



THE MEANING  
OF "MERGER"

*The University of Omaha*

# The University of Omaha

## FACT SHEET FOR A "MERGER"

The Board of Regents of the University of Omaha and the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska have jointly agreed in principle on a "merger" of the two institutions.

### WHY?

Why is the University of Omaha, after 59 years as an "independent" institution of higher education, a party to such action? There are three reasons:

1. The future of the University of Omaha faces serious financial difficulties. A survey of the avenues of fiscal relief shows these possibilities:
  - a. State aid for operational funds and capital improvements
  - b. Private foundation grants and gifts
  - c. Additional increases in student tuition and feesState aid appears to be the only feasible solution. The establishment of a foundation is a long-range operation and time is of the essence for the University. An increase in tuition (now \$18 per credit hour for residents and \$28 per credit hour for non-residents) will continue to price more students out of an opportunity for a college education--600 were lost following an increase in 1966--and further, a tuition increase would negate the basic purpose of the University which is to provide a quality education at a reasonable cost.
2. The patrons of the University of Omaha in two recent elections have strongly indicated that they believe they cannot afford increased tax support for the University. A recent survey indicated that almost 80 per cent voted against the mill levy increase because taxes were too high, and 70 per cent in the same survey indicated that Omaha University should be state supported.
3. There is a need for coordinated cooperation in higher education in Nebraska. Such a move between the two large universities in the state can be the keystone of such cooperation and lead to statewide coordination in many other areas.

Before committing the University of Omaha to a course of "merger" with the University of Nebraska, the Omaha Board of Regents investigated several possible "types" of state aid:

1. The formation of a State University of Omaha. This would require a constitutional amendment which could be voted upon, at the earliest, in 1968, and such a plan would probably not be in operation before 1971. The Regents feel the University cannot sustain its quality programs that long while waiting for financial help.
2. The inclusion of the University of Omaha in a bill which would provide aid to junior colleges and municipal universities on a per student basis--plus direct legislative appropriations to the University of operating and improvement funds. The latter part of this proposal is thought to be illegal. The first part would provide the University between \$500,000 and 750,000 in each of the next two years. This would meet the normal growth needs of the first year, but the need is compounded and such a provision would be only a "halfway" measure in the second year. And the present problem would still exist.
3. The "merger" with the University of Nebraska.

### THE PRINCIPLES OF THE MERGER PROVIDE:

1. Reasonable academic and administrative autonomy for the University of Omaha.
2. The present college and departmental structure of the University of Omaha will be retained.
3. The members of the University of Omaha faculty will hold the rank, tenure and benefits held at the time the "merger" is official.
4. The faculties of both universities will be accorded the same rights and privileges.
5. A common governing board will be the umbrella of both universities.
6. Approval must be given by the voters of the City of Omaha.

### THE BENEFITS OF THE "MERGER" ARE MANY:

1. Financial--Funds for the operation and capital expansion of the University of Omaha would be appropriated by the State Legislature.
2. Student--Reduced tuition for all Nebraska students. The tuition rates for both universities would be the same. At the present time, a resident student who carries 15 hours at the University of Omaha is charged \$270 plus fees while the student at the University of Nebraska who is a Nebraska resident and who is carrying 12 or more hours pays a blanket fee of \$167 a semester. A Nebraska student who does not live in Omaha and who carries 15 hours at the University of Omaha is charged \$420 per semester.
3. Taxpayer--Such an agreement will prevent costly duplication and competition in expensive higher education. The taxpayer will be able to provide more education for more Nebraskans through his tax dollar.
4. The Universities--The two universities will be able to use facilities pooled on both campuses and to share knowledge and specialties and will be able to use fully the communities in which they are located as "classrooms".
5. Nebraska--The state will have an expanded educational horizon through coordinated cooperation of educational programs. More Nebraskans will be able to pursue a college education--a benefit of financial, cultural, and environmental import to the state.

# Two-thirds of Bills Stumble On Long Trail to Governor

How does a bill become a law in Nebraska?

That question is asked these days as Nebraskans realize their 49 state legislators will be faced with the task of ruling on perhaps one thousand bills before the 1967 Legislature adjourns.

If the experience of past sessions can be used as a guide, less than one-third of the bills will become law.

Those that do will have traversed a long, tortuous course. At the end of the process some will have been amended to the point of having little resemblance to the original proposal.

During the first 20 working days of the session a bill may be introduced by any senator. After the deadline, it is necessary for a standing committee to place a piece of proposed legislation before the Senate. An alternative is for the Governor to request the introduction of a bill.

When a new bill reaches Hugo Srb, veteran clerk of

the Legislature, it is read aloud by title only. It is then referred to a committee by the Lieutenant Governor, Speaker and chairman of the Committee on Committees working as a team.

The standing committee conducts a public hearing, then votes in executive session on whether to report the bill to general file, actually the floor of the Legislature, or to indefinitely postpone action, tantamount to killing the bill. Only a majority vote is required to place the bill on general file.

Reporters may be present but are confined by the rules of the Legislature to publishing only the vote count.

Occasionally, a senator will announce his committee vote for publication.

The bill may be amended in committee or during debate on the floor.

If the measure survives its initial exposure, it is advanced to the Enrollment and Review Committee which

checks the general language, spelling, punctuation and the like.

The committee then reports the bill to select file where it is debated. If it survives again, it is returned to the Enrollment and Review Committee for final editing.

Then it is placed on final reading — where the vote is taken which determines whether it will actually become law.

Twenty-five votes are needed to become law. The measure, if signed by the Governor, takes effect 90 days after the Legislature adjourns.

If the Governor vetoes the bill, the Legislature may by three-fifths vote pass it over his objections.

That process can be hastened by attaching the "emergency clause," which requires 33 affirmative votes. This provides that the bill would become law as soon as the Governor signs it.

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## Nebraska Legislators

Your support of the merger proposal. Write your state senators of your endorsement of the merger of the University of Omaha and the University of Nebraska. c/o State Legislature, State Capitol Building, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509

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| 23 Harold B. Stryker      | 48 Terry Carpenter    |
| 24 Stanley A. Matzke      | 49 George C. Gerdes   |
| 25 Jerome Warner          |                       |

Members of the Legislature's Education Committee: Senators Lester Harsh, chairman; Arnold Ruhnke, William F. Swanson, Donald Elrod, Miss Florence Reynolds, Ross H. Rasmussen, George Syas, Rudolf C. Kokes.