NEBRASKA'S

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COORDINATING COMMISSION
FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education

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Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education

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INTRODUCTION

One hundred fifty years into its statehood, the knowledge, skills, and discoveries that result from postsecondary education are more critical than ever to Nebraska's well-being as it faces forces such as global competition, technological innovation, and social change. To their great credit, Nebraskans have valued postsecondary education since before statehood, and they have created and supported a comprehensive network of colleges and universities that has continuously developed to meet the needs of students, communities, and the state.

The constitution and statutes of Nebraska assign the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education the responsibility for comprehensive planning for postsecondary education in Nebraska. The purpose of the *Comprehensive Plan for Postsecondary Education* is to provide direction for the future of postsecondary education in Nebraska. It identifies goals that will lead to an educationally and economically sound, vigorous, progressive, and coordinated higher education network throughout the state. It is used by the Coordinating Commission to facilitate most of its statutory decision-making processes.

For the state and its students to receive maximum benefits, the *Comprehensive Plan* must be accepted and supported by the educational community, the governor, the Legislature, businesses, and citizens within our state. Most importantly, it must reflect and project the values and aspirations of the people of Nebraska.

The *Comprehensive Plan* is built upon the foundation of existing postsecondary educational institutions within our state, the current and projected demographics of the state, the economic and political realities of the state, and the state's constitution and statutes. By statute, the *Plan* must include the role and mission assignments for each public postsecondary education institution, as well as the Commission's recommended guidelines on issues such as tuition and fee levels, admission standards, dual credit, and articulation. It is the shared vision and statewide goals, however, that most influence the design of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

As the environment for postsecondary education changes, the *Comprehensive Plan* must continually evolve and adjust. The Commission approved the state's first *Comprehensive Plan* in June 1992. In 1999, the state Legislature passed LB 816, calling for review and revision of the *Comprehensive Plan* by the Commission, in collaboration with higher education governing boards.

As the Commission noted in in its 2000 revision, it is the responsibility of those who are interested in education and care about Nebraska's future to review regularly this vital document to assure it meets the state's changing needs. Since the *Comprehensive Plan's* approval by the Commission in 2000, its recommended guidelines have been updated from time to time to meet the challenges of the changing educational environment. In 2014 and 2015, institutional peers were updated in cooperation with the public postsecondary institutions. A review of Nebraska's evolving environment and the *Comprehensive Plan's* vision, goals, and guidelines was undertaken in 2015 and 2016. Additional review and revisions will follow.

Postsecondary Education Institutions and Structure: An Overview

Nebraskans benefit from a comprehensive network of diverse two- and four-year, public and private postsecondary educational institutions that provide an array of programs and services (see Table 1 on page iv). This network of institutions is comprised of:

- **Public sector institutions**, which include: the University of Nebraska's four campuses and the two-year College of Technical Agriculture; three state colleges; and six area community colleges, which have a total of 13 campuses and numerous centers.
- **Independent, nonprofit colleges and universities,** which are comprised of 18 four-year colleges and universities and two federally funded tribal colleges.
- **Private career schools**, which encompass more than 50 institutions offering programs in areas such as cosmetology, business, allied health, real estate, and skilled crafts.

(For a complete listing of all public and private institutions, see Appendix 1.)

The University of Nebraska is governed by a constitutionally established, eight-member, elected Board of Regents. There also are four non-voting student regents, each representing a University of Nebraska campus.

The state colleges are governed by a constitutionally established, seven-member Board of Trustees comprised of six members appointed by the governor and approved by the Legislature, and the Nebraska Commissioner of Education, as well as three non-voting student trustees representing each of the colleges.

Each of the six community college areas is governed by a separate governing board elected from within the college's geographic service area. Five of the area boards are assisted and coordinated by the constitutionally referenced Nebraska Community College Association.

Most of the independent colleges and universities have their own governing boards that select their own members.

Most of the private career schools are licensed through the state Department of Education and, most often, are managed by their owners.

The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education is a constitutional agency with responsibilities for higher education planning and coordination. Its 11 Commissioners are appointed by the governor with approval by the Legislature. The Commission's role is that of a coordinating entity, not that of a governing board. The Commission's primary purposes include promoting cooperation and collaboration among all sectors of higher education in the state and eliminating unnecessary duplication among the public sector institutions.

TABLE ONE (A)

NEBRASKA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	
THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES (See Appendix 1 for a listing of all campuses.)	Central Community College Metropolitan Community College Mid-Plains Community College Northeast Community College Southeast Community College Western Nebraska Community College
THE STATE COLLEGE SYSTEM	Chadron State College Peru State College Wayne State College
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA	University of Nebraska at Kearney University of Nebraska-Lincoln University of Nebraska Medical Center University of Nebraska at Omaha Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture
INDEPENDENT NOT-FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES	Bellevue University, Bryan College of Health Sciences, Clarkson College, College of Saint Mary, Concordia University, Creighton University, Doane University, Grace University, Hastings College, Nebraska Christian College, Little Priest Tribal College, Midland University, Nebraska Indian Community College, Nebraska Methodist College, Nebraska Wesleyan University, Omaha School of Massage & Healthcare of Herzing University, St. Gregory the Great Seminary, Summit Christian College, Union College, York College
INDEPENDENT FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES	The Creative Center, ITT Technical Services, Inc., Kaplan University, National American University

PRIVATE CAREER SCHOOLS (Regulated by the Nebraska Department of Education and other agencies)	Categories Business Schools Barber & Cosmetology Schools Driver Training Schools Hospitals offering Nursing & Allied Health Programs Pilot Schools Real Estate Schools Trade & Technical Schools Modeling Schools Miscellaneous Schools

TABLE ONE (B)

OUT-OF-STATE INSTITUTIONS AUTHORIZED TO OPERATE IN NEBRASKA
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University - Daytona Beach, FL Hope International University dba Nebraska Christian College via 2016 merger Kansas State University dba: MidWest Veterinary Specialty Hospital - Manhattan, KS La Sierra University - Riverside, CA North American Baptist Seminary dba: Sioux Falls Seminary - Sioux Falls, SD Strayer University dba: Verizon Wireless Call Center - Washington, DC University of Missouri - Columbia, MO University of Oklahoma - Norman, OK University of South Dakota - Vermillion, SD

Chapter One

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION FOR NEBRASKA'S FUTURE

Vision for Nebraska Postsecondary Education

Nebraskans will reap many benefits from affordable, accessible, and high-quality postsecondary education. Nebraska's people will value and support postsecondary institutions that are vital, vigorous, and visionary. Each postsecondary institution will fulfill its role and mission with distinction by being responsive to changing academic, workforce, societal, economic, cultural, and community development needs. Together, Nebraska's postsecondary institutions will provide access to educational opportunities that meet the diverse needs of students and citizens; create environments that foster student success; position Nebraska to excel in the global economy; and exercise careful, creative, and cooperative stewardship of available resources.

The Evolving Environment

Nebraska is known as the home of the "good life," made possible by good K-12 schools, high quality of life, low unemployment, a strong work ethic, rich cultural offerings, and an array of postsecondary education opportunities. Given the demographic and economic realities within the state and rapid changes in the global economy, this *Plan* charts a course for creative and proactive leadership in postsecondary education that can position Nebraska to maintain the good life far into the future.

Nebraska is a geographically large state with a widely dispersed population. Minority populations are the only segment of the population projected to show any long-term growth, and that growth will be gradual compared to the rest of the nation. Nebraska's working-age population is projected to grow by only 3 percent between 2010 and 2030. The only significant population growth is expected to occur in the thirteen metropolitan counties located primarily in the southeastern quarter of the state. These demographic projections, combined with Nebraska's traditionally low unemployment rates, its aging population, and its relative lack of net in-migration, will exacerbate existing workforce shortages and threaten the state's future economic growth.

While the state's population is projected to grow slowly, the costs of needed local, state, and federal government services and infrastructures, including those of public postsecondary education, will likely continue to grow. This places an increasing burden on the taxpayers of the state. Nebraska traditionally has one of the highest participation rates in postsecondary education in the country. It also ranks among the top ten states in the nation in per capita state appropriations for public postsecondary education. Nebraska average annual wages rank relatively low

nationally, making the tax burden to support state services, including public postsecondary education, relatively high.

This *Plan* builds on the educational strengths of the state. The state and its postsecondary institutions can work together to effectively address the challenges facing Nebraska and prepare the state and its citizens to be successful. The economic base in Nebraska may have limitations, but Nebraska's educational base is strong and provides an opportunity to significantly impact the state's destiny.

The following section highlights some of the major forces for change in the future, along with their potential impacts on postsecondary education and the state.

DEMOGRAPHIC FORCES

- The state as a whole will experience modest population growth, with metropolitan and other urban areas experiencing most of the growth. In contrast, many rural counties will continue to lose population.
- Statewide, total numbers of high school graduates are projected to continue to increase slightly before leveling off by 2022. The proportion of high school graduates from minority groups is expected to increase consistently.
- The population will become more diverse as numbers of Hispanics and other minorities grow faster than the non-minority population.
- Nebraska's postsecondary education attainment gap between minority populations and the white, non-Hispanic population is among the largest in the country at 27.9 percent.
- Migrants to Nebraska from other states tend to have lower incomes, lower educational attainment, and be from minority groups.
- About 40% of PK-12 students qualify for free and reduced lunches.
- The proportion of Nebraskans aged 65 and older is projected to increase from 13.5 percent in 2010 to 20.4 percent in 2030. The proportion of Nebraskans aged 20 to 64 is projected to decline from 58.4 percent to 53.6 percent.
- High proportions of Nebraskans aged 55 and older are employed compared to most states and the nation.

Potential Impacts:

- Overall, institutions of postsecondary education will see increased competition for traditional-age, in-state students.
- More of these students than in the past will come to postsecondary education with substantial financial need.
- Institutions will develop new strategies and support programs for attracting, retaining, and graduating minority students.
- Nebraska institutions will intensify efforts to recruit out-of-state students, including international students, and will work harder to retain Nebraska students.
- As more adults remain in the workforce, there will be a continuing need for access to lifelong learning and retraining opportunities to keep skills current to

workplace needs.

- Many adults will require some form of adult basic education, including English Language Learner (ELL) instruction.
- Institutions will develop new strategies and support programs for attracting and retaining adult students who need new skills and training, some of whom will enroll part-time and take courses via distance education technology.
- As the population becomes more diverse, educational attainment will decrease unless educational participation among minorities increases.

ECONOMIC FORCES

- Employers are demanding a skilled workforce that can keep pace with an explosion of knowledge and rapid technological change – locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.
- It is estimated that 71 percent of Nebraska jobs will require at least some postsecondary education by 2020. This includes everything from vocational certificates through graduate and professional degrees.
- Nebraska consistently has one of the nation's lowest unemployment rates.
- Economic growth in Nebraska is limited by shortages of workers, especially those with science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), and design training.
- Nebraska ranks low in comparison with other states in private and federal research funds, limiting opportunities for new business growth and innovation within the state.
- Agriculture remains a foundation of Nebraska's economy and is becoming more technical and diversified, with increasing emphasis on precision production, value-added processing, and niche marketing.
- Economic development is constrained by the out-migration of Nebraskans with at least some postsecondary education who do not find employment opportunities in Nebraska that match their skills and interests.

Potential Impacts:

- Postsecondary institutions will need to respond rapidly to employer needs and become increasingly flexible in course content and in the use of technology in delivery of instruction.
- Institutions will see a growing demand from business and from students for specialized knowledge and skill certifications (in professional, vocational, and technical areas such as information technology) to meet workforce needs.
- Businesses will become more involved in assisting students/future employees with the costs of their education as a way to meet workforce needs.
- The state will consider incentives for recruiting and educating students in targeted workforce shortage areas.
- Efforts to raise student awareness of workforce shortage areas and career opportunities will begin as early as middle school.
- Businesses will expect increased levels of assistance from postsecondary

education in the areas of technology transfer, applied research, and technical assistance.

- Advances in information technologies will create expanded opportunities for businesses to locate production facilities at sites remote from central offices.
- It will become increasingly important for the state's primary research institutions to compete effectively for federal and private research funding.
- Postsecondary institutions will continue to encourage and reward innovation and entrepreneurship, not only among their faculty and their students but Nebraska businesses, as well.
- Innovation and expansions sparked by postsecondary institutions will lead to more employment opportunities that are attractive to recent graduates, creating a virtuous circle of economic growth.

POLITICAL FORCES

- Competition for state funding continues to grow, as does the motivation to lower the state and local tax burdens on businesses and individuals.
- Provision of services for an aging population is requiring more attention and resources from state policymakers.
- Support remains strong for public institutions that demonstrate responsiveness to local, regional, and state needs.
- There is growing pressure on both K-12 and postsecondary education that students be adequately prepared for college and careers.
- The significant increase in the cost of education and student indebtedness has led to an increasing recognition among lawmakers that postsecondary education must be made more affordable.
- State and national policymakers are increasingly interested in understanding employment outcomes and providing that information to students in an easily accessible and transparent manner.
- State and national policymakers and accrediting bodies increasingly expect measures of accountability and performance from postsecondary education institutions.

Potential Impacts:

- Restrictions on property taxes for K-12 education and community colleges, as well as other state and local taxes, may result in heightened competition for state tax funds and increased tuition.
- Students, parents, and state and federal policymakers will demand creative solutions to reduce college cost and student debt and mitigate its effects on career, family, and consumption opportunities.
- Postsecondary educational institutions will have a strong, vested interest in the welfare of Nebraska's economy and in the employment outcomes of their students.
- Reporting on employment outcomes for graduates, both in terms of location and earnings, will become more prevalent at the state and federal levels.

- The accountability expectations of governing boards, legislators, consumers, and accrediting agencies will result in improved institutional accountability measures and clearer reporting.

EDUCATIONAL FORCES

- Nebraska has achieved one of the highest high school graduation rates in the country. However, there are significant differences in graduation rates by race and ethnicity.
- Nebraska has traditionally had a very high rate of participation in postsecondary education, though other states are closing the gap in terms of the percentage of high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary education.
- As in other states, too many Nebraska high school graduates are assessed as needing remediation when they enroll in college.
- High schools and colleges are facing increasing demands to provide a challenging curriculum that allows appropriately prepared high school students to take college-level courses for high school and college credit.
- Career academies are increasing in popularity as postsecondary education, K-12, and the business community partner to address workforce needs.
- "Nontraditional" students – including students older than 22, students with children, veterans, and students who work full time – make up a significant proportion of postsecondary enrollments, particularly at community colleges, which serve large numbers of students in non-credit as well as credit-bearing courses.
- Nebraska's college students are mobile. Each fall, over 25 percent of new-to-campus students at public institutions are transfer students, and Nebraska students complete their undergraduate degrees after transferring at a higher percentage than the national average. Many independent Nebraska postsecondary institutions enroll large numbers of transfer students as well.
- Some postsecondary institutions increasingly rely on part-time faculty to teach courses.
- Both the cost of education for taxpayers and the price of education for students and parents are rising faster than general inflation and family incomes.
- In spite of progress in addressing deferred maintenance needs, facilities on the campuses are aging and are in need of repair, replacement, renovation, adaptation to new technologies, and upgrades to safety and security measures.
- Information technology is ubiquitous in all aspects of postsecondary education, from classrooms to communications to media access to student services and research. There are no areas of postsecondary education untouched by the need for up-to-date software, hardware, and high-speed broadband capacity and availability.
- Information technologies have vastly expanded access to postsecondary education. Distance is less relevant to off-campus postsecondary instruction for more learners, and many on-campus students enroll in a mix of face-to-face, hybrid, and online courses.
- Nationally, corporations, for-profit postsecondary institutions, and new training

entities such as coding academies and massive open online course providers are responding rapidly to the open market environment, greatly expanding opportunities for in-house corporate training, online courses, and training programs that are valued by employers but do not award traditional credentials.
- As new providers enter the market, competency-based credentials are vying for credibility alongside traditional credit-hour based credentials.

Potential Impacts:

- High schools and colleges will concur on what constitutes college and career readiness and align testing and curricula to mitigate the need for remediation at the postsecondary level.
- Postsecondary institutions and high schools will increasingly offer dual enrollment programs for high school students to enrich the high school curriculum and provide a transition to college.
- Growing student mobility and affordability concerns will require that postsecondary institutions continue to strengthen transfer and articulation agreements.
- More students will borrow and/or borrow more to fund their education.
- Many students will be employed while in college, typically adding to the time it takes them to complete their education. Some may not graduate, or may enroll intermittently for long periods of time.
- The State of Nebraska and the institutions will continue to direct funds toward maintenance, repair, replacement, and renovation of existing facilities, as well as adapting facilities to new technologies.
- As costs of education continue to escalate, institutions increasingly will look toward methods of collaboration with other institutions to become more efficient.
- Efforts must be made to ensure that inadequate internet access and/or speed does not limit the ability of communities and students to take advantage of the full range of course offerings now available online.
- The postsecondary environment will remain highly competitive as new education and training providers enter Nebraska either physically or online. Quality and consumer protection standards will need to adapt to the changing environment nationally and in states.

Shared Values and Beliefs

Focusing on this *Plan's* vision for postsecondary education will help ensure that Nebraskans now and in the future benefit from the "good life" for which the state is known. The vision is based on the following values and beliefs that the Coordinating Commission shares with the leaders of Nebraska postsecondary education institutions and their governing board members:

- All Nebraska citizens, unrestricted by age, culture, disabilities, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, socioeconomic status, or geographic location, deserve reasonable and affordable access to postsecondary education opportunities appropriate to their individual needs and abilities.
- While access to postsecondary education is paramount, it is not an end in itself. Student success is the ultimate goal of postsecondary education and is the shared responsibility of students and institutions.
- Nebraska's citizens benefit from a comprehensive network of diverse and high-quality postsecondary education institutions that maintain distinct, but complementary, roles and missions.
- The state benefits when Nebraska institutions focus resources on unique areas of excellence in which they can bring major benefits to the state and to students.
- A cooperative relationship between postsecondary education and K-12 education is needed to ensure that students enter postsecondary education prepared to succeed.
- Postsecondary education has an important role in supporting the state's economic development goals by contributing to a competent and competitive workforce for our state, by ensuring lifelong learning and training opportunities for our citizens, and by promoting an innovative and entrepreneurial culture that rises to the challenge of globalization.
- Nebraska's postsecondary institutions fill a vital role in many communities by serving as a cultural hub, not only educating their students in the arts and humanities but sharing those learning opportunities with the public whenever possible.
- Postsecondary education's ability to apply information technology effectively to respond rapidly to changing student, employer, and state needs is critical to its success.
- Nebraska's public institutions rely on State of Nebraska funding policies that are fair and predictable and offer appropriate levels of support to enable the institutions to meet the educational needs of students and the state.
- Nebraska public institutions are accountable to the taxpayers for making wise use of resources for programs, services, and facilities, as well as for avoiding unnecessary duplication.
- Nebraska strives to perform at the highest levels nationally in terms of postsecondary access, success, affordability, efficiency, and impact and will measure its performance and progress in these areas.

Major Statewide Goals

The following major statewide goals are critical to the achievement of this *Plan's* vision for postsecondary education in Nebraska. Accomplishing these goals will require substantial cooperative effort on the part of all persons involved with higher education in the state. Further discussion of each major statewide goal and strategies for the accomplishment of each major goal form the framework for chapters two through six of this *Plan*:

Meeting the Needs of Students (Chapter Two)

- Nebraska's institutions and policymakers will increase participation and success in postsecondary education, particularly for low-income and underrepresented populations, and ensure that all Nebraskans are able to access and successfully complete postsecondary education appropriate to their individual needs and abilities, unrestricted by age, culture, disabilities, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, socioeconomic status, or geographic location.

- Nebraska postsecondary institutions and policymakers will collaborate to ensure that lack of financial resources will not prevent students from accessing and completing postsecondary education in a timely manner without unreasonable student debt.

- Nebraska's postsecondary institutions will cooperate to increase effectiveness, reduce students costs, and shorten time to degree through innovations in course transfer such as reverse transfer and seamless transfer agreements.

- Nebraska's postsecondary institutions will be student-centered, create inclusive environments that foster student success, and offer lifelong learning opportunities that are responsive to students' and workforce needs.

- Nebraska colleges and universities will foster critical thinking skills and provide their graduates with the knowledge and workplace skills needed to be successful employees, innovative entrepreneurs, and responsible citizens on a global stage.

Meeting the Needs of the State (Chapter Three)

- Nebraska will close the historical educational attainment gaps between majority and underrepresented populations and be among the leading states in overall educational attainment.

- Postsecondary education in Nebraska will be responsive to the workforce development and ongoing training needs of employers and industries to build and sustain a knowledgeable, trained, and skilled workforce in both rural and

urban areas of the state.

- Postsecondary institutions will contribute to the health and prosperity of the people and to the vitality of the state through research and development efforts, technology transfer and technical assistance, and by attracting external funds to support these activities.

- Postsecondary education institutions will assess evolving needs and priorities of the students and people of Nebraska in a timely manner and will adopt new methods and technologies to address them.

- Postsecondary education will serve the state by preparing individuals for productive, fulfilling lives and by developing and nurturing the citizens and future leaders of Nebraska.

- Postsecondary education institutions will maintain their distinctive role as providers of cultural and artistic opportunities to students and their communities through study, research, and programming.

Meeting Needs by Building Exemplary Institutions (Chapter Four)

- Each Nebraska institution will fulfill its role and mission in an exemplary manner and will compare favorably with peer institutions.

- Nebraska will value postsecondary education and support its investment in public postsecondary education through fair and reliable funding policies that provide appropriate levels of support to enable institutions to excel and meet the educational needs of the state and its students.

- Postsecondary education in Nebraska will be effective in meeting the needs of students and the state, will be efficient in its expenditure of the state's resources, and will be accountable for developing, sustaining, and demonstrating exemplary teaching, learning, research, and public service.

Meeting Educational Needs through Partnerships and Collaboration (Chapter Five)

- Postsecondary education institutions will work as partners with one another and with other entities, including those in the private sector, whenever appropriate to share resources and deliver programs cooperatively to enhance learning opportunities for Nebraska residents.

- Postsecondary education will work effectively with elementary and secondary schools to improve teaching and learning at all levels of education, provide opportunities for early college enrollment, and ensure the college and career readiness of all high school graduates.

Facilities Planning to Meet Educational Needs (Chapter Six)

- Nebraska will promote a physical environment at each of its public postsecondary institutions that is supportive of role and mission; is well utilized and effectively accommodates space needs; is safe, accessible, cost effective, and well maintained; and is flexible to adapt to future changes in programs and technologies.

Measuring Accomplishments

Nebraska is committed to measuring its progress toward achieving the major statewide goals through national comparisons and institutional peer comparisons. It is the aim of this *Plan* that, when rank order is appropriate, Nebraska will rank among the ten best states in national comparisons and individual public institutions will rank among the five best institutions in peer comparisons.

National Comparisons

1. Educational attainment by race/ethnicity and age (25 to 34 and 25 to 64)
2. Public high school graduation rates
3. Percentage of high school graduates who met or exceeded college readiness benchmarks as measured by the State's standard college admission test
4. Percentage of high school graduates going directly to college
5. Percentage of population enrolled in college: persons 25-49 without an associate's degree or higher
6. Percentage of first-time, full-time baccalaureate-seeking students who graduated within four years at public four-year institutions
7. Six-year completion rates at any campus for students who started at public four-year campuses
8. Six-year completion rates at any campus for students who started at public two-year campuses
9. State and local appropriations per FTE student
10. Net tuition revenue per FTE student
11. State need-based grant aid per FTE student
12. Percentage of family income needed to pay net price for full-time enrollment at public two-and four-year institutions: families with median incomes
13. Percentage of family income needed to pay net price for full-time enrollment at public two-and four-year institutions: families in lowest income quintile

Peer Comparisons

1. Enrollment percentages by race/ethnicity and low-income status (Pell)
2. Graduation and enrollment status at six and eight years
3. Graduation rates – 150 percent of normal time by race/ethnicity
4. Four-year graduation rates – four-year campuses
5. Persistence/attainment outcomes by end of year two – community colleges
6. Remedial student course taking and success – community colleges
7. State and local appropriations per FTE student
8. Tuition and fees per FTE student
9. Education and general spending per FTE student and degree
10. Average net price of attendance for students receiving grant or scholarship aid
11. Average net price of attendance for students receiving federal financial aid from the two lowest income quintiles
12. Percentage of undergraduates with federal loans and median federal loan debt of graduates
13. Research and development expenditures – all sources, University of Nebraska campuses
14. Research and development expenditures – federal sources, University of Nebraska campuses

Non-comparative Measures

1. Percentage of high school graduates going directly to college by race/ethnicity, gender, and income – state
2. Dual credit, AP, and other early college enrollments – state
3. Number of recent high school graduates enrolled in remedial education – state

4. Number of degrees and credentials awarded in identified high-need areas – institutional and state

5. Number of students completing adult basic education and continuing into postsecondary education – institutional and state

6. Enrollment in non-credit, continuing education – institutional and state

7. Employment outcomes of graduates – institutional and state

8. Educational attainment by county

These national, institutional peer, and non-comparative measures may be updated or adapted to incorporate the best available data as state and national data sources improve or change.

Chapter Two

MEETING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS

The heart of any great higher education system is the student, the learner. Education that is vital, vigorous and visionary begins by identifying and addressing the current and future needs and aspirations of its students.

Goals and Strategies

Major Statewide Goal:
Participation and Access

Nebraska institutions and policymakers will seek methods to increase participation and success in higher education and to ensure that access to higher education institutions' programs and services is not restricted by factors such as geographic location, economic status, age, culture, disability, color, national origin, or gender.

Access to postsecondary education is vitally important to the people of Nebraska. Its citizens strongly believe that postsecondary education opportunities should be readily available to them. For the most part, Nebraskans do enjoy reasonable access to postsecondary education. The sectors of postsecondary education provide Nebraskans with many educational choices and, as a network of institutions, offer access for students of all ability levels.

PARTICIPATION

Nebraskans attend college at a higher rate than the national average and the great majority choose to remain in Nebraska for their education. Other states have exceeded Nebraska's participation rates in recent years, however, dropping Nebraska's national ranking. Improving participation rates, especially for underrepresented minorities, is still an important goal.

- **Strive for the highest participation rate in postsecondary education among the states.**

AFFORDABILITY

Family income levels should not determine whether an individual has access to higher education. Ensuring financial access to higher education is a shared responsibility of state and federal government, higher education institutions, and the students and their families. They must combine to provide sufficient support to ensure that qualified financially needy students have the opportunity to attend postsecondary education institutions that best match their needs, aspirations, and abilities.

- **Keep the net price of higher education affordable for students.**

Financial Aid

One means of keeping higher education affordable is to provide sufficient amounts of financial aid to needy students. Nebraska does not currently provide adequate financial support to financially needy students.

- **Increase state support for the state-administered, need-based financial aid program to improve Nebraska's competitive position to above the national average.**

- **Ensure that financially needy adult students who are enrolled on a part-time basis have access to the state's financial aid program.**

- **Explore the potential of deferred tuition payments or installment plans in helping to eliminate financial barriers to higher education.**

- **Encourage employers to provide tuition reimbursement programs for their employees who are taking relevant education and training courses to improve their job skills. Programs that reimburse the employees at the time they pay tuition instead of at the completion of the course further eliminate financial barriers to higher education.**

Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees are another factor in the affordability of higher education. The rising cost of postsecondary education throughout the country has raised concerns that some students may be priced out of opportunities. While tuition and fees at Nebraska's public institutions are generally less than national averages, paying for a college education is a barrier to higher education for many students and their families.

- **Continue the existing state policy of maintaining moderate tuition rates at public postsecondary education institutions to promote access.**

- **Tuition rates will be moderate in comparison to each institution's peers and will be consistent with the recommended guidelines on the following page.**

Coordinating Commission's
Recommended Tuition & Fee Guidelines:

1) Tuition and fee rates are set at a level within each sector that is appropriate to that sector's role and mission.

- Community colleges, which offer students entry-level career training or lower division academic transfer programs, will have the lowest tuition of the three sectors to ensure that they remain the sector with the broadest access. To keep community college tuition at a level that encourages public access, it will be necessary to maintain appropriate levels of state support for community colleges.
- State colleges, which have a role and mission focusing on undergraduate and limited graduate-degree education, will have a mid-range level of tuition and fees. Tuition at these regional institutions will be maintained at levels that continue to encourage access by the citizens of their regions.
- The University of Nebraska's campuses, which have more comprehensive and differentiated missions that encompass research and extensive professional and graduate-level programming, will have the highest and most differentiated tuition rates of the three public sectors, based on the role and mission of each campus.

2) The state's taxpayers continue to bear the majority of the cost of education for students at public postsecondary institutions, on a per student basis. The students' share of the cost of education, as measured by student payment share, should be appropriate to the role and mission of each sector.

Student payment share, defined as the total revenue from tuition and mandatory fees compared to the total of tuition, mandatory fees, state support, and local support, should adhere to the following differentiations within each sector:

- The student payment share at the community colleges should be the lowest of the three public sectors.
- The student payment share at the state colleges should be greater than the student share at community colleges, but less than that at a University of Nebraska campus.
- The student payment share at the University of Nebraska should be greater than either the state colleges or the community colleges.

3) Institutions set comparatively low non-resident tuition and fee rates to attract out-of-state students to the state, which may eventually help to meet the state's needs for additional workers, and may encourage cultural diversity on the campuses.

4) Tuition for graduate-level and professional courses reflect the higher costs of these programs.

As part of its statutory responsibility to provide the governor and Legislature with a biennial report on tuition and fee rates at Nebraska public postsecondary education institutions, the Commission compares the tuition and fee rates of Nebraska institutions with those of their peer institutions identified in the Comprehensive Plan. The Commission also provides data to help measure the affordability of higher education in Nebraska in terms of tuition as a proportion of family income.

College Savings Plans

Encouraging families to prepare financially for the cost of postsecondary education is another means of making college more affordable. In 2000, Nebraska created a State College Savings Plan program to assist Nebraska families to save for the cost of postsecondary education. Inherent in this program and other such programs are investment and tax benefits that motivate families to begin saving.

- **Encourage Nebraska families to invest and save funds to offset the future costs of higher education through various private and public college savings programs, including the Nebraska College Savings Plan.**

DIVERSITY

Nebraska's population is becoming more diverse each year, with growing numbers of Hispanics, African-Americans, Native Americans, and Asians. The changing demographics of the state are reflected in the increasingly diverse student bodies of the campuses, yet issues and barriers to higher education—either real or perceived—still exist for many in these population groups. This is especially true for first-generation college students. Overcoming these barriers will benefit these students and their families as well as the state by increasing the numbers of Nebraska citizens who have the education and training needed to contribute to the state's economic and social well-being.

Campuses must also be aware of the special needs of students with disabilities and of returning and first-time adult students. As institutions have become more accessible and accommodating to special-needs students and more flexible in scheduling for non-traditional age students, these students' numbers have also increased, adding to the diversity on the campuses.

- **Support existing programs and undertake new initiatives to support equity and promote diversity within the institutions' student bodies.**
  - Assure that all students, including students of color and non-traditional-age students, are welcomed and integrated into campus life and have opportunities to succeed.
  - Increase efforts to recruit and retain a diverse student body.
  - Implement programs and allocate resources toward the goal of increasing baccalaureate degree completion rates of underrepresented populations.
  - Use existing databases and indicators to track the progress of underrepresented population groups in higher education in areas such as enrollment, retention, and completion.
  - Implement initiatives to eliminate discrimination, support equity, and promote diversity within student bodies, faculty, and staff.

- Provide virtually universal access at community colleges, which will provide educational opportunities ranging from foundations course work to technical and academic transfer programs.
- Assure that campuses are accessible to students with disabilities.
- Provide flexible hours and daytime and evening classes to meet the scheduling needs of students, particularly of working adults enrolled on a part-time basis.
- Target recruitment plans to attract students of color and other underrepresented students to the campuses and help prepare them for college.
- Actively recruit faculty and student role models for the new student populations so that as many students as possible see persons like themselves in a variety of responsible, admirable positions, particularly for women and minorities in fields in which they are often under-represented, such as mathematics, science, and engineering.
- Support special activities, such as mentoring programs and peer counseling, that help first-generation college students, non-traditional age students, and students from underrepresented populations succeed in the campus environment.
- Promote an awareness and appreciation of cultural and racial diversity through curriculum and student campus activities.
- Encourage the allocation of state funds for achievement of these objectives.

USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY TO BROADEN ACCESS

Expanded use of electronic distance learning and other instructional technologies is a key strategy in broadening access to postsecondary education and life-long learning for Nebraska citizens. Geographic boundaries and remote locations present few obstacles for most of these technologies. Courses may be delivered via terrestrial or satellite-based telecommunications, such as a two-way interactive video classrooms, or individually to students through computer-mediated or Internet-based programs at times and places of choice.

Nebraskans are able to choose from a broad array of educational options offered through these various technologies by in-state and out-of-state institutions, businesses, and other entities. Increasingly, course work offered via technology is student-centered, self-paced, and flexible as to time and place.

- **Commit to the use of information technologies to expand educational opportunities; overcome geographic barriers; provide high quality, accessible education programs; and make higher education available at nearly any time or any place.**

  - Through expanded, coordinated, and well-planned use of instructional technologies throughout the state, institutions can:

    - Use instructional technology and connectivity, when appropriate, to share courses, faculty, and other resources among institutions to make the best use

of state resources and to serve students by increasing access to programs and enabling students to enroll concurrently at two or more institutions.
  - Provide a reasonably efficient method of broadening and enhancing access to postsecondary educational opportunities, particularly to working and place-bound adults.
  - Allow opportunities for innovative and coordinated educational projects among the schools, postsecondary education, and the communities they serve.
  - Tailor courses and programs to meet the needs of specific groups of people, regardless of their location.
  - Serve businesses and their employees through increased access to, and sharing of, educational and business-related expertise.
  - Share high quality courses and programs taught by outstanding faculty to broaden and enrich the educational experience of students at more institutions and provide greater efficiency in use of the state's resources.
  - Enable learners, including fully employed adult students, to gain competencies in a variety of ways and be certified by objective means.
  - Use competency-based learning models to meet the needs of adult learners by offering specific components of traditional courses that represent learning objectives and that are in demand by adult learners.
- Ensure that all distance learning programs available in Nebraska result in learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the degrees/certificates awarded.

  - Inform citizens of the expectations and standards for educational programs delivered through instructional technologies and, to the extent possible, assure the quality of those educational programs and support services made available to students residing throughout the state.
  - Endorse the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and School's *Guidelines for Distance Learning* and take measures to ensure that courses offered in Nebraska via instructional technologies meet or exceed the standards. (See Appendix 2 for the North Central Association's Guidelines for Distance Learning.) The Commission will utilize these guidelines in fulfilling its constitutional and statutory duties to review new programs and to review applications for out-of-state programs and new private colleges.

- Encourage and reward faculty for incorporating technology into courses and subjects.

Learning Centers

The rapidly expanding use of new distance learning technologies has not only greatly enhanced access, but has also made possible cooperative ventures among institutions inside and outside the state that broaden the learning experience of students and expand learning opportunities. Cooperative educational projects, such as community-based learning centers, bring beneficial programs to different regions of the state while

saving money for the state and its students.

- **Participate in learning centers and educational consortia that increase access to and participation in higher education throughout the state.**

  The development and operation of a learning center are dependent on the commitment of the community, the state, and the participating institutions for ongoing success. Responsibilities are shared as follows:

  – Communities are largely responsible for undertaking the initiative to create the learning center within the community, including providing the facility to house it.
  – The state has a major responsible for providing the statewide connectivity and technology that allows learning centers to import needed programming from higher education institutions.
  – The institutions that serve the community have primary responsibility for meeting the community's needs in providing appropriate courses and programs.

Major Statewide Goal:
Student-Centered

Nebraska's postsecondary education institutions will be student-centered and will offer learning opportunities that are responsive to students' needs.

Equally important to the opportunity to participate in higher education is the opportunity for students to succeed in higher education. Institutions that truly meet student needs provide programs, services, and campus environments that not only meet the current needs of students, but also are sufficiently flexible to meet the need of a changing student population.

PREPARATION AND ADMISSION STANDARDS

Clearly defined preparation and admission standards within a coordinated system of postsecondary education help ensure that students have access to institutions that meet their needs and provide the best opportunity for success. Neither the needs of the students nor the needs of the state are best served when academically unprepared students enroll in institutions.

- **Clearly define and communicate preparation and admission standards to students so that they enroll at institutions where they have the opportunity to succeed at achieving their educational and career goals.**
  – Identify appropriate admission standards reflective of each postsecondary

education institution's role and mission and communicate these standards to the K/12 school systems and to adults who are considering enrolling in postsecondary education.
  - The content and expectations of freshman-year course work should be consistent with the admission and preparation standards set by the institutions to help ensure that a gap does not exist between high school graduation competencies and freshman-year academic expectations.
  - Continue articulation agreements between the community colleges and the four-year colleges and universities to assure that students who do not meet admission standards at four-year institutions have the opportunity to achieve a baccalaureate degree by beginning course work at a community college.

- **Set preparation and admission standards at Nebraska's postsecondary educational institutions that are comparable to those of their respective peers and that are consistent with the recommended preparation and admission standards guidelines on page 2-10.**

TIME TO DEGREE

Students, their parents, institutions, employers, and Nebraska taxpayers all share an interest in timely progression through postsecondary education into the workplace. For students and their parents, issues of financial burden and cost effectiveness come into play. Institutions benefit because students who are progressing quickly through their instructional programs are less likely to drop out and are more satisfied with their college experience. Given labor shortages in Nebraska, employers also see advantages to timely graduation. Taxpayers prefer students to progress smoothly and quickly through the postsecondary system so that state and local appropriations for public institutions are wisely used and not duplicated.

- **Institutions help students to graduate within a reasonable and predictable time frame.**

  - Needed support services are available to all students to increase the likelihood of timely graduation.
  - Programs are structured with consideration for time to degree as well as assuring competency in required knowledge and skills. Flexibility in course scheduling, such as adapting to the schedules of working students, facilitates program completion.
  - Comparable and reliable measurements of retention rates and graduation rates are available and publicly accessible from all sectors of postsecondary education.

ARTICULATION

Students do not come to postsecondary education with equivalent preparation levels, yet each student deserves the opportunity to progress through higher education to the level that meets their educational and career goals. A truly coordinated system of postsecondary education facilitates opportunities for individuals to move easily from one sector of postsecondary education to another as their abilities grow and their needs, interests, and educational goals shift.

Coordinating Commission's
Recommended Preparation and Admission Standards Guidelines

Preparation and admission standards will help Nebraska's postsecondary educational institutions demonstrate institutional effectiveness in areas such as retention and graduation rates through comparisons with each institution's peers.

1) Community College Guidelines:
- Community colleges continue their policy of open admissions, although not necessarily to all programs. Different preparation and admission standards that reflect the differences in programs within the community college system are acceptable.
- Community colleges inform prospective students of the recommended preparation level for their anticipated course of study. The entry-level skills of new students are assessed to guide students into courses and programs that facilitate progress to their education or career goals.
- The community colleges provide foundation education coursework for those who are unprepared for college-level work.

2) State College Guidelines:
- Students admitted to any of the state colleges will be prepared to succeed at the state college level upon admission.
- The Nebraska state colleges identify and recommend those high school courses that, if completed satisfactorily, will provide the skills and competencies needed for students to have reasonable probability for academic success at a Nebraska state college.
- The preparation standards recommended by the state colleges are communicated by the institutions to K/12 counselors, students, and their parents.
- The state colleges fund and implement programs to assure that recommended preparation standards do not interfere with their access or diversity goals.
- Ideally, the foundations education needs of students are provided for whenever possible through cooperative arrangements with community colleges.

3) University of Nebraska Guidelines:
- Students admitted to any of the University of Nebraska campuses will be prepared to succeed at the university level upon admission.
- The University's admission standards are communicated by the institutions to K/12 counselors, students, and their parents.
- The University funds and implements programs that promote admission standards consistent with the diversity goals of the University.
- Ideally, the foundations education needs of students are provided for whenever possible through cooperative arrangements with community colleges.

Coordinating Commission's
Recommended Articulation Guidelines

1) **Academic credits for equivalent courses at Nebraska public institutions are appropriately recognized by the other public institutions, creating a seamless, coordinated public postsecondary educational network. This guideline applies to students transferring from one sector to another, as well as from one institution to another within the same sector.**
   - Credit earned with a satisfactory grade in an equivalent course at one regionally accredited public college or university is accepted as credit at another regionally accredited public college or university.
   - Associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions are equal partners in providing the first two years of baccalaureate degree programs. Graduates of two-year Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degree programs have met the lower division general education requirements for similar programs at all public postsecondary schools in Nebraska. Likewise, students who have satisfactorily completed all of the lower division general education requirements at a state college are admitted to a University institution without requiring additional lower division general education courses.
   - Students who have earned Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degrees in an accredited community college or completed the required courses for the first two years at an accredited state college and have achieved satisfactory grades in courses equivalent to those at the University are not required to repeat any course.
   - Students who began, but did not complete, the Associate of Arts or Associate in Science degree at an accredited institution are granted credit for satisfactorily completed courses that the accepting baccalaureate institution determines are equivalent to its own courses. State college students transferring to a University institution also are granted credit for satisfactorily completed, equivalent courses; as are University students granted credit for satisfactorily completed, equivalent courses when they transfer to state colleges and community colleges.
   - Associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions work together to ensure that lower-division baccalaureate programs throughout the state are equivalent in scope and quality.
   - Postsecondary education institutions will facilitate and maintain articulation agreements and transfer policies that create "portable" education credits.

2) **These articulation guidelines recognize the traditional role of faculty in determining course comparability between institutions and underscore the need for faculty to adjust to changes and to make fair and reasonable decisions when appropriate standards are attained.**

3) **Transfer students on campuses will have the same opportunities as non-transfer students to become integrated into the campus social, cultural, and academic activities.**

4) **The four-year institutions periodically provide feedback to the two-year institutions on the academic success of their students who have transferred into the four-year institution.**

5) **The Commission periodically prepares and distributes a status report on articulation in the state between institutions. The Commission may make further recommendations regarding articulation based on the results of this report.**

- Foster additional articulation agreements that ensure students enrolled in most programs will be able to transfer from one institution to another with ease and with minimal loss of credits or loss of time required to complete their degrees.

  - A student's options for postsecondary education are not limited by his or her choice of where first to attend college. Provided the institution is properly accredited, learning achievements from the first institution will open doors to new opportunities at other institutions.
  - Articulation agreements at Nebraska postsecondary education institutions are consistent with the recommended guidelines on page 2-11.

SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE CAMPUSES

Parents and students rank personal safety as a priority. Fortunately, students on Nebraska college campuses are far more secure than at many campuses in other states. Reports of assaults and violent crime on Nebraska campuses are rare and below national averages. In recent years, many Nebraska institutions have undertaken measures to make their campuses even more secure through better lighting, emergency phones, additional security personnel, etc.

Most facilities on Nebraska campuses are safe, accessible to the disabled, and fully ADA compliant. Fire safety is a concern on all campuses, but especially those with older residence halls. Accessibility also remains a challenge at some campuses.

- **Institutions continue efforts to provide safe and accessible campuses that are responsive to changing student needs and supportive of a learning environment.**

- **Campus facilities are well maintained to assure the safety of students.**

Major Statewide Goal:
Support Services

Postsecondary education institutions will provide appropriate support services to help all students reach their educational goals, regardless of where and how the instruction is delivered.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Students drop classes and leave institutions for a variety of reasons, many beyond the control of the institutions. However, a comprehensive mix of student support services can make the difference in retaining students and helping them to succeed and are fundamental to the students' overall college experiences. These support services include academic assistance, such as advising or mentoring programs; services that meet students' personal needs, such as health centers and personal counseling; organizations aimed at special groups, such as minorities or non-traditional-age students; and student activities such as student government, intramural sports, and campus cultural events that give students opportunities to be involved with the campus.

Providing Preparation and Support

Many people enrolling in postsecondary education lack the preparation they will need in some academic areas to learn successfully. Students who are underprepared or lack learning skills come from a wide variety of situations, including recent high school graduates as well as people who haven't been in a classroom for decades. In addition, recent immigrants frequently need some foundations education to prepare them for further education in this country. For all of these individuals, enrollment in foundations education courses and support through counseling or mentoring programs may mean the difference between their educational success or failure.

- **Provide academic assistance through foundations education courses to assist both traditional-age and non-traditional, working adult students who are not academically prepared for college-level courses.**

- **Foundation programs are provided by community colleges, which collaborate with local agencies and employers to identify basic educational needs of under-educated adults in order to enhance workforce capacities.**

- **Offer tutoring, mentoring, and counseling programs that provide appropriate assistance for students.**

Providing Resources

Today's higher education environment is shifting from a focus on teaching to a focus on student learning. Students are becoming more actively engaged in their own learning process, utilizing a number of resources available to them through multiple sources such as faculty, libraries, classroom and lab experiences, instructional technologies, and the Internet. Creating campus facilities and support services that nurture this learning environment and meet the needs of both on-campus and off-campus distance learning students is a growing challenge for institutions.

- **Provide learning support systems, including accessible libraries, well-equipped computer labs, and classrooms that are equipped for the newest technologies and support an enriched, flexible, and effective learning environment for all students.**

  – Students have the opportunity to conduct campus administrative functions online, such as registering for courses, dropping and adding courses, and checking financial aid and bill payment status.
  – Faculty are encouraged to provide course syllabuses, class notes, supplemental resources, and class announcements online for the convenience of the students.

- **Ensure that all distance learning programs available in Nebraska result in learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the degree/certificate programs awarded on campus, and that students enrolled in distance learning programs have access to support services comparable to those utilized by on-campus students**.

Major Statewide Goal:
Skilled Graduates

Nebraska colleges and universities will provide their graduates with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed as capable employees and responsible citizens.

The ultimate goal of any student-centered institution is to provide its graduates with the skills, knowledge, and critical thinking abilities they will need to meet their personal and career goals. To achieve this, students need exposure to courses that challenge their minds and motivate them to learn, while preparing them for the reality of today's workforce and society.

THE NEEDS OF GRADUATES

The skills and knowledge students will need to succeed are constantly changing as the world around them changes. Today's students need to be efficient, self-directed and active learners who are prepared for a lifetime of learning in a global, technology-driven society. The process begins in the classrooms of the campuses, or wherever and whenever postsecondary education courses are being delivered to students, with high quality programs that actively engage students' minds.

- **Provide interesting, challenging, and rewarding classroom experiences that engage students as active participants in their learning process and motivate them to high achievement.**

  – Recognize and reward faculty members whose teaching methods produce student outcomes consistent with this goal.
  – Encourage faculty to use instructional technologies that enhance student learning.
  – Encourage faculty to use innovative teaching methods that allow students to actively participate in their own learning experience, both inside and outside of traditional classrooms.
  – Assess student learning outcomes and use the results to enhance the quality of student learning.

Too often, a gap exists between what students learn in college and the skills and knowledge they will be expected to have mastered when they enter their careers or advance in their education. To close this gap, colleges and universities are increasingly incorporating work experience into course content and measuring accomplishment of competencies and skills appropriate to students' fields of study.

- **Incorporate "real world" experience into college curricula through internships, required work experience, volunteer service, exposure to entrepreneurial opportunities, and activities that increase cultural and international awareness.**

  – Institutions prepare students to work effectively within the context of the emerging diversity within communities, the state, region, and nation.

- **Ensure that graduates are competent in areas appropriate to their field of study, as determined through measures identified by the institutions.**

  – Institutions choose from a variety of assessment tools, such as competency testing or external certifications.
  – Employers have a role in identifying competencies needed for graduates to succeed in the workforce in their fields of study.

Chapter Three

MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE STATE

The state of Nebraska and its public higher education institutions depend on each other and shape each other's future. The state needs a strong higher education network that prepares students for productive and fulfilling lives, enhances workforce development, and helps solve the state's problems. Postsecondary education, particularly the public institutions, relies on the state's ability to expand its economic and population base to provide resources to support the institutions. The two must work together and grow together to address the future needs of both the state and the institutions.

Beyond the key economic importance of higher education to the state, institutions of higher education have a historic and continuing obligation to help students reach their maximum intellectual potential. Perhaps the greatest contribution any educational program can make is to enable individuals throughout their lives to be successful and contributing members of society who are able to think critically, gather and evaluate information, communicate effectively, understand and respect the physical environment, and participate actively in political decision-making. The future of our state continues to depend on higher education institutions that shape thoughtful and adaptive citizens who thrive in a period of rapid change and multiple careers.

Goals and Strategies

Major Statewide Goal:
Workforce Development

Higher education in Nebraska will be responsive to the workforce development and ongoing training needs of employers and industries to help sustain a knowledgeable, trained, and skilled workforce in both rural and urban areas of the state.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Employers in Nebraska face many critical issues and challenges. Shortages of skilled and trained workers exist throughout the state. Each day technology transforms how, when, and where business is conducted, creating an ongoing need for employee training and retraining to stay current and competitive in an increasingly competitive and global market. Finding ways to operate more productively and effectively is critical to businesses' growth and survival.

Central to this *Plan's* vision is the belief that postsecondary education has an important role in assisting businesses and contributing to the overall prosperity of Nebraska's economy. In today's global economy, the success of Nebraska's businesses and the future of the state's economy are dependent on a partnership among the state, its higher education institutions, and the employers to secure skilled and knowledgeable employees for innovative and progressive businesses, industries, and services throughout the state.

Prepared Graduates

Employers need college graduates and trained workers who have extensive and varied knowledge, skills, and demonstrated competencies that prepare them for entering and succeeding in the workforce. To advance in business and succeed in their careers, these graduates also need good oral and written communication skills, computer competencies, teamwork abilities, general workplace skills, and, increasingly, conversancy in more than one language.

- **Improve the workforce readiness of graduates of public institutions.**
  - Review program content and, where needed, incorporate workforce readiness competencies into curricula.
  - Use employer advisory councils to identify needed changes in existing program content or to create new certificate or degree programs to meet evolving needs.
  - Increase opportunities for students to attain job experience while in school via internships, apprenticeships, service learning, etc.
  - Prepare graduates for employment in a global marketplace through required course work in foreign languages, international affairs and finance, and other courses that will expose them to other countries' cultures and economies.
  - Undertake measures to become eligible training providers, as authorized under Federal Workforce Investment Act regulations.
  - Equip classrooms with state-of-the art facilities and provide faculty opportunities to be appropriately trained in new technologies being utilized in industry.
  - Monitor and assess the success of job-seeking graduates in finding employment in their field of study.

Targeted Skills

Institutions in Nebraska are being asked to produce more graduates and trainees in workforce areas of high demand, such as information technology. In addition, employers are stressing the need for broadly educated employees with key workplace skills.

- **Respond to workforce needs by developing, offering, and promoting degree or certificate programs in needed areas.**

- Provide specialized certification programs in professional, technical, and vocational fields that address regional and state needs. These certifications often will be provided through external entities.
- Create "portable programs" designed to meet specific needs and serve a specific area or cohort of individuals that, when the needs have been met, can be moved to another area of the state where there is similar need.
- Cooperate with state and local workforce and economic development agencies and employer advisory councils to project workforce needs and employers' workforce demands. Respond to projections with appropriate adjustments in program availability and capacity.
- Work with the state and employers in Nebraska to target key industries for workforce development and use state incentive funds for grants or contracts with public or private institutions that can deliver needed instructional programs, technical assistance, and research/development in the area.
- Explore internships or work/study opportunities in high demand fields to encourage students to enter these fields and remain in Nebraska upon graduation.
- Align recruitment of students to disciplines and programs with the state's workforce needs in specific industries and geographic locations across the state.
- Produce graduates with the skills to think critically, communicate effectively, and work collaboratively as members of problem-solving teams in the workplace.
- Work with businesses to meet literacy needs of their under-educated adult employees.

Teacher Training

Nebraska's schoolteachers are one of the state's greatest assets. By many measures, achievements of Nebraska elementary and secondary students consistently rank among the highest in the nation. Teachers exert a profound influence on students' lives. Yet many school districts are finding it difficult to attract and retain qualified teaching staff given an aging teacher workforce, salary levels that are marginally competitive with those in neighboring states and private industry, and state-imposed property tax caps.

- **Encourage education leaders and policymakers to address workforce needs for new teachers.**

Lifelong Learning

With rapid technology, knowledge, and skill transformations occurring in most of the workforce, workers need constant retraining to remain productive and competitive. Higher education needs to be responsive to these changes and prepared to provide education and training to meet the needs of workers in Nebraska.

- **Provide lifelong learning and retraining opportunities to all Nebraskans, especially in the area of technology.**

- Provide in-home and workplace distance learning opportunities of high quality and reasonable price that help workers keep current in their fields or move into new careers.
- Enhance collaboration between colleges and industry to improve availability and value of in-service training to upgrade the skills of the existing workforce.
- Respond to requests from students, employers, and communities for needed programs or training opportunities to address changing workforce needs.

Expanded Workforce Diversity

Minority populations are a growing component of Nebraska's population and workforce. Unfortunately, minority populations are underrepresented in postsecondary education participation, although their participation levels are improving. Encouraging more minorities to participate in higher education could help address the state's need for more trained workers.

- **Enhance educational and workforce development opportunities for minority populations who have been underrepresented in the workforce.**

  - Develop and implement programs to prepare racial/ethnic minority students for entry into postsecondary education and the workforce.
  - Encourage and support campus-based programs that support the recruitment and retention of minority students and create an open and supportive campus culture.
  - Work with middle schools and high schools to encourage students of color, first-generation college students, and academically at-risk students to complete high school with courses that prepare them to succeed in college.
  - Explore methods of bringing educational and work experience opportunities to minority populations in their own communities that encourage enrollment in postsecondary education.

Attracting and Retaining Students

Nebraska faces labor shortages in a number of critical areas. Attracting more of Nebraska's top students, as well as more students from other states, to Nebraska postsecondary institutions and retaining them through graduation could help the state address workforce shortages, especially in targeted fields.

- **Effectively recruit and retain more Nebraska students and attract more out-of-state students to Nebraska higher education institutions, especially those students entering targeted career fields that address workforce needs in Nebraska.**

  - Provide merit-based scholarships and grants to students with talents and achievement in targeted workforce areas.

- Support reduced out-of-state tuition levels to attract more students from other states.
- Encourage internships and work/study opportunities so that graduates of Nebraska colleges and universities are more likely to remain employed in the state.

Major Statewide Goal:
Research and Technology Transfer

Institutions will contribute to the health and prosperity of the people and to the vitality of the state through research and development efforts, technology transfer and technical assistance, and by attracting external funds to support these activities.

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Research is an important role of higher education and a vital component of the state's economic competitiveness. Business and industry increasingly depend on higher education to develop and share new discoveries and technologies that can help them stay competitive in today's changing economy.

Nebraska's economic future is dependent on its ability to attract new businesses and industries and assist existing businesses to be competitive. Higher education has a critical role, generating and transferring knowledge that helps business and industry to compete and succeed. Equally important is higher education research that directly impacts the citizens of the state by contributing to their social, educational, and health needs.

- **Conduct research focused on the economic, social, educational, and health needs of Nebraskans.**

- **Improve technology transfer and technical assistance to Nebraska employers to enhance the productivity of Nebraska industries.**

  - Provide ongoing assistance to Nebraska's agricultural industry through shared research, technical assistance, public services, and programming focused on areas such as value-added production and international marketing.
  - Participate in partnerships with industry, government, and private organizations that are responsive to current and projected future state needs.

- **Increase awareness of the contributions of research programs to the quality of life in Nebraska to improve the understanding of research activities and to attract increased support for research activities.**

ADEQUATE HEALTH CARE

Adequate health care, especially in underserved rural areas, is a critical issue that postsecondary education can help resolve through health education programs, research, and services. The University of Nebraska and community colleges, as well as some independent colleges and universities and private career schools, all have important roles in providing education and training in the many health-related fields. Most of these institutions incorporate training at rural hospital sites into their curriculum to expose students to rural health career opportunities.

- **Institutions with a role in health-care education identify and respond to the changing health-care needs of Nebraska's citizens, including those in underserved rural areas.**

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The growth and diversification of Nebraska's economy depend to a substantial degree on the success of small businesses and entrepreneurial ventures. Higher education can assist by providing education programs, technical assistance and advice, and accessible lifelong learning opportunities that will help these individuals and small businesses to succeed.

- **Incorporate an entrepreneurship focus into instruction and community outreach programs to facilitate the growth of entrepreneurship and Nebraska-based small businesses.**

SCHOLARLY RESEARCH

Research is not always directly applicable to the economic development of the state. While often difficult to measure, scholarly research conducted at higher education institutions enhances the learning experience of students within the institution, the academic currency of the faculty, and the knowledge base of Nebraska citizens.

- **Provide a scholarly environment that will add to the intellectual accomplishments of the state, providing knowledge valuable to its citizens.**

Major Statewide Goal:
Serving Citizens

Higher education will serve the state by preparing individuals for productive, fulfilling lives and by developing and nurturing the citizens and future leaders of Nebraska.

Nebraska will need more than trained and skilled technicians and professionals in the future. It will need creative, intelligent citizens who can generate new ideas, adapt to new technologies, analyze issues, solve problems, and utilize lifelong learning opportunities. All sectors of higher education have vital roles in creating an environment for this learning community within the state.

EDUCATED CITIZENRY

Workers in Nebraska need not only the knowledge, expertise, and technical skills to do their jobs, but also the ability to think critically and creatively in order to advance and succeed in their careers. The abilities to communicate effectively, understand other cultures, speak another language, and think critically will be valued in an increasingly global and complex society.

- **Provide general education courses that prepare students to understand and contribute constructively to the nation's social, economic, and governmental frameworks**.
- **Prepare Nebraska's students and citizens for global opportunities and competition by integrating an international perspective into institutions, faculties, programs, and activities.**
- **Facilitate access to educational, technological, and cultural opportunities in urban and rural communities throughout the state.**
- **Inform citizens of the economic returns from participation in postsecondary education.**

THE NEEDS OF IMMIGRANTS

Much of the recent growth in Nebraska's population has resulted from immigrants who have come to Nebraska to make a home, raise their families, and find work opportunities. For many, language is the first barrier they must overcome. Obtaining the education they need to enter the workforce is the second**.** Higher education, in particular

the community colleges through English Language Learner (ELL, also known as English-as-a-Second-Language) and basic literacy courses, can be the key to prosperity for these individuals.

- **Provide accessible English Language Learner and basic literacy programs throughout the state, primarily through the community college system.**

- **Institutions collaborate with employers of individuals whose native language is not English to provide English Language Learner courses and other needed adult basic education courses on-site at the workplace**.

Major Statewide Goal:
Technology

Postsecondary education institutions will assess evolving needs and priorities in a timely manner and will be prepared to change and adopt new methods and technologies to address the evolving needs and priorities of the students and people of Nebraska.

USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY TO MEET STATE NEEDS

Information technologies have the potential to transform how, when, and where higher education is delivered, making it available virtually any time and any place. Tremendous potential also exists to make education more efficient and effective while at the same time enhancing access and quality. Without the statewide connectivity of hardware needed to create a coherent, interconnected higher education network, however, the potential for technology's many educational uses is much more limited.

- **Study carefully the implications of and potential uses for technology in addressing educational needs, including its**:

  – Potential for expanding access to higher education programming, particularly to place-bound and working adults.
  – Use for more efficient campus operations.
  – Effect on facilities planning and curriculum development, in particular the many opportunities for sharing of facilities, courseware, and other resources.
  – Effect on faculty issues, including professional development opportunities and inter-institutional sharing of talent.
  – Implications for lifelong learning opportunities for the whole citizenry.

- **Cooperate to provide statewide technological connectivity to ensure that citizens in all regions of the state have access to higher education programming and services**.

  – Aggregate the demand for technology connectivity by government, higher education, employers, and communities and their residents to leverage the overall investment in technology for better rates and services.

The expanded use of information technologies, including data processing hardware, software, and other services, can improve learning, teaching, and other key processes of higher education institutions. Virtually every key process and program within higher education ultimately will involve the use of information technology.

- **Use instructional technologies as a way to increase learning productivity, including effective use of student-centered and self-paced learning activities.**

  – Develop and regularly update standards for instructional and other information technologies based on best practice guidelines, such as those developed by the North Central Association (see Appendix 2) and other such regional and national associations, and share descriptions of standards with other institutions in the state.
  – Set appropriate expectations and requirements for students and faculty regarding the use of information technologies.
  – Use exemplary instructional technology programs that are purchased from or shared by other organizations in addition to those programs developed internally.
  – Provide supportive environments and professional development opportunities that allow faculty to acquire the technical skills needed to use fully new learning and instructional technologies in the classroom and lab.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Higher education's role in Nebraska extends far beyond the walls of the classrooms and the buildings of the campuses. Each campus has a multi-county service area for which it shares responsibility with other institutions to meet the higher education needs of the citizens. Some campuses also have statewide programmatic or public service responsibilities, such as the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's responsibility for agricultural public service. Through outreach to communities throughout the state, higher education can support community development initiatives by providing needed educational programming, specialized technical assistance, leadership and human resources, and cultural awareness opportunities.

- **Postsecondary education institutions make concerted efforts to reach out to their communities and across the state to identify and meet educational, research, and public service needs and to be proactive in assisting economic and community development.**

- **Explore methods of effectively and efficiently meeting the changing needs of different constituencies throughout the state such as agriculture, business, government agencies, community organizations, cultural and recreational groups, and families.**

- **Institutions report and effectively communicate their success in meeting the educational, research, and public service needs of the state and its citizens.**

Chapter Four

MEETING EDUCATIONAL NEEDS THROUGH EXEMPLARY INSTITUTIONS

This *Comprehensive Plan's* vision for higher education in Nebraska calls for institutions that are vital, vigorous, and visionary; that fulfill their roles and mission with distinction by being responsive to changing needs throughout the state; and that exercise careful and creative stewardship of available resources. It is a vision committed to the development and support of a first-class, nationally recognized higher education system in Nebraska. Realization of this vision will require the steadfast commitment of higher education governing board members, administrators, faculty, and staff, as well as the support of state policymakers, current and future students, and the citizens of the state.

Goals and Strategies

Major Statewide Goal:
Exemplary Institutions

Each Nebraska postsecondary institution will fulfill its role and mission in an exemplary manner and will compare favorably with peer institutions.

Exemplary institutions provide high quality education and skill development opportunities that prepare students to be personally and professionally successful, to be good citizens of the state and knowledgeable contributors to an increasingly global and multi-cultural society, and to be lifelong learners. They attract motivated and high-performing students, as well as top-quality faculty and staff. They are student-centered, yet offer rigorous courses and programs that challenge students to learn. They are heavily engaged in leading-edge research, both basic and applied, and compete successfully for external research funding that can stimulate the state's economy. They actively pursue opportunities for public engagement, technology transfer, and technical assistance to meet the needs of Nebraska businesses, communities, and government. They are responsive, flexible, and innovative. They receive appropriate levels of funding from the state and invest it wisely to meet their needs and aspirations. They have visionary leaders who create a culture of continuous improvement.

Comparisons with peer and competing institutions can provide indicators of where an institution is and where it wants to be in the future. Such comparisons also provide a method of measuring and demonstrating an institution's progress toward specific goals and outcomes. Governing boards and administrators provide leadership to establish

goals for their institutions and leverage them to greater accomplishments. Faculty, students, state policymakers, and Nebraska citizens also have significant roles in the accomplishment of these goals.

- **The governing boards and administrators of each Nebraska institution are responsible for and encouraged to commit attention and resources to the following:**

  - Fostering a collaborative model to connect students, educators, and practitioners together, whenever appropriate, in the design and implementation of instructional programs with both academic goals and working-world applications;
  - Focusing energy and targeting resources on areas of excellence in teaching, research (if appropriate to role and mission), and public service that benefit the students and the state and enhance the institution's regional and national reputation;
  - Promoting quality and innovation in teaching and learning within each institution's designated role and mission, particularly in areas of importance to the state;
  - Assessing student learning and using the results to enhance the quality of the students' learning experiences;
  - Eliminating existing programs and services that are non-viable or marginal in terms of outcomes, costs, and centrality to the role and mission of the institution;
  - Improving retention and graduation rates so that higher percentages of students who are seeking degrees achieve their educational goals;
  - Attracting, developing, and retaining high quality faculty and staff members;
  - Implementing student recruitment strategies aimed at enrolling Nebraska's top performing students in Nebraska postsecondary education institutions;
  - Using information technologies and resource sharing to enhance learning opportunities both on- and off-campus;
  - Being responsive to the changing needs of the state and its citizens;
  - Providing creative, efficient, and flexible leadership and planning that will help institutions achieve exemplary status;
  - Conducting analysis and evaluation of the educational and service needs of the institution's service area through ongoing dialogue with employers, civic leaders, and citizens;
  - Promoting diversity on their campuses in the hiring of faculty, staff, and administrators; in recruitment of students; and in curriculum development and student activities; and,
  - Providing supportive environments and professional development opportunities that allow the faculty to acquire the technical skills needed to utilize new learning and instructional technologies in the classroom and lab.

RESEARCH

Research is a vitally important role of higher education. Research conducted by higher education institutions has been a major contributor to the economic productivity of the country, literally transforming the way daily business is conducted. It has made a major difference in the quality of life, lengthening life expectancies, developing new products, creating new job opportunities, transforming the agriculture industry, and bringing new knowledge and understanding to the citizenry.

- **Public institutions with major research roles, including the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Nebraska Medical Center, set goals and prioritize areas of research to become more prominent and nationally competitive for research funding and to meet the health and economic needs of the state.**
  - Focus energy and resources on areas of excellence in research that will advance knowledge and bring national recognition to the institutions.
  - Expose students to research skills and experiences that are relevant to their field of study and future career goals.
  - Increase the visibility of the contributions of research programs to the quality of life in Nebraska to improve understanding of research activities and to attract increased support from within the state for these activities.
- **High quality, state-of-the-art research facilities on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Nebraska Medical Center will help the institutions to attract external research funding.**

Major Statewide Goal:
Funding Exemplary Institutions

Nebraska will value higher education and support its investment in public higher education through fair and reliable funding policies that provide appropriate levels of support to enable institutions to excel and meet the educational needs of the state and its students.

FUNDING EXEMPLARY PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Adequate and stable funding is critical to any successful, high quality higher education institution. Nebraskans traditionally have been supportive of higher education. For a state with a relatively small population base, Nebraska provides a proportionally high level of financial support for its public postsecondary education institutions. Nebraska

also has a higher proportion of its high school graduates enrolled in higher education than most states. Because of high levels of support and participation, the people of Nebraska have enjoyed the benefits of a comprehensive and accessible network of public postsecondary education institutions.

Institutions face growing demands for more and better programs and services. At the same time, the state's resources are being stretched by demands for services in other critical areas such as health, corrections, and the public schools. It is crucial that in this environment Nebraska's public higher education institutions receive appropriate levels of support that will allow them to meet the needs of the state.

Ongoing State Funding

State appropriations are the mainstays of Nebraska's public postsecondary education institutions. Almost one-fourth of the state's general fund appropriations go toward public postsecondary education institutions. It is important, therefore, that there is agreement between the state and higher education on major funding policies and priorities.

- **State funding for the University of Nebraska, state colleges, and community colleges:**
  - Reflects the state's educational needs and priorities and provides additional funding to institutions that demonstrate they are addressing these needs and priorities;
  - Is a priority in the state's spending plan, reflecting the commitment of the legislative and executive branches to achieve the educational goals set forth in this *Comprehensive Plan*;
  - Supports higher education's significant role in the state's economic and workforce development efforts;
  - Is sufficient to provide salaries and professional development opportunities that will attract and retain high quality faculty and staff at the institutions;
  - Rewards institutions that use partnerships and collaborative efforts to achieve greater efficiency, enhance access, or address student and state needs; and,
  - Is focused on the efficient and effective use and management of education resources for purposes of attaining optimal educational results.

Emerging State Needs

State appropriations for the state colleges and the University of Nebraska are based on review of base budgets and incremental funding, not formulae. The state also provides some matching funds for external grants. The state expects auxiliary services at public postsecondary education institutions and some student services, such as residence halls, bookstores, and food services, to be self-supporting.

The state provides some funding incentives to public higher education targeted at specific state goals, such as funding for the Nebraska Research Initiative (NRI) and the Nebraska Center for Excellence in Electronics. Increasingly, higher education is expected to be responsive to new and emerging needs throughout the state.

- **As high priority state needs and demands are identified, the state and its public postsecondary education institutions will target new state funds to meet these needs and demands.**

Technological Connectivity

Statewide connectivity of technology hardware is a key element for a high quality, statewide network of higher education. Instructional technology expands access to higher education across the state and promotes efficiency through sharing of courses, faculty, and other resources. Quality is also enhanced as institutions import courses and classroom resources that would otherwise be unavailable to their faculty and students. The workforce training needs of the state's employers are also better served as training and professional development courses are delivered on-site or at sites convenient to employees via distance learning technologies.

- **Recognize statewide connectivity of information technology for Nebraska postsecondary education institutions and the communities they serve as a state policy and funding priority.**

Community College Funding

The state, area property owners, and the students all contribute to the operating costs of the community colleges. Ideally, the state pays 40 percent of the operating costs of the community colleges, property owners pay 40 percent of the costs through a tax levy established by the community college area governing board, and 20 percent of costs are covered by student tuition and fees and other sources of revenue.

- **Community college funding continues to reflect a shared responsibility of the state, the property taxpayers of the community college areas, and the students.**

Foundations Education

The state has given the community colleges primary responsibility for foundations education within higher education. In some instances, the state colleges also provide some foundations education courses. Foundations education includes targeted entry-level education for recent graduates of secondary education with deficits in specific knowledge or skills, as well as adult learners returning to postsecondary education and needing to refresh or advance their knowledge and skills in specific areas.

Initiatives such as the new K/12 standards and the P/16 advisory council ideally will lessen the number of under-prepared students entering postsecondary education. No matter how successful these initiatives, there undoubtedly will always be a need for some level of foundations education. The institutions currently cover the cost of these non-degree credit programs through their regular operating budgets. The cost of the courses are covered primarily by revenues paid by students. State and local revenues help support Adult Basic Education, General Education Degrees, and English-as-a-Second-Language courses. As a result, evaluating the overall cost of foundations education courses to the state is difficult. Addressing solutions to foundations education and its costs to the state will require an evaluation of the overall costs by the state, higher education, and the elementary/secondary school systems.

- **In cooperation with the elementary and secondary school systems, pursue avenues or means to diminish the need for foundations education in postsecondary education.**

- **To the extent that such needs exist for foundations education, assure that funds are available to address the needs**.

Research and External Funding

Nebraska provides comparatively strong support to the University of Nebraska for research. Most of the state's research funding is targeted toward specific research areas. Some funding also is provided for human resources and support services for research.

- **The state continues to provide financial support for research conducted at the University campuses, particularly when it is targeted toward specific fields that provide economic impact on the state.**

  – Institutions demonstrate effectiveness and productivity in the use of state research funding through measurable outcomes.

Higher education institutions increasingly are looking to other sources for funding support to help continue existing activities and develop new ones. These additional funding resources may result from collaboration with corporations, donations from private sources, funding from the federal government, or partnerships with other entities. These resources not only bring funds to the institutions, but also can enhance the strength and richness of the institutions' instruction, research, or public service roles.

- **Governing boards, administrators, and faculty share responsibility for competing for and acquiring increasing levels of private, federal, corporate, and other non-state funds for institutional development and enhancement.**

Facilities Funding

Exercising careful and creative stewardship of available physical resources, as articulated in Chapter Six, is an important part of this *Plan's* vision for higher education.

- **The state will continue to invest monies for the ongoing and deferred repair and maintenance of existing facilities at the public institutions, and for new facilities when warranted.**
  - Ongoing preventive maintenance of facilities is the responsibility of the institutions.

Major Statewide Goal:
Accountability and Effectiveness

Higher education in Nebraska will be effective in meeting the needs of students and the state; will be efficient in its expenditure of the state's resources; and will be accountable for developing and sustaining exemplary teaching, learning, research, and public service.

One of the greatest challenges faced by higher education is being responsive to the many needs of the state and its citizens within the reality of state, institutional, and student resources. To improve quality, expand access, adapt new technologies, meet the diverse needs of students, and be creative and visionary in fulfillment of their roles and missions, higher education institutions must develop methods to become more efficient and productive. It is equally important that higher education institutions measure their productivity and share the results of those measurements with the public to generate a better understanding of the outcomes of higher education.

INCREASED EFFICIENCY

Exercising careful and creative stewardship of available resources is an important part of this *Plan's* vision for higher education. If higher education is to have the ongoing support and confidence of the people of Nebraska, it must practice effective and efficient use of resources and communicate how it maximizes use of public funds for the benefit of students and the citizens of the state.

- Institutions maintain the confidence and support of the public by allocating resources wisely and seeking cost efficiency and effectiveness in their operations and management of resources.

- Governing boards reduce and/or eliminate unnecessary duplication in program offerings and in all operations of the institutions.
- Governing boards focus institutional resources on areas of excellence within each institution's role and mission that meet the needs of students and serve institutional, regional, and state priorities.
- Whenever feasible, campuses share resources and collaborate as a way of maximizing their resources.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Increasingly, governing boards, accrediting bodies, and the public are asking not only for accountability for the use of public funds but also for assessment of outcomes for higher education. Are students learning? Are research efforts producing results? Are the citizens receiving needed services? It is important for higher education to be able to evaluate effectiveness and productivity through appropriate measurable outcomes.

- **Postsecondary education institutions evaluate and communicate measurable outcomes and benchmarks appropriate to their role and mission in areas of importance to students and the state. These include student retention, degree completion, and job placement rates; comparability with peers in quality of teaching, learning, research, and public service; and student satisfaction.**

  - Governing boards set standards of excellence appropriate to their role and mission and identify measurements that reflect their productivity and enable them to demonstrate progress toward achievement of their standards.
  - Higher education institutions inform the public about the outcomes and benefits of their instruction, research, and public service roles**.**

Chapter Five

MEETING EDUCATIONAL NEEDS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

No higher education institution or sector can operate successfully in isolation. To realize its full potential, higher education must extend beyond colleges and universities and forge partnerships with businesses, industries, K/12 schools, government agencies, cultural institutions, communities, and families. Such partnerships offer many benefits to the institutions as well as the state and its citizens.

Goals and Strategies

Major Statewide Goal:
Partnerships

Higher education institutions will work as partners with one another and with other entities whenever appropriate to share resources and deliver programs cooperatively to enhance learning opportunities for Nebraska residents.

PARTNERSHIPS AMONG PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Collaboration and partnerships among the state's public postsecondary education institutions will improve efficiency and save taxpayer dollars. Beyond the savings, however, collaboration also offers institutions a means to improve quality and enhance the scope of their offerings through integrating learning opportunities and sharing expertise and resources. The result of such partnerships will be a network of institutions with distinct roles and missions and unique areas of excellence that work together to ensure that the state's higher education needs are met.

- **Meet state needs through collaborative ventures and institutional partnerships that produce efficient uses of courses, instructional resources, faculty, and other campus resources.**
  - Opportunities for collaboration, cooperation, and sharing resources are a high priority of higher education administrators.
  - Public institutions are encouraged to enter into cooperative ventures resulting in cost efficiencies to the state, or address local, regional and/or state economic development goals.

- **Through the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (NITC), support and encourage the coordinated and productive use of instructional technologies to expand access to higher education and improve efficiency.**

  – Explore methods to cooperate in the development and use of informational and instructional technology and develop joint plans for addressing current and future educational needs through the use of new technologies.

There are excellent examples within Nebraska of higher education sharing facilities with other institutions, government entities, and communities that yield many benefits to the users. Learning centers in Alliance, LaVista, Norfolk, and Grand Island are examples of differing learning center models that have all yielded successful results for improving efficiencies and meeting needs.

- **When possible, partner with other higher education institutions, communities, businesses, and other entities to share facilities, to improve efficiencies, and to accommodate the needs of students and communities**.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS

Nebraska's independent colleges and universities and private career institutions are valuable education resources to the state.

Independent institutions are predominantly liberal arts institutions with distinct characteristics that in some cases attract a national and international student body. Some offer a strong religious affiliation; others offer specialization in certain disciplines. Some independent colleges and universities include a focus on specific populations; for instance, targeting the older, returning college student.

The state's private career schools provide short-term, career-oriented training programs in disciplines such as business, cosmetology, allied health, trade and/or technical fields, and modeling. Entities that license and regulate the postsecondary education courses offered through these schools include the Nebraska Department of Education, the Board of Barber Examiners, the Department of Health, the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the Real Estate Commission.

The positive and competitive environment created by the presence of both public and private institutions within the state is beneficial to the overall quality of postsecondary education. Nebraska will realize the best use of its resources through communication, cooperation, and collaboration among public, independent, and private institutions.

- **Encourage cooperation and partnerships, whenever possible, between public and private higher education to realize the best use of resources and to enhance educational opportunities**.

  – Independent colleges and universities and private career schools are invited to

participate in statewide educational planning and coordinating processes.
- The public and private sectors of higher education share an interest in assuring that financially needy students have access to postsecondary education opportunities.
- Public higher education institutions enter into partnerships with the two tribal colleges in the state to help increase the level of participation and the success of Native Americans in higher education and to provide the tribal colleges and their students with access to needed programs and technologies.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER STATES

The State of Nebraska cannot attempt to provide programs to meet everyone's educational needs. Postsecondary educational services that are not readily available and are expensive to replicate in Nebraska may be available via regional, national, and international consortium linkages. To make maximum use of these collaborative efforts, the institutions and students need heightened awareness of the educational opportunities they present.

- **Participate in regional interstate compacts, including the Midwest Higher Education Commission (MHEC), which will help broaden educational opportunities for Nebraska students and promote resource sharing with institutions in other states.**

By statute, the Board of Regents is authorized to negotiate contracts with accredited schools of optometry and veterinary medicine to provide admission to these programs for qualified Nebraska students. These contracts save Nebraska the expense of offering these programs while providing access to the programs for students through reciprocal agreements.

- **Continue to use reciprocity agreements with other states to provide access for Nebraska students to specific programs that are not otherwise available within the state.**

The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education has responsibility to determine whether out-of-state institutions will be permitted to offer classes in Nebraska. The Commission's primary concern is the creation of any unnecessary program duplication by allowing out-of-state institutions to operate in the state.

- **Out-of-state institutions cooperate and coordinate with in-state institutions to avoid unnecessary duplication and to focus program offerings to fill existing voids for which the resources of Nebraska are unavailable or of low priority.**

  - The Coordinating Commission considers the availability of instructional programs in Nebraska through existing public and private institutions when making a judgment about whether an out-of-state institution should be authorized to offer programs in Nebraska.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH EMPLOYERS AND OTHER STATE AGENCIES

An active partnership between higher education and Nebraska's business sector is essential if the economy of the state is to grow. Coalitions formed by a wide range of leaders can help guide institutions to educate and/or train students for the economic and social realities they will encounter. Community-level partnerships may include joint planning, collaborative research, and cooperative education and training programs.

- **Partner with the state's employers to provide ongoing training to employees in both rural and urban locales to sustain the workforce's knowledge, skills, and readiness for change.**
  - The Coordinating Commission and institutions work collaboratively with community-based organizations, one-stop shared agency service centers, and employers to communicate and share information on support and training and/or education opportunities.
  - Higher education, state agencies, and employers link data systems to connect education and employment data.
  - The Coordinating Commission, higher education institutions, and Nebraska Workforce Development develop and maintain a data system to track the migration of students between institutions and sectors and from higher education into the Nebraska workforce.

Major Statewide Goal:
K/12 Schools

Higher education will work cooperatively with elementary and secondary schools to improve teaching and learning at all levels of education and to facilitate the transition from one level of education to another.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS

The ability of students to enter college directly upon graduation from high school and succeed in their studies is the shared responsibility of the K/12 schools, postsecondary education, and the students and their families. The K/12 system must provide the appropriate breadth, depth, and quality of learning for students in the elementary and secondary grades. To help students make smooth transitions from high school to college, colleges must provide appropriate curriculum, course work, and levels of support to students when they reach their institutions.

Responsibility for the quality of learning also is shared by the K/12 schools that hire and retain quality teachers; the postsecondary institutions that prepare teachers initially and upgrade their skills throughout their professional careers; the agency that credentials teachers for Nebraska's schools; and the families, communities, and postsecondary education institutions that shape students' enthusiasm for higher levels of academic achievement. In turn, the State of Nebraska is responsible for providing access to college for those students who are prepared to enter and succeed in Nebraska's colleges.

Cooperative Ventures

Cooperative ventures between K/12 and postsecondary education can be vehicles for improved communication and cooperation on shared issues between the two levels of education.

- **Higher education will support the efforts of the Nebraska Department of Education and cooperative ventures to improve communication and cooperation between K/12 districts and schools and Nebraska's public and private postsecondary institutions.**
  - Participate in working groups that have been established at the discipline level so that math and reading/writing teachers at the K/12 district level and college faculty work together to discuss course content to meet both K/12 standards and lead to proper preparation for college freshmen classes.

Prepared Students

Students who are not academically prepared for college-level work are likely to become discouraged or dissatisfied when they enter college and are not successful. A truly coordinated system of education that ensures that students transition easily from one level of education to another begins with an understanding of the abilities of students as they leave one system to enter another.

- **Higher education will collaborate with K/12 to inform all students attending Nebraska's schools, as early as middle-school, about what they need to learn and accomplish in order to enter and have the best chance to succeed in Nebraska's colleges.**
  - Work with K/12 educators to clearly communicate to students and their parents, as well as to new teachers and educators, the prerequisite knowledge, skills, competencies, and course work needed for admission to and success in colleges in Nebraska.
  - Increase exposure of K/12 students and their parents to Nebraska's postsecondary education campuses through programs such as college fairs, career and job placement services for students, campus visitations, and presentations at various student organizations.
  - Provide information that helps families prepare financially for college, including information about college savings plans, federal and state financial aid, and scholarship opportunities.

- **Higher education will collaborate with school districts across the state to identify and address any gaps between K-12 standards for graduation and prerequisite college preparation for admission to and success in Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions**.
  - Collaborate with school districts in curricula reform to reduce the number of students unprepared to succeed in college-level courses.
  - Provide feedback to the K/12 school system regarding the academic performance and retention of recent high school graduates enrolled in Nebraska's colleges and universities.
  - Work in concert with K/12 to define academic standards for students that clearly connect high school graduation with college preparation, admission, and success, and clearly connect the curriculum in the first two years with standards for admission.
  - Review curricula and course work for appropriateness to the level of entering students, the sequence of general and major field course work, and the instruction, learning support, and advisement for students in their first two years of postsecondary education.

- **Higher education will collaborate with K/12 districts and schools to assure statewide access to advanced placement and college-level courses for academically prepared students to facilitate a successful transition to postsecondary education course work.**

  – Enhance students' access to existing and emerging postsecondary education/high school programs by permitting academically prepared high school students who are "on track" for high school graduation to be eligible to receive dual high school and college credit for the college-level courses they complete satisfactorily while attending high school.

    - Encourage and/or enable institutions (*e.g.,* through funding priorities) to use technologies to deliver advanced placement and college-level instruction across the state to academically prepared and eligible students who are admitted to Nebraska's colleges while still attending high school.
    - Collaborate with the Nebraska Department of Education and the state to align state funding policies and formula for K/12 funding with postsecondary education funding and tuition policies to provide equitable and appropriate tax funding for such programs.
    - Through dual enrollment guidelines (following this section), establish collaborative minimum standards for dual enrollment programs that (1) assure college-level rigor of college credit courses; (2) enrich the high school curriculum; (3) aid students in the transition from secondary to postsecondary education; and (4) foster collaboration between high school and college faculty in curriculum development, instruction, assessment, and evaluation of dual enrollment courses.

  – Promote high school students' participation in college-preparation and college-level instruction through programs such as Tech-Prep, School to Career, high school-college academic summer courses and camps, and other such programs.

Nebraska Dual Enrollment Standards

Defining Dual Enrollment

Dual enrollment programs are intended to meet the needs of academically advanced students, to provide enrichment for students who have special, academic, or vocational needs, or to provide technical education. Dual enrollment courses will articulate with degree programs at postsecondary institutions. Academic courses will articulate with baccalaureate degree programs or associate degree programs, diplomas, and certificates. Vocational or technical courses will articulate into applied associate degree programs, diplomas, or certificates.

In this document, dual enrollment programs are often referred to as "dual-credit programs" or "programs." Students enrolled in such programs are referred to as "dual-credit students." Dual enrollment programs and dual-credit students are distinguished from concurrent enrollment programs and concurrent enrolled students in the following definitions:

> Dual-credit students: High school students who take a course for both college and high school credit. High schools count these students in their average daily attendance.
>
> Concurrent enrolled students: High school students who take college courses for college credit only (no high school credit), while remaining enrolled in high school and counted in their school's average daily attendance.

Standards

The following minimum standards apply specifically to dual enrollment programs developed and maintained by school districts and cooperating colleges and universities.

Students

1) Student eligibility for the program is determined by participating high school and college/university officials; however, eligible students will typically:
    a) Be juniors or seniors; and
    b) Meet the prerequisites of the course or otherwise demonstrate the ability to achieve success in the course; or
    c) Be formally identified as high ability or gifted students by the school participating in the dual enrollment program.

    Students will complete a dual enrollment application signed by a high school official.

2) The college/university has the following recommended academic guidelines to increase students' opportunity for academic success. Eligible students will typically:
    a) Have attained a GPA of 3.0 or better; or
    b) Earned an ACT composite score of at least 20 or an equivalent score on another valid assessment; or
    c) Earned an ACT sub-score of at least 20 or equivalent on another valid assessment relevant to the offered dual enrollment course or courses; or
    d) Rank in the upper one-half of their high school class; or
    e) Demonstrate through some alternative means the capacity for academic success in the desired course or courses. (Examples include student portfolios, letters of recommendations, and student performances/exhibitions.)

    The preceding student eligibility guidelines may be waived in special circumstances by the appropriate secondary or postsecondary officials.

3) Participating students are admitted and registered by the appropriate postsecondary institution with mutual consent of the district and college/university.

4) Eligible students are provided appropriate course materials, including policies, college procedures, course outline/syllabus, and assessment materials if not specified in the course outline.

5) Eligible students receive guidance regarding their program responsibilities, weighted credit options, if any, and specific grading practices.

6) Institutions provide participating students information clearly describing institutional procedures for academic credit transfer. Institutions are encouraged to provide the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education with information or Web site links describing institutional credit transfer policies and procedures so that the Commission can maintain a Nebraska dual enrollment Web site.

Faculty

1) Instructors meet approved requirements for teaching at the department/college level. Minimally, instructors for academic courses hold a master's degree. Instructors meet district teaching requirements for program participation. All faculty have the mutual support of the district and college/university participating in the dual enrollment program.

2) High school and postsecondary faculty receive appropriate orientation and training (e.g., curriculum, assessment, policies, and procedures) for participation in the program.

3) Collaboration between high school and postsecondary faculty is encouraged and faculty development is available where appropriate.

4) Collaboration between high school and postsecondary faculty is encouraged and faculty development is available where appropriate.

5) High school and postsecondary faculty maintain contact throughout the program. In some instances, this contact is facilitated by technology.

The preceding faculty guidelines may be waived in special circumstances by the appropriate secondary and postsecondary officials.

Curriculum

1) Courses must reflect college-level experiences and rigor as well as district and state standards and practices.

2) Course outlines or syllabi (including at minimum a description of content, teaching strategies, performance measures, grading standards, resource materials, objectives/outcomes, and course calendar) utilized in the program meet district(s), state, and college/university standards.

3) Courses in this program are of the highest quality and intended to challenge eligible students while preparing them for transition to postsecondary education.

Assessment

1) Assessment policies and procedures are consistent with district and college/university practice.

2) To assure the academic rigor of courses for which college credit will be awarded, universities or colleges participating in dual enrollment programs will include valid student and faculty assessment measures that are consistent with the typical assessment measures of such university or college.

3) Ideally, curricula should progress logically and neatly with greater complexity and depth as students pass from secondary to postsecondary education. Therefore, jointly developed assessment policies and procedures of K-12 schools and postsecondary education institutions should be designed to align dual enrollment curricula with state course content standards. Additional statewide cooperative work is needed to accomplish this objective.

Evaluation

1) The district(s) and college/university review the program on an annual basis.

2) Program participants are tracked following graduation through postsecondary experiences when possible. Tracking elements may include district(s) data (e.g., class rank, GPA, ACT where available, AP exam where available and appropriate, and course outcomes and grade) and postsecondary data (e.g., GPA, major, number of hours completed, and enhancements, if appropriate to program).

3) Data sharing occurs consistent with the policies of the district(s) and college/university.

Instructional Context and Resources

The instructional context and appropriate resources are determined by district(s) and college/university officials.

School districts and postsecondary education institutions should work together to ensure broad access to dual enrollment courses for all students, irrespective of the students' financial resources. Postsecondary education institutions are encouraged to offer tuition remissions or find other means of support for eligible students qualifying for free or reduced lunches or otherwise demonstrating financial need.

School districts that receive state aid related in part to significant numbers of students challenged by poverty or English language limitations should consider using such aid or finding other means of support to fund the tuition expenses of eligible students who would not otherwise be able to enroll in dual enrollment courses.

All public high schools must comply with the provisions of the Public Elementary and Secondary Student Fee Authorization Act, Sections 79-2,125 to 79-2,135, (RRS). The Act requires that all K-12 education must be free in the public schools. However, students may be charged tuition by the college for college credit. If dual enrollment arrangements between schools and colleges make it impossible or very difficult for a student to take a course as a high school course only and without cost for college tuition, such arrangements might be considered a violation of the Student Fee Authorization Act and Article VII, Section I of the Nebraska Constitution, on which the Act is based.

Teacher Preparation

- **Higher education and K/12 leadership will collaborate in the recruitment, preparation, and retention of quality teachers in Nebraska's schools.**
  - Institutions offering teacher education undertake initiatives to:
    - Improve the academic and pedagogical competency of their candidates for certification and assist schools in mentoring new teachers and in the professional development of all teachers.
    - Develop more integrated approaches to the preparation of teachers in both the Colleges of Education and Arts and Sciences.
    - Equip teacher education graduates with continuing education and professional development opportunities that provide knowledge and skills in utilizing new instructional technologies in the classroom.
    - Provide graduates with skills and interest in teaching diverse groups of students who are at-risk and in need of remedial/developmental education.
    - Collaborate with school districts and Education Service Units to improve the availability and the value of in-service training, to mentor new teachers, and to recruit high schools' best students to the teaching profession.
    - Regularly assess the content and methodology of postsecondary education's teacher and counselor preparation in response to reform in K/12 curricula.
    - Identify the need for additional pre-service and in-service training in terms of K/12 curricula reform, changing characteristics of students, and changes in college curriculum, teaching, and advising.
    - Collaborate with the Department of Education to find ways that elementary and secondary schools can improve the productivity of learners and teachers, such as through expanded use of technology.
    - Work with the K/12 community to address issues related to teacher shortages, including teacher salaries and recruitment programs.
    - Encourage teachers to promote and encourage their students to consider teaching as a rewarding and meaningful career option.
    - Assure that all new teacher graduates possess the requisite skills to effectively teach courses using distance learning technologies.

Chapter Six

STATEWIDE FACILITIES PLAN

The state's college and university campuses represent decades of investment in the creation and maintenance of intellectual and physical environments designed to support the fundamental missions of higher education.

Students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors must be supported by a physical, technical, and natural environment that encourages intellectual growth and human interaction. The physical environments of the campuses must be functional, well utilized, safe, accessible, cost effective, well maintained, and responsive to the changing needs of the institutions' programs and the people served. The campuses must possess a sense of place, beauty, and quality that clearly represents their priorities and mission-driven responsibilities.

Increased use of information technologies has significant implication for planning, constructing, and utilizing facilities for colleges and universities. How changing technologies will affect future teaching and learning styles both on and off campuses must be considered and addressed in institutional facilities planning.

To some students, the "campus" is their computer at home or wherever a laptop can take them. To other students, a branch campus, learning center, or job site can serve as the campus. How institutions bring academic and student services to this geographically diverse student population is a facilities planning issue. In addition, high-speed connectivity between campuses, learning centers, and homes is increasingly necessary to enable the learner to access information at any place and time. Expanding partnerships with local communities and businesses, and local, state, and federal agencies can enhance institutional efforts to meet these needs.

Within this context, the following questions are being asked of those who are responsible for the planning, construction, maintenance, and financing of the physical environments of postsecondary education institutions:

- What are the best ways to adapt the existing physical environment to support changes in academic programs? What facilities will these programs require? How will the courses of these programs be delivered?
- When new facilities are constructed, how can they be made more adaptable to future change?
- What are cost-effective strategies for maintaining campus facilities?
- How will the various infrastructures of the campuses be enhanced and maintained—not only the utilities, but the information technology networks, roads, walks, landscapes, and instructional and research equipment?
- How will those physical elements of the campuses that support and encourage human interaction be preserved and enhanced?

- How can these challenges best be addressed by state funding policies?

The following goals and strategies frame an approach that should enhance the physical environments required to support effectively the current and future programs of Nebraska's institutions of postsecondary education.

Goals and Strategies

Major Statewide Goal:
Facilities

Nebraskans will advocate a physical environment for each of the state's postsecondary institutions that: supports its role and mission; is well utilized and effectively accommodates space needs; is safe, accessible, cost effective, and well maintained; and is sufficiently flexible to adapt to future changes in programs and technologies.

FACILITIES PLANNING

College and university facilities are becoming increasingly complex, requiring careful planning to meet the functional, social, educational, technological, and environmental challenges of the present and future world. Branch campuses, shared learning centers, online learning, and other educational advances are accelerating the pace of change. Within this context, facility planning has become more important than at any time in the history of postsecondary education institutions.

In developing institutional comprehensive facilities plans, a facilities' information database can serve as an excellent tool for making prudent and wise planning decisions. Facilities plans should be developed in cooperation with local residents, so that both the institution and community at large may benefit.

- **An institution's comprehensive facilities plan will be an integral tool that supports the institution's role and mission and strategic plan.**
  - The content and format of institutional comprehensive facilities planning documents should be flexible in order to be responsive to a rapidly changing educational environment.
  - A statewide facilities information database will be available to support the development and review of institutional comprehensive facilities plans.

FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION, OPERATIONS, AND MAINTENANCE

Facilities are perhaps the best example of how institutional decisions are made permanent, with long-term effects on operating budgets and programs. Buildings constructed to meet today's immediate needs have the potential of either enhancing or impeding institutions from meeting needs of future generations. The same may also apply to buildings that are offered to institutions as gifts. Therefore, weighing the initial contribution of a gift with its long-term costs and benefits is a critical factor in determining need.

- **Individual capital construction projects will support institutional strategic and comprehensive facilities plans; comply with the *Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education*, which includes the Statewide Facilities Plan; and not unnecessarily duplicate other facilities.**

  - Collaboration and cooperation between higher education institutions and public and private agencies can enhance an institution's programs and services and provide for efficient use of resources. When economically and programmatically feasible, institutions will share facilities with one another.
  - Commission evaluation of individual capital construction projects are based on the following review criteria:

    - Prior Commission approval of applicable academic programs that would occupy space in the capital construction project has been granted.
    - The project demonstrates consistency with the governing board's institutional comprehensive facilities plan.
    - The project addresses current and projected needs.
    - The project enhances effectiveness and efficiencies of institutional programs and services.
    - Reasonable project alternatives have been considered.
    - The amount of funding requested does not represent insufficient or extraordinary proposed expenditures of tax funds and the use of tax funds is appropriate.

FACILITIES FUNDING

Facilities funding has historically come from a variety of sources. These sources of funding and example applications include:

- State and local taxes for infrastructure projects, academic instructional, academic and operational support, and public service facilities;
- User fees for student centers, residence halls, and parking;
- Federal funding for research facilities;
- Self-generated funding for auxiliary programs such as bookstores, child care centers, hospitals, etc.;

- Student tuition and fees, which increasingly are being used to support renewal and renovation of academic and support facilities; and,
- Private funding available to support each of these types of facilities projects.

Institutions are responsible for ongoing preventive maintenance of campus facilities. Facility operating and maintenance (O&M) funding has historically come from state and local taxes, student tuition, user fees, and auxiliary funding. Federal or private funding has rarely been used for facility O&M in the past. However, there is a recent trend nationally to request private donors to contribute to a facility O&M trust fund when donating funds for a facility project. State tax funds also are used for deferred maintenance, fire and life safety, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and energy conservation projects at the University and state college campuses. The state has also created a Building Renewal Assessment Fund to collect depreciation charges on all new capital construction projects, building additions, major renovations, and purchases or acquisitions of facilities at the University and state colleges.

State funding for University and state college facilities is provided during a biennial budget cycle. Community colleges have not received state funding for capital construction projects.

The University of Nebraska Board of Regents and Nebraska State College Board of Trustees submit a capital construction budget request to the Governor and Legislature biennially on even-numbered years. These requests include a prioritized list of capital construction projects submitted by each governing board.

The Commission reviews and makes recommendations on the governing board capital construction budget requests and submits a unified, prioritized list that recommends the sequential order of appropriations for approved capital construction projects. The Commission's prioritization process is based on numerically weighted criteria that establish the recommended funding order of individual projects. The process is reviewed biennially with the University and state colleges for needed revisions.

- **Adequate and stable funding will be available for maintenance, repair, renovation, and major construction projects as identified in the comprehensive facilities planning and review processes.**

  - Provide adequate funding for appropriate maintenance of facilities and utility and infrastructure systems and to provide a safe, accessible, and energy-efficient physical environment.
  - The Commission will consider national standards and work collaboratively with the public higher education sectors and other state policymakers to set standards for appropriate levels of funding for routine maintenance, deferred repair, and renovation/remodeling projects to help ensure that campus facilities are well maintained and that deferred repairs and needed renovation and remodeling projects are completed.

- Continue the use of dedicated and stable funding sources for capital construction projects to include:
  - The community college areas' dedicated capital improvement property tax levy;
  - State funding to meet depreciation charges for all University and state college capital construction projects that are assessed a two percent depreciation charge for accumulation of amounts in statutory Building Renewal Assessment Funds; and
  - State funding of the Task Force for Building Renewal.
- Provide additional dedicated and stable funding sources for capital construction projects such as establishment of capital construction fund reserves or development of dedicated funding sources for capital construction projects.

GUIDELINES FOR COMMISSION REVIEW OF THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, AND RENEWAL OF CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Nebraska public postsecondary education aspires to maintain the highest standards in the acquisition, construction, and renewal of capital construction projects. Maintaining public trust in this process is a responsibility shared by institutions, governing boards, and the Coordinating Commission.

To support the highest standards in the acquisition, construction, and renewal of capital construction projects, the Commission has adopted the following *Guidelines* to assist in its review and decision-making regarding capital construction projects that utilize tax funds. These *Guidelines* are not intended to constrict or constrain the constitutional or statutory authorities provided institutional governing boards to review, approve, and manage capital construction projects. Rather, they serve to make all interested parties aware of points that will guide the Commission's own deliberations in an increasingly complex environment.

Funds to support institutional facilities are drawn from an increasing variety of sources, and funding mechanisms are becoming correspondingly complex. As the percentage of institutional revenues coming from state funds continues to decline around the country, public institutions will increasingly seek support from diverse sources. Despite that necessity, Nebraska public postsecondary institutions should acknowledge and embrace their public missions, seek to deliver the greatest value for the state's investments in higher education, and pursue practices that support maintenance of the public trust.

Public higher education officials must comply with numerous laws, regulations, and policies governing capital construction and related projects. Higher education officials also should acknowledge and embrace the *spirit* behind those laws, regulations, and

policies, and its leaders encourage individuals, organizations, foundations, and facilities corporations created to benefit public institutions to do the same.

Many generous donors provide needed support to our institutions, and their preferences and interests should rightly receive careful consideration. Nonetheless, public higher education institutions and boards should ensure that donor preferences do not place undue future burdens on public taxpayers to pay for increased project, operating, or maintenance costs.

The Commission encourages institutional governing boards to maintain polices and practices governing the acquisition, construction, and renewal of capital construction projects that in the public interest (i) assure compliance with laws, regulations, and policies relating to award of contracts, (ii) are in compliance with public meetings and public records laws, (iii) assure good value for acquisition of land and facilities, construction of new facilities, and renewal of existing facilities, and (iv) thoroughly review and assess existing hazardous materials, fire and life safety, deferred repair needs, and building system issues, needs, and conditions for all major renovation projects.

Examples of such policies and practices are provided in the following *Guidelines* that the Commission has endorsed to assist it in its review of these increasingly complex issues. The examples are not intended to comprise a comprehensive or exclusive list.

Guidelines for Commission Review of the Acquisition, Construction, and Renewal of Capital Construction Projects

Open Processes

Nebraska's public higher education institutions and boards use transparent and open processes and practices as they plan and make decisions about capital construction projects. Some examples of such open processes and practices include:

- Maintaining Transparency. Board decisions regarding capital construction projects are made in announced, public sessions (other than those exempted under open meeting laws) and disclosed in public documents. Modifications to those documents, and documents developed through contracting processes delegated by governing boards, are subject to public examination under the Nebraska public records statutes.
- Expecting and Supporting Professional Codes of Ethics. Individuals, entities, and boards involved in the capital construction process are guided by their respective professional Codes of Ethics, including conflict of interest policies, use of quality construction standards, and standard business practices.

Good Value in Acquisition of Facilities

Public higher education institutions and boards seek good value as they consider acquiring facilities, either by purchase or gift. Some examples of such "seeking good value" practices include:

- Considering Alternatives. An analysis of possible alternatives is made prior to the acquisition of any facility to determine the most effective approach to meeting the identified need (e.g., purchase vs. lease vs. new construction vs. renewal of existing facilities). Decisions about the most cost-effective approach include considerations of both initial and long-term costs.
- Determining How Much to Pay. When purchasing a property, tax valuations or independent appraisals are used to assure that a justifiable price is paid.

Good Value in New Capital Construction Projects

Nebraska's public higher education institutions and boards seek good value as they make decisions about new capital construction projects, whether constructed directly by an institution or through a private developer. Some examples of such "seeking good value" practices include:

- Competitive Selection Process. Competitive proposals are sought and received from developers or construction contractors for any new facility built on institutional property, in accordance with applicable statutes and governing board policies.

- Development Fees. Development fees assessed in the purchase of new construction are generally based on an up-front, cost-plus fee basis and do not generally exceed rates typical for the local market.

Good Value in Renewal of Existing Facilities

Nebraska's public higher education institutions and boards seek good value as they make decisions about the renewal of existing facilities. Some examples of such "seeking good value" practices include:

- Thoroughly Assessing Current and Future Needs. A thorough survey of existing hazardous materials, fire and life safety, and building system issues, needs, and conditions is made for all major renovation projects. These surveys help provide accurate cost estimates and may eliminate costly future work.
- Ensuring Attention to Broad Safety, Accessibility, and Repair Concerns. Major fire and life safety, accessibility, and deferred repair needs are addressed when major renovation projects are undertaken, including repair or replacement of roofs and other exterior building envelope work.

Sources of Funding for Various Types of Space

As previously stated, funds from diverse sources support the construction, acquisition, renewal, and ongoing operations and maintenance of campus facilities. Nebraska's Governor and Legislature have the final responsibilities for determining whether and how state funds are provided for capital construction projects; the Coordinating Commission is charged to approve capital projects and make funding recommendations on such projects. Those recommendations are based upon some general considerations, listed below, that focus mainly on the use of tax funds. Regardless of these general considerations, institutions are encouraged to cultivate non-tax sources of funding to enhance offerings and allow state funds to have the greatest impact on key institutional and state needs.

Instructional, Instructional/Administrative/Operational Support, and Public Service Space. Tax funds generally support the design, construction, and/or ongoing facility operations and maintenance (O&M) of needed instructional, instructional/administrative/operational support, and public service space.

Research Space. In Nebraska, as in other states, funding for research space at public institutions has traditionally come from a variety of sources, including federal, state, and private sources. Opportunities to advance economic development, improve public health or safety, match external funds, renew existing space, or support key institutional missions are circumstances that institutions should consider in asking for (and the Legislature in determining) the provision of state funds for the construction and O&M of research space.

Other Types of Space. Funds from non-tax sources support the design, construction, and ongoing facility O&M of other institutional space, such as:

- Alumni or foundation program space.
- Auxiliary enterprise space.
- Self-sufficient intercollegiate athletic program space.
- Self-sufficient student support space such as student housing, parking, student centers/unions, student medical services, recreational facilities, and student auxiliary services (e.g., childcare services, bookstores, etc.).

Other Issues

Institutions, boards, and the Commission consider individual capital construction projects within the context of broad institutional and state needs, while maintaining the flexibility to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities.

In most instances, state tax support should be focused on projects that address important state needs or institutional role and mission. In general, if such a need is not readily apparent for a particular project, the percentage of non-tax support made available for that project should be relatively high. Tax funds should be used to support projects that respond to high state and/or institutional needs, while projects responding to lesser state and/or institutional needs should increasingly rely on non-tax funds.

Additional considerations may include:

- Cost-Benefit Ratio. Potential cost savings or other benefits to the state may make a project more attractive.
- Matching Funds. A high level of non-tax matching funds may make a project more attractive and justify greater reliance on state support.
- Ongoing Facility O&M Commitments. Alternate (non-tax) sources of ongoing O&M support may make a project more attractive. In cases where alternative funds are appropriate and available, meeting long-term commitments with dedicated alternative funding streams may enhance project justification.

Chapter Seven

PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION ROLES AND MISSIONS

Each postsecondary education institution within Nebraska has a clearly defined role and mission upon which it bases its educational programming, services, and other operational procedures. An institution's role and mission provide the rationale for its being and define the institution's fundamental priorities and characteristics.

- **Each institution has a clearly defined role and mission, and has students, programs, and services that are appropriate to that institution's role and mission.**

Traditionally, public postsecondary education's roles and missions are considered in the context of three primary programmatic areas of responsibility: instruction, research, and public service. Each institution has responsibilities to varying degrees in each of these areas and each has responsibility for serving a specific geographic area of the state.

Underlying the roles and missions of Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions are a number of important objectives:

- **In fulfilling its role and mission, each institution recognizes the importance to the individual of high quality teaching and learning and the value of educated citizens to society.**

- **Fulfilling the responsibilities of postsecondary education is best accomplished when institutions with distinct roles and missions cooperate to provide a balance within and between them to provide excellent teaching, appropriate research, and pertinent public service to the state.**

- **Each institution values and promotes racial and cultural diversity.**

- **Institutions cannot be everything to everyone. Each institution sets priorities between and within instructional programs, research projects, and public service activities as a basis for budget, program, and facility decisions that best serve the needs of the students, the institution, and the residents of its service areas.**

- **Institutions track their progress toward accomplishing their institutional role and mission responsibilities and the statewide goals of the *Comprehensive***

***Plan* through available outcome measures and benchmarks. These measures may include comparisons of an institution's accomplishments with those of its peer institutions. Benchmarks also are used by higher education institutions as a means to evaluate and improve programs and services to the region and state, and to inform the public.**

GEOGRAPHIC AND PROGRAMMATIC SERVICE AREAS

Statutes require the Commission to designate geographic and programmatic service areas for each public institution within the state.

Geographic Service Areas

Institutions, by statute, will not offer programs at sites outside their designated geographic service area except as permitted under Commission rules and procedures. These rules and procedures offer institutions relatively broad flexibility to offer some courses or programs off campus and outside their geographic service areas, assuming such courses or programs are within the institution's programmatic service mission, meet need and demand, are currently approved programs, and do not unnecessarily duplicate offerings of the resident institutions.

- **Outside-of-service-area courses may be offered in the following situations**:
  - Electronically delivered distance learning programs delivered via the Internet and other technologies to individual students at sites such as their homes and workplaces may be offered without CCPE oversight.
  - Short courses and seminars (fewer than 20 contact hours) provided for businesses, associations, and professional groups as part of professional growth activities may be offered without CCPE oversight.
  - Courses or programs delivered by institutions, either electronically or traditionally, at established ongoing sites outside a designated geographic service area may be offered if notice is given to institutions within the geographic area where the course or program will be delivered and such institutions do not object by notifying the Commission within seven days.

- **The residents of geographic service areas are the primary beneficiaries of the off-campus programs and activities provided by the institution. Institutions share a responsibility with other institutions in their geographic service area to provide needed services to area residents.**

- **Institutions sharing a service area cooperate to avoid unnecessary duplication of both off-campus and on-campus programs.**

  – The Commission facilitates meetings with institutions to collaboratively plan off-campus programming in shared service areas.
  – Cooperation and joint sharing of courses to meet needs and increase efficiencies are encouraged.

Service areas are in no way meant to curtail students from other counties, states, or nations from attending the campuses of any institution. In addition, student internships, cooperative education positions, and student teaching placements will cross geographic service area boundaries.

Programmatic service areas

Programmatic service areas are areas of responsibility within the instructional, research, and public service roles of a public institution. Programmatic service areas may be shared by several institutions; however, some programmatic service responsibilities are limited to certain types of institutions. One institution also may be designated as the primary provider of specific program areas, either within the sector or statewide among all public institutions. An example is the statewide role of the University of Nebraska Medical Center in health-related disciplines within the University of Nebraska system.

The Commission recognizes that its designation of geographic and programmatic service areas creates the potential for layering or overlapping of programs and services among institutions serving the same area. Its concern is unnecessary duplication of programs and services. Where demonstrated need exists, an overlap of programs and services may be justified. The Commission will monitor its rules and procedures regarding geographic and programmatic service areas and make revisions, as needed, to eliminate unnecessary duplication while maintaining needed programs and services.

PEER GROUPS

A peer institution is one that is representative of the institution to which it is compared. The Commission is required by statute to identify peer institutions for each public postsecondary education institution in the state. The Commission reviews and compares several characteristics of institutions, such as enrollment and program offerings, in identifying peers. Peer groups are used for budget and program review, as well as for other comparisons that will aid in Commission decision making. The Commission's purpose for the use of peer groups does not include influencing the collective bargaining process.

INSTRUCTION

The primary responsibility of the educational institutions is to facilitate learning. Instruction of students is the most important function of all public institutions.

- **Institutions, governing boards, and the Commission (through its program review process) share responsibility to evaluate existing and proposed new instructional programs to determine if they are appropriate to role and mission of the institution, if they meet the objectives of the institution, and if they meet the needs of students and the state.**

  – Institutions prepare their graduates to be ready to enter the workforce through ongoing review and evaluation of program offerings and content, through employer advisory councils, through "real work" experiences such as internships and apprenticeships, and through communication with employers to identify emerging needs.

Clearly defined instructional roles for each sector and institution help students make informed choices of institutions that meet their needs. Once at the institution, students have the right to expect educational programs and support services, which provide them with the best possible opportunity to learn and succeed. Given such a learning environment, it is incumbent upon students to apply those opportunities toward their educational goals. Nebraska's postsecondary education institutions have the right to expect achievement from students, as do the citizens, who have a substantial investment in those admitted to the institutions.

- **Instruction at Nebraska's postsecondary education institutions prepares students to succeed in the workplace and to contribute to a democratic society.**

- **All public institutions are responsive to industry needs for technical, professional, and vocational skills and knowledge, providing programs, services and—when appropriate—specific certifications for both employees and management. Certifications demanded by business are typically competency based and directly connected to needed work skills**.

- **Institutions identify priority program areas to make the best use of resources, eliminating program areas where there is little need or demand, unnecessary duplication, or inconsistency with institutional objectives.**

- **Institutions use instructional technologies to provide educational opportunities to place-bound students, who are often working adults, as well as to traditional, on-campus students.**

- **Institutions develop agreements to share courses with other institutions, and to share faculty and other resources to make the best use of state resources and serve students by increasing access to programs and enabling students to cross-register between institutions.**

- **All degree-seeking students, no matter how specialized their programs of study, receive quality general education as a part of their educational experience**.

- **In addition to their other instructional roles, community colleges have the primary responsibility within the public sector to provide foundations education courses for students who are underprepared for college-level work.**

  – When possible, underprepared persons wishing to attend a University of Nebraska or state college campus would be directed into foundations education courses offered by a community college. See the community colleges' role and mission for the Commission's recommended foundations education (developmental/remedial) guidelines.

RESEARCH

Nebraska and the nation depend on the postsecondary institutions to conduct research and scholarship that generates new knowledge and technological advances in theory, techniques, and products.

Research is a part of each institution's role and mission in varying degrees. At some institutions, particularly the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Nebraska Medical Center, research—both basic and applied—is a high priority. At the state colleges and some portions of the University, research is more closely tied to teaching and directly applicable to scholarship, improvement of instruction, and faculty development. Community college research is much more limited and directly applicable to the classroom or workplace.

- **Research conducted at Nebraska public postsecondary education institutions is productive and effective.**

- **Each institution strives for a balance between teaching and research that is appropriate to its distinct mission.**
- **Faculty scholarly activity and research at all institutions enhances teaching to the extent feasible.**

- **Postsecondary institutions transfer knowledge and technology produced by research to Nebraska's businesses whenever possible to help Nebraska's businesses become more competitive and to promote the state's economy.**

PUBLIC SERVICE

All public institutions, irrespective of sector, have public service roles that vary based on the differing roles and missions, programs, disciplines, and resources of each institution. Public service missions provide valuable expertise, human resources, and cultural activities aimed toward the betterment of the state.

- **Postsecondary education institutions reach out into their communities in their service areas as active participants in public and community service activities**.

- **Cooperative public service efforts between and among public and private institutions and other entities are utilized to meet public service needs.**

- **Institutional leaders identify and review their public service projects to eliminate unwarranted duplication of services.**

The educational value of public service for students is not to be overlooked or discounted. Service learning can vastly enhance a student's educational experience. Among the most far-reaching lessons higher education provides its students is an understanding of the satisfaction and rewards of service to others.

- **Public service activities are incorporated, whenever possible, into program curriculum and student activities.**

- **By statute, public service activities of public postsecondary education institutions are subject to review by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education**.

  – The Commission and public institutions jointly maintain an inventory of public service activities, which is made available on the Commission's Web site for public access and awareness.

Community Colleges' Role and Mission

Community colleges provide educational options for students seeking entry-level career training. The education program may culminate in an applied technology associate degree, diploma, or certificate; or an associate of arts or associate of science degree from an academic transfer program.

The community colleges are student-centered, open-access institutions primarily devoted to quality instruction and public service. They provide counseling and other student services intended to promote the success of a diverse student population, particularly to those who have been traditionally underserved in other educational settings. Students often attend community colleges for purposes other than to obtain a degree, such as for specific job-related training for career advancement.

- **The community college programmatic service areas, as defined in statutes, include:**
  - The first instructional and service priority of the community colleges is applied technology and occupational education, and—when necessary—foundations education, which includes developmental and remedial education.
  - The second instructional and service priority is transfer education, including general academic transfer programs or applied technology and occupational programs that may be applicable to the first two years of a bachelor's degree program, and—when necessary—foundations education, which includes developmental and remedial education.
  - The third instructional and service priority of the community colleges is public service, particularly adult continuing education for occupations and professions; economic and community development focused on customized occupational assessment and job-training programs for business and communities; and avocational and personal development courses.
  - The fourth instructional and service priority of the community colleges is applied research.

INSTRUCTION

Community colleges provide an array of one- and two-year career programs designed to enable students to enter the job market immediately upon completion of their programs.

- **Community colleges' governing boards and the Coordinating Commission, through the established program review process, evaluate existing and proposed new career programs to determine if they comply with institutional objectives, meet student and state needs, and whether they constitute unnecessary duplication. Existing programs at private career institutions will be considered by the Commission in this process.**

- **The community colleges coordinate with other public and private institutions within their geographic service areas in providing continuing education to avoid unnecessary duplication.**

Many students choose community colleges with the desire to achieve or improve employability quickly. They want specific, job-oriented training that will lead directly to employment or will upgrade their knowledge and skills. Employment-related courses, complemented by a solid core of general education courses, give community college students the opportunity to enter the workforce and advance successfully in their chosen careers.

Students also attend community colleges to complete their first and second years and then transfer to a four-year institution to complete their baccalaureate degree. Significant progress has been made in articulation between community colleges and other Nebraska postsecondary education institutions to facilitate this process.

- **Community colleges serve as feeder institutions into four-year colleges and universities through their academic transfer programs.**

  – Two and four-year institutions continue development of a broadly accepted articulation policy where an AA or AS degree from a community college is accepted to meet the lower division general education requirements of the four-year institution.

- **Community colleges provide a core of high quality general education courses that permeate all of their programs of study. All degree-seeking students complete a general education component as a part of their educational experience.**

- **Community colleges incorporate relevant and appropriate "real" work experiences, such as internships, volunteerism, and cooperative education, into students' educational programs whenever possible.**

- **Community colleges continue to develop and use instructional technologies to expand the accessibility of their educational and training programs within their service areas.**

- **When considering new instructional programs and public service activities, each community college area assesses if an actual unmet need exists and assigns that need a priority. If it has sufficient priority, the community college then directs responsibility for meeting that need to the campus that is best able to meet the need. Geographic access, financial, human and physical resources, and institutional expertise are all considered in selecting the appropriate campus.**

Coordinating Commission's
Recommended Foundations Education (Developmental/Remedial) Guidelines:

Foundations education courses are pre-college level courses designed to correct skills deficiencies in writing, reading, and mathematics, all of which are essential for college study. Such courses often feature low student/teacher ratios or independent study options that allow opportunities for one-on-one assistance from instructors. No college credit toward degree completion is granted for foundations education programs.

The Commission recommends the following guidelines for the delivery of foundations education courses:

- **Community colleges have the primary responsibility to provide foundations education courses for students.**

- **Community colleges may offer foundations education courses through cooperative arrangements with the state colleges and University campuses. The arrangements may include offering the community college foundations education courses at a state college or University campus.**

- **Student success courses, such as study skills, library skills, and tutoring, are not to be defined as foundations education courses. Community colleges, as well as four-year institutions, continue to offer these success courses for their students.**

- **Community colleges are major providers of English Language Learner (also known as English as a Second Language) and U.S. citizenship courses, which are critical to immigrant populations in Nebraska, as well as high school equivalency courses (GED).**

Response to Employer Needs

Community colleges are critical to the state's economic development efforts. They are a major source of trained and skilled workers for the workforce. In addition, through cooperative education efforts with businesses, they provide customized, on-the-job training for employees as well as services such as re-employment training, skills upgrading, and occupational assessment. It is critical that community colleges be structured to allow flexibility and rapid responsiveness to workforce needs.

- **Community colleges, through ongoing communication with employers and advisory groups, identify competency-based skills that employers are seeking and provide testing mechanisms to assure graduates of training programs, skills-upgrading courses, and customized training programs have attained these skills.**

- **Community colleges continue efforts to pursue cooperative education and training efforts, as well as technical assistance programs, with businesses and communities to support the economic development of their geographic service areas. Commission procedures include provisions to enable community colleges to respond quickly and effectively.**

PUBLIC SERVICE

Community colleges provide many public services within their geographic service areas, including economic development, cultural awareness, personal and professional development, and community activities. Their active public service role and their local tax-supported funding base have contributed to their reputation as community-based institutions.

- **Economic development within geographic service areas is an important and continuing function of a community college's public service role.**

- **The community colleges have responsibility to provide public service activities in their geographic service areas that are within the scope and limitation of their resources.**

RESEARCH

Applied research is the fourth and last priority of community colleges. Community colleges do not serve as a principal source of research.

- **Research activities at community colleges generally are limited to the enhancement of instruction, public service, technical assistance activities, and faculty professional development.**

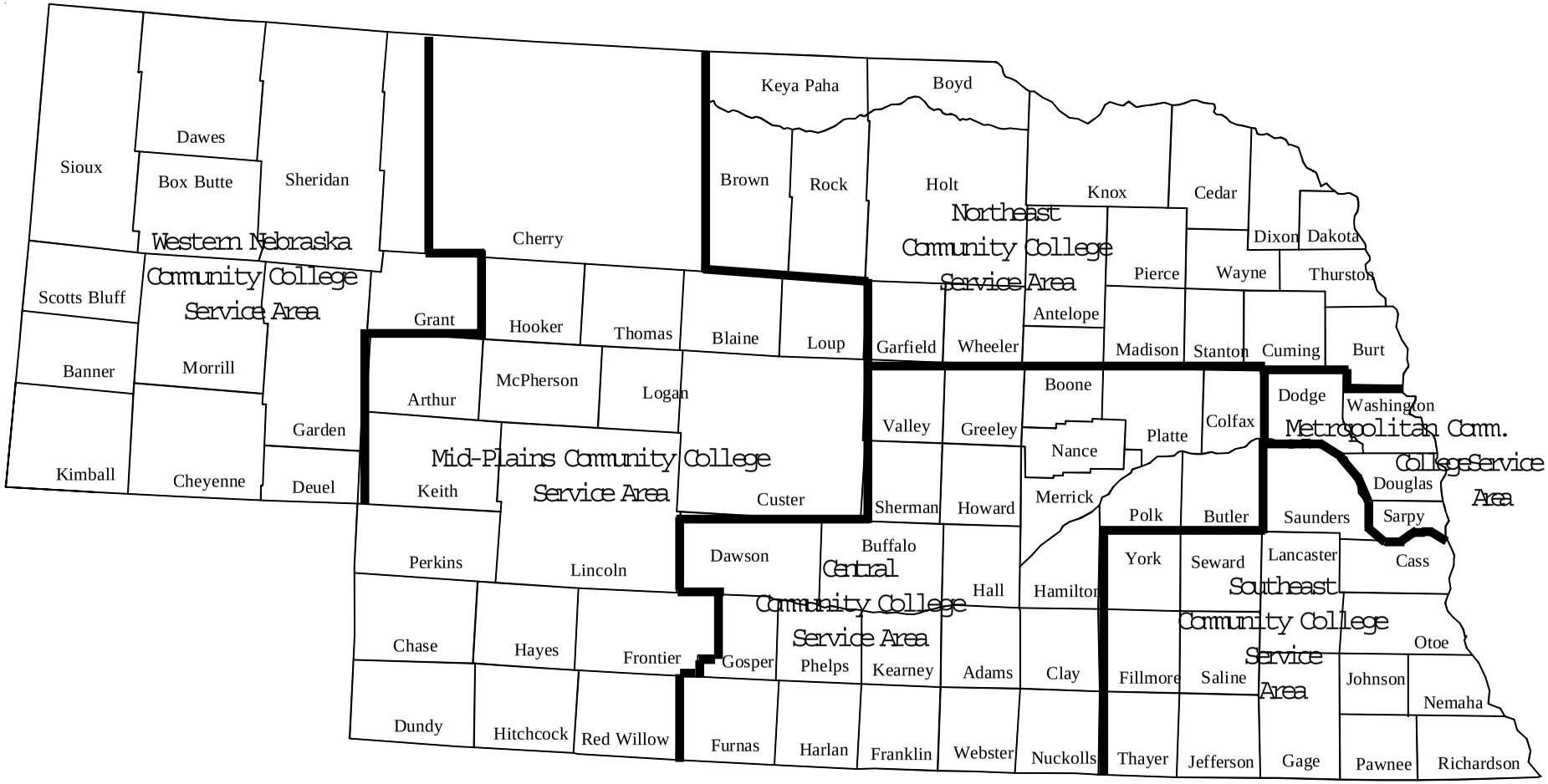
GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREAS

- **Community colleges shall serve the educational needs of their geographic service areas. When warranted, Commission procedures permit institutions to offer programs and services outside their geographic service areas (see map, page 7-12, and Table 2, page 7-13).**

PEER GROUPS

- **The Commission has identified several institutions as appropriate peers for each of the community colleges. Community college area peer lists are found in Appendix 3.**

COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERVICE AREAS



** Electronically delivered distance learning courses to individual homes and worksites are not restricted by service areas.

TABLE 2

NEBRASKA'S PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGES

NAME OF INSTITUTION	CAMPUSES	AREA COUNTIES
Central Community College	Columbus, Grand Island and Hastings	Adams, Boone, Buffalo, Butler, Clay, Colfax, Dawson, Franklin, Furnas, Gosper, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Merrick, Nance, Nuckolls, Phelps, Platte, Polk, Sherman, Valley, Webster
Metropolitan Community College	Elkhorn Valley, South Omaha, Fort Omaha	Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy, Washington
Mid-Plains Community College	Vocational/Technical (North Platte), McDonald-Belton (North Platte), McCook Community College	Arthur, Blaine, Chase, Cherry, Custer, Dundy, Frontier, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith, Lincoln, Logan, Loup, McPherson, Perkins, Red Willow, Thomas
Northeast Community College	Norfolk	Antelope, northern edge of Boone, Boyd, Brown, Burt, Cedar, Cuming, Dakota, Dixon, Garfield, Holt, Keya Paha, Knox, Madison, Pierce, Rock, Stanton, Thurston, Wayne, Wheeler
Southeast Community College	Beatrice, Lincoln, Milford	Cass, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer, York
Western Nebraska Community College	Scottsbluff	Banner, Box Butte, western edge of Cherry, Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel, Garden, Grant, Kimball, Morrill, Scottsbluff, Sioux, Sheridan

State Colleges' Role and Mission

The state colleges at Chadron, Peru and Wayne are regional institutions that provide educational programs and public services to meet needs indigenous to their service areas. State colleges historically have served "traditional-age" students; however, in more recent years they have expanded to meet the needs of non-traditional students, who often are place-bound individuals seeking professional and personal development.

- **The Nebraska State College System's programmatic service areas, as defined in statute, include:**

  - Its first instructional priority is the provision of baccalaureate general academic, occupational, and education degree programs.
  - Its second instructional priority is to provide master's programs in education and other disciplines authorized by statute or by the Commission.
  - Its third priorities are applied research, public service activities, and continuing education activities that serve their geographic service areas, except in programs where a college has been assigned the responsibility to provide a particular service on a statewide basis.
  - Delivery of academic transfer and pre-professional associate degree programs for which a degree may be awarded if approved by the Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State College System and the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, and upon demonstration of a compelling need and unique capacity of the state college to offer such a program. Associate degree programs, however, are a less-needed function of a state college and are directed to community colleges whenever possible. This factor will be considered in the review of new program proposals by the Coordinating Commission.

- **Certain responsibilities within the Nebraska State College System's role and mission are appropriate to more than one of its institutions. When considering new instructional programs, research projects, and public service activities, the Board of Trustees of the system determines whether or not an actual unmet need exists and, if so, assigns that need a priority. If it has sufficient priority, the Board then directs responsibility for meeting that need to the state college that is best able to meet the need. Geographic access, institutional expertise, and financial, human, and physical resources are all considered in selecting the appropriate institution.**

INSTRUCTION

The first two priorities of the Nebraska State College System relate to instruction. The state colleges have evolved from their earlier role as teachers' colleges into more comprehensive institutions that provide diverse educational opportunities to their region. Future expansion of state college programs will respond to regional educational needs, subject to institutional capacity and quality assurance.

- **State colleges best serve the people of the state by focusing on programs and services that have the broadest implications and demand within their region.**

- **Teacher education, business, and liberal arts education leading to a baccalaureate degree are the major emphases of state colleges.**

- **General education courses permeate all undergraduate education at the state colleges. Each college offers a core of general education courses that provides a foundation for all other programs.**

- **Graduate-level programs are proposed only when they are within the role and mission, when resources are available, and when there is evidence of ongoing need and demand.**

- **State colleges and the Coordinating Commission, through the established program review process, evaluate existing and proposed new instructional programs to determine if they comply with institutional objectives, meet student and state needs, and whether they constitute unnecessary duplication.**

- **Student success courses, such as study skills, library skills, and tutoring, are not to be defined as developmental courses. State colleges are encouraged to continue to offer these survival skills courses for their students.**

- **Each state college provides continuing education opportunities to its region that are within the institution's role and mission and that do not represent unnecessary duplication.**

RESEARCH

High quality teaching is the primary focus of state colleges. Research at state colleges is strongly linked to and supportive of the state colleges' emphasis on undergraduate teaching.

- **Research that enhances the state colleges' regional roles and is within their mission is appropriate as part of their third and last priority, and shall not supplant the state college's emphasis on teaching.**

PUBLIC SERVICE

The state colleges are recognized for the significant public service role they provide in the educational, cultural, and economic development of their service areas. State colleges meet their public service mission with emphasis on educational outreach programs, cultural enrichment programs, and assistance to the businesses and

communities of their geographic region of the state.

