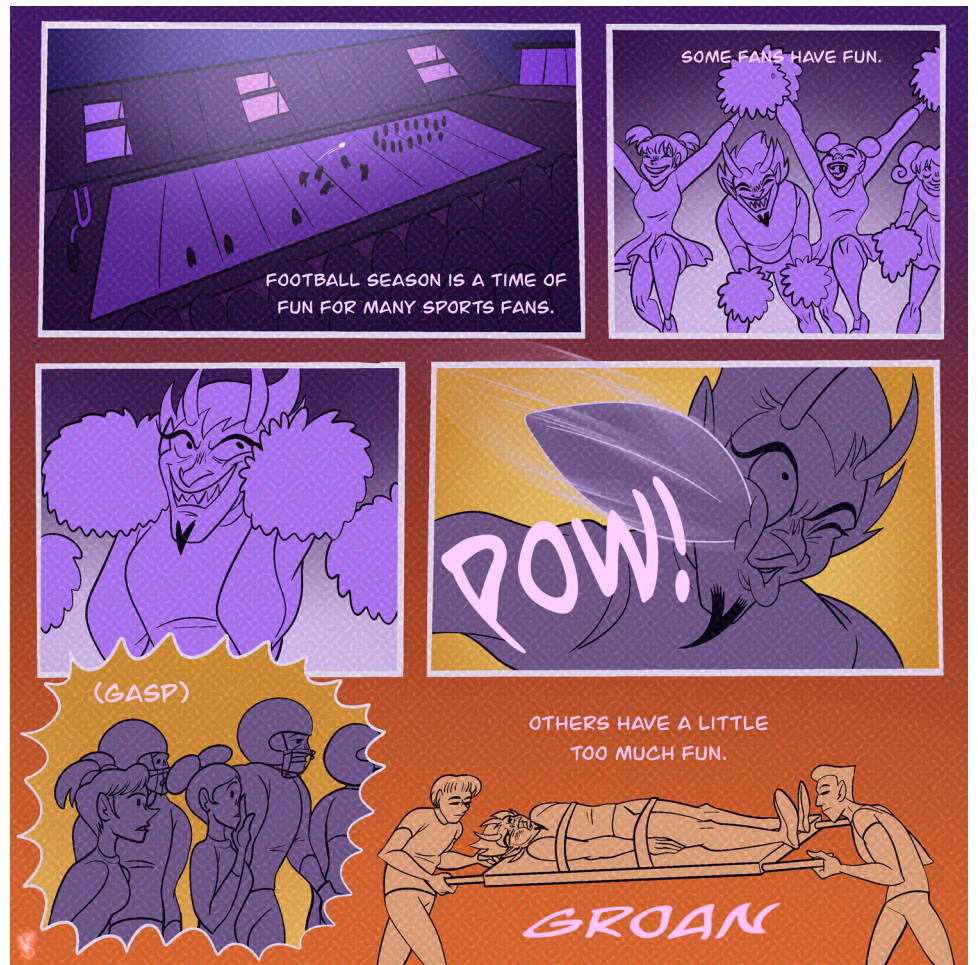




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# Football Night Fun

Illustration by Stephani Bradley



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