

GPSTI Overview

The Great Plains Software Technology Initiative, launched in July 2002 by the UNL Computer Science and Engineering Department, is dedicated to helping create the foundation for a competitive software industry on the Great Plains.

Created in response to the City of Lincoln Mayor's Technology Council recommendations, the Initiative provides a critical link between the City of Lincoln, the business community, and UNL by:

- Promoting local businesses and connecting students with employment opportunities,
- Providing opportunities for industry members to extend their knowledge on current topics in Computer Science and Engineering,
- Supporting the development of an applied software engineering curriculum, and
- Sharing our passion for technology to encourage young people and introduce them to the exciting world of computing.

The Great Plains Software Technology Initiative is housed in the Computer Science and Engineering Research Computing Facility in downtown Lincoln.



If you would like to learn more about the Initiative or become involved with the activities listed, contact:

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We're on the web!

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*Great Plains
Software Technology
Initiative*

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

Department of Computer Science
and Engineering



Great Plains Software Technology Initiative

Mission

The Great Plains Software Technology Initiative is currently focused on four primary areas of activity:

- 1) Design and development of an applied software engineering curriculum,
- 2) Development of outreach programs to recruit future CSE students,
- 3) Creation of partnerships with the software development industry, and
- 4) Establishment of an Applied Software Engineering Laboratory.

A major emphasis within these areas of activity is on helping to stem the region's "brain drain" of good students leaving the state while fostering an environment that is supportive of the software development industry and attractive to software companies who are just getting started or looking to relocate.

The Great Plains Software Technology Initiative is about forming partnerships with industry and other University organizations that leverage all of our strengths; helping create a challenging and exciting curriculum that prepares students to become technology leaders; and fostering an environment that encourages the growth and development of the local and regional software technology industry.



First-Year Accomplishments

- Provided coordination and funding for two pilot technical communication seminar courses for CSE graduate students. These courses are not only providing an immediate benefit to students by supporting their work on a thesis, dissertation, or conference paper, but the courses are also preparing the students to become effective communicators in their professional careers.
- Hosted an open house at the Research and Computing Facility in conjunction with the Downtown Lincoln Association Technology Fair.
- Provided support and matching funds for research into the use of intelligent learning objects and implementation of a "Testing from the Start" curriculum development project; and provided funding for joint projects with industry where CSE students get real-world experience and bring knowledge of state-of-the-art technology to industry partners.
- Collaborated with Instructional Design and Educational Psychology Specialists to plan and begin the "reinvention" of the Computer Science curriculum.
- Purchased workstations for use in research, training, and education in the recently created Access Grid node and PrairieView Visualization Center at the CSE Research and Computing Facility.



- Established a Student Mentoring Center to provide UNL Computer Science and Computer Engineering majors with a set of resources that will help them assimilate to college life and encourage them to continue their study in the CSE program.

Current and Planned Activities

- Expand CSE Department outreach activities to promote the exciting dimensions of computing and technology, and encourage middle school and high school students to pursue studies in computer science and engineering.
- Provide continued support for the development of a challenging and exciting curriculum that prepares students to become technology leaders.
- Provide support for continuing education, training, research and collaborative activities involving CSE faculty, students and members of industry.
- Provide additional opportunities for CSE faculty and students to meet with members of the business community and explore opportunities for student internships and collaborations; and facilitate partnerships between the CSE Department and Industry.
- Participate in the organization of a local software technology group. One of the primary goals of this group is the creation of a database of regional businesses involved in software development. This database will be used to help make connections between CSE faculty and students, and industry representatives when opportunities for collaboration arise.
- Increase the scope of student support services and activities to enhance the sense of community within the CSE Department.