- **Each state college identifies strengths and capabilities within its role and mission that best serve its region's public service needs.**

- **Whenever possible, public service activities are related to and supportive of instruction.**

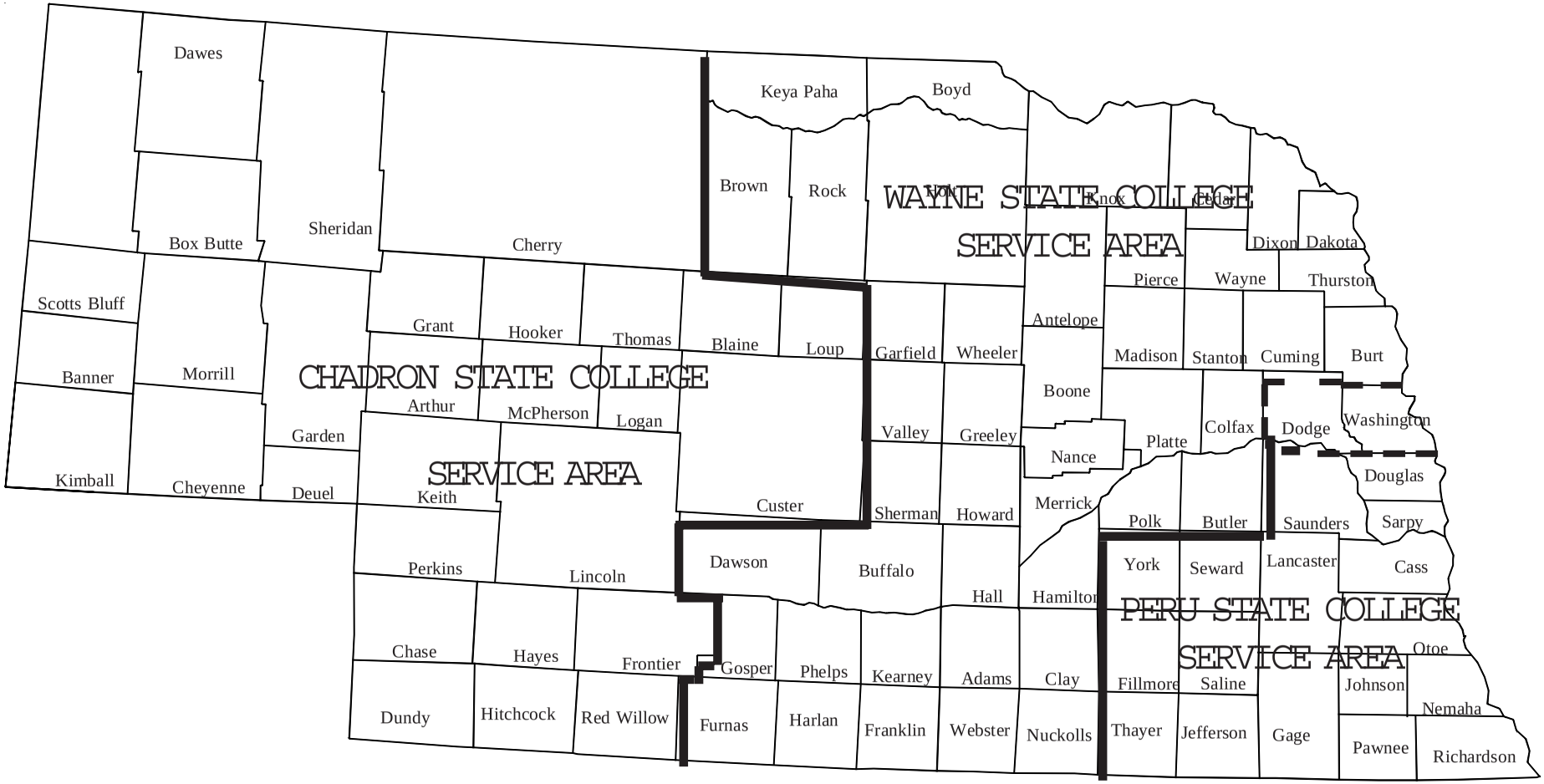
- **The state colleges have responsibility to provide regional public service activities within the scope and limitation of their resources.**

- **State colleges use distance learning and instructional technologies to the best effect possible within available resources to provide access to educational, cultural, and personal development activities within their regions.**

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREAS

- State colleges shall serve the educational needs of their geographic areas (see map, page 7-18). Services outside the programmatic/geographic service areas are also permitted in accordance with Commission rules and procedures.

STATE COLLEGE SERVICE AREAS



Dodge and Washington are shared counties between WSC & PSC
(shown by dotted line)

* State college geographic service areas are contiguous with community college geographic service areas.

** Electronically delivered distance learning courses to individual homes and worksites are not restricted by service areas.

Chadron State College

Chadron State College is classified as a Master's (comprehensive) College/University I. Chadron State College's programmatic service area includes baccalaureate-level liberal arts and occupational degree programs and professional degree programs in education.

- **The primary focus of Chadron State College's educational programs is high quality, comprehensive undergraduate programs leading to baccalaureate degrees in arts and sciences, business, and teacher education, all of which are enhanced by a coherent general education program.**

- **Chadron State College's new baccalaureate degree programs will reflect the needs of its service area and the priorities of the State College Board of Trustees.**

- **Chadron State College offers the Master of Education, the Educational Specialist, and the Master of Business Administration degrees.**

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA

- Chadron State College's service area encompasses most of western Nebraska and includes the counties of Arthur, Banner, Blaine, Box Butte, Chase, Cherry, Cheyenne, Custer, Dawes, Deuel, Dundy, Frontier, Garden, Grant, Hayes, Hitchcock, Hooker, Keith, Kimball, Lincoln, Logan, Loup McPherson, Morrill, Perkins, Red Willow, Scottsbluff, Sheridan, Sioux, and Thomas.

PEERS

The peer institutions for Chadron State College are listed in Appendix 3.

Peru State College

Peru State College is classified as a Master's (comprehensive) College/University II. Peru State College offers undergraduate programs leading to a baccalaureate degree in arts and sciences, business, and teacher education.

- **Peru State College focuses on high quality undergraduate programs leading to a baccalaureate degree in arts and sciences, business, and teacher education, all enhanced by a coherent general education program.**
- **Peru State College offers the Master of Education degree.**
- **Peru State College's new baccalaureate degree programs will reflect the needs of its service area and the priorities of the State College Board of Trustees.**

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA

- Peru State's geographic service area encompasses much of southeast Nebraska and includes the counties of Cass, Douglas, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Richardson, Saline, Sarpy, Saunders, Seward, Thayer, and York, as well as shared responsibility with Wayne State College in Dodge and Washington.

PEERS

The peer institutions for Peru State College are listed in Appendix 3.

Wayne State College

Wayne State College is classified as a Master's (comprehensive) College/University I. The college has grown from its tradition as a teacher's college to offer a comprehensive curriculum with balanced emphasis on the arts and sciences, business, and teacher education.

- **Wayne State College's primary emphasis is high quality, comprehensive undergraduate programs leading to a baccalaureate degree in arts and sciences, business, and teacher education.**

- **Wayne State College offers the Master of Education, the Educational Specialist, and the Master of Business Administration degrees.**

- **Wayne State College's new baccalaureate programs will reflect the needs of its service area and the priorities of the State College Board of Trustees.**

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA

- Wayne State College's service area encompasses northeast and much of central Nebraska and includes the counties of Adams, Antelope, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Buffalo, Burt, Butler, Cedar, Clay, Colfax, Cuming, Dakota, Dawson, Dixon, Franklin, Furnas, Garfield, Gosper, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Holt, Howard, Kearney, Keya Paha, Knox, Madison, Merrick, Nance, Nuckolls, Phelps, Pierce, Platte, Polk, Rock, Sherman, Stanton, Thurston, Valley, Wayne, Webster, and Wheeler,, as well as shared responsibilities with Peru State College in Washington and Dodge.

PEERS

The peer institutions for Wayne State College are listed in Appendix 3.

University of Nebraska's Role and Mission

The University of Nebraska provides extensive, comprehensive postsecondary education to Nebraska citizens through its four campuses: the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the University of Nebraska at Kearney, and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. The two-year Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture, under the management of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at UNL, is also part of the University of Nebraska system. While these different institutions share some common missions, each has a distinct heritage and performs a different role.

The heritage of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is that of a land-grant institution. For the University of Nebraska at Kearney, it is that of a former state college. The University of Nebraska at Omaha's heritage is that of an urban private and, later, a municipal university, with the needs of the Omaha metropolitan area as its primary concern. The University of Nebraska Medical Center has a heritage of specialization in health education. These differing heritages have helped create each institution's distinct personality.

- **The University of Nebraska's programmatic service area, based on statutes, includes:**
  - The University of Nebraska is engaged in instruction, research, and public service. These three parts of the University's mission are interdependent. However, when viewed in its entirety, the University's first priority is undergraduate instruction (with the exception of UNMC and the Cooperative Extension Division); its second priority is graduate and professional instruction and research; and its third priority is public service.
  - The University of Nebraska has sole responsibility for graduate programs at the specialist and master's degree level and all baccalaureate professional programs throughout the public sector of postsecondary education in Nebraska, with the exception of programs in education, business, and other areas authorized for the state colleges by the Legislature and Coordinating Commission.
  - The University of Nebraska has primary responsibility for instruction in agriculture and natural resources and primary statewide responsibility for research and public service in agriculture and natural resources.
  - The University of Nebraska has sole responsibility for doctoral and first-professional degree programs, cooperative extension programs, and other degree programs and services specifically provided for by law. The first-professional degrees offered by the University of Nebraska shall be in law and architecture.
  - The University of Nebraska has sole responsibility for baccalaureate, first-professional, master's, and doctoral degree programs in the health professions to include medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing, and allied health professions, with the exception of the baccalaureate programs in allied health professions established at the state colleges.

  - The University of Nebraska may continue to offer associate degrees in agriculturally-related fields at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis and the Associate Degree in Engineering Technology.

- **Certain responsibilities within the University's role and mission are appropriate to more than one of its institutions. When considering new instructional programs, research projects, and public service activities, the University assesses if an actual unmet need exists and assigns that need a priority. If it has sufficient priority, the University then directs responsibility for meeting that need to the institution that is best able to meet the need. Geographic access, institutional expertise, and financial, human, and physical resources are all considered in selecting the appropriate institution.**

- **A close relationship exists between research and public service in support of instruction at University institutions. Concurrently, research and public service offer potential for the betterment of the University, as well as the state and society.**

- **The University Board of Regents appropriately aspires for its institutions to become competitive with the top tier of similarly classified universities nationwide. The University campuses strive for improvement in the various indicators of performance used for comparison of quality, productivity, and effectiveness, especially in instruction and research. To accomplish this goal, the University establishes focus areas, targeting high priority role and mission areas for enhancement toward national prominence.**

INSTRUCTION

- **Within its three-part mission of instruction, research, and public service, the overarching mission of the University is to serve as a teaching institution.**

Nebraska expects the University to provide the state with educated and competent graduates who form the nucleus of a professional, skilled, and progressive work force; provide leadership for the state's businesses, communities, and government; and become good citizens of the state. The state also expects the University to provide education of a caliber to challenge, stimulate, and empower Nebraska's students to excel. Together, these expectations have created the demand for a broad, all-encompassing, high quality, comprehensive university when, unfortunately, the resources to meet this demand are limited.

- **The University continues to identify priorities within its institutions to develop and strengthen into areas of superiority, and to identify those programs for which there is less need or that are more appropriately offered at other**

institutions or in other sectors. Through this process, the University can reallocate its resources to provide exemplary programs and services that best meet the needs of Nebraska.

- **The University has the clear responsibility for providing doctorate programs within Nebraska's public postsecondary educational system. It is important that the University and the Commission, through its program review and approval authority, evaluate existing and proposed doctoral programs and prepare to make needed adjustments as student demand, as well as economic, social, and technological priorities, change.**
  - When new doctoral programs are deemed appropriate, the University will consider which of its institutions is most capable of providing the program and will best serve the needs of the students and the state.
- **The University avoids unnecessary duplication of full graduate programs at University campuses, closely scrutinizing proposals to avoid replicating graduate-level programs at multiple campuses.**
  - The opportunity for more graduate-level degrees often will be available without a major expenditure of Nebraska's public funds through multi-state higher education compacts or cooperative agreements involving the University of Nebraska.

To become a stronger institution, the University needs students who are capable of sharing in and contributing to its goals. Students who are unprepared for the rigor and climate of a comprehensive institution may remain on the periphery.

- Under recommended guidelines for foundation (remedial) education in this *Plan*, when possible, underprepared students wishing to attend the University are directed into courses offered by a community college, possibly co-located on a University campus.
  - Student success courses, such as study skills, library skills, and tutoring are not to be defined as developmental and the University of Nebraska is encouraged to continue to offer these courses for its students.

RESEARCH

The State of Nebraska relies on the University of Nebraska institutions as a source of research that advances knowledge and technology, serves the state's economic development goals, and enriches Nebraskans' quality of life. Research and creative activity of a historical, artistic, or more philosophical nature enhance the quality of our lives and our understanding of ourselves and our civic and cultural environment. Each

institution within the University system defines its research role differently.

- **The University is responsible for research that advances knowledge, strengthens the University, and benefits the state and its citizens.**

- **The University targets its research efforts at specific, highly promising priority areas, attracting both research funds and research-oriented students to the institution and state.**

- **In instances in which research extensively relies on an infusion of state funds, it is prioritized and targeted to the needs of the state.**

- **Technology transfer and other commercial interactions that support existing industries and help the state attract new businesses merit focused attention by the University.**

- **The University strives to produce measures of research productivity that compare well with peer institutions.**

PUBLIC SERVICE

The University provides many public services to the state. As a primary source of knowledge, technology, cultural activities, research, and human resources, the University often provides leadership and participation in community, regional, and statewide issues. The University also provides a valuable public service to the state through its fine art centers, museums, performing art centers, and other activities.

- **The University continues to implement partnerships between the University and businesses, agencies, and communities throughout the state that contribute to the "good life" enjoyed in Nebraska.**

- **In most instances, public service at the University is tied to and supportive of instruction.**

- **The University strives to provide its students with an opportunity to participate in such activities.**

- **The University, to the extent its resources permit, supports its fine art centers, museums, performing art centers, and other activities that provide cultural and educational resources to the citizens of the state as well as students of the institutions.**

- **The University of Nebraska's service area for public service activities is statewide within the scope and limitation of its resources.**

- **Telecommunications and other distance learning technologies are an educational and public service function of the University. The University uses instructional technology to the best extent possible within available resources to provide citizens, students, and faculty access to educational, cultural, and personal development activities.**

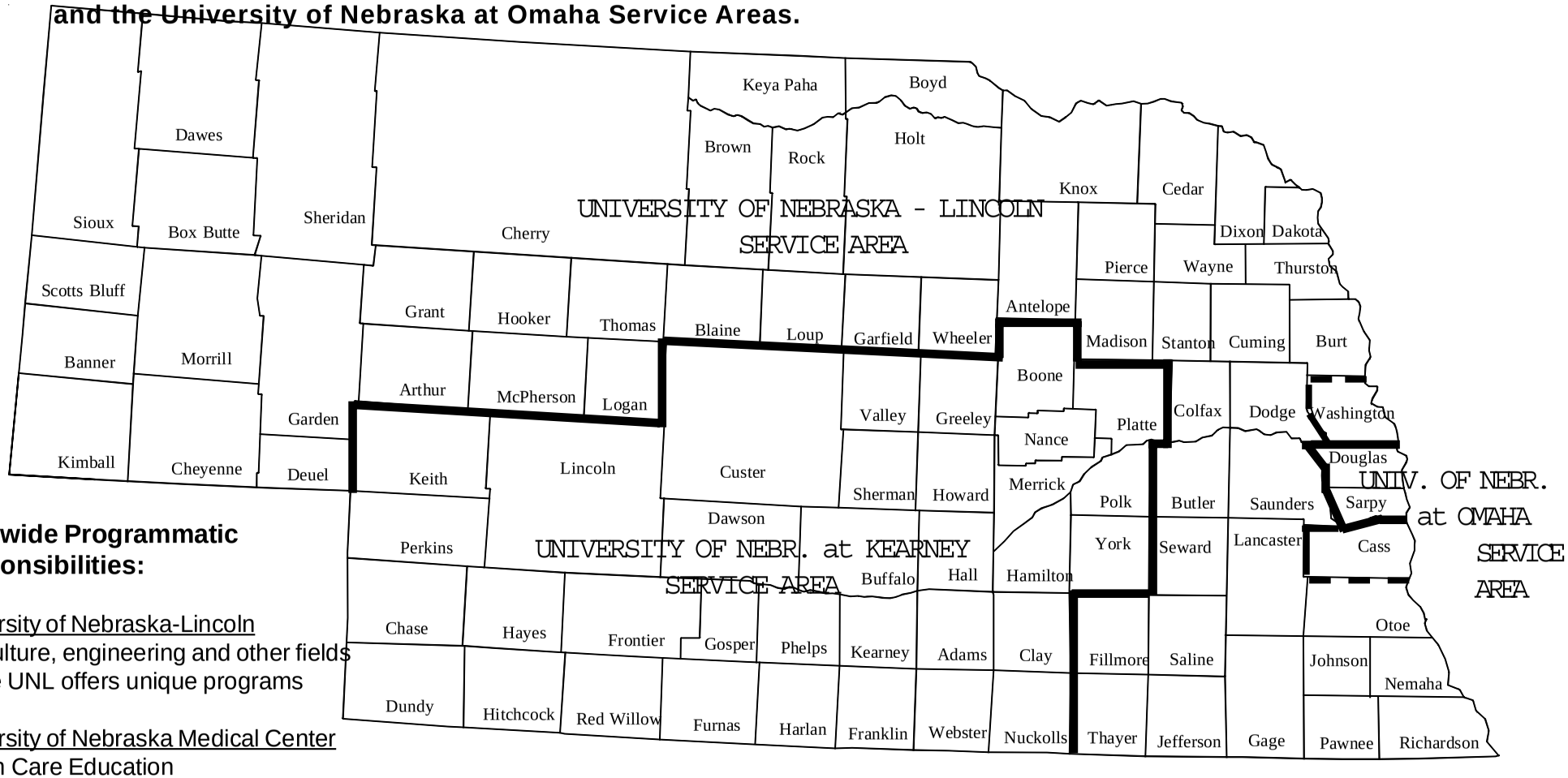
  – The University of Nebraska continues to make and implement plans for how it might use telecommunications to extend access to its programs and courses.
  – The University of Nebraska retools cooperative extension services to address the changing agricultural climate and to help rural communities bridge the digital divide.

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA

Except in those program areas where they have statewide responsibility, the University of Nebraska's four campuses serve the educational needs of their specific geographic areas. Services outside the programmatic/geographic service areas are permitted in accordance with Commission rules and procedures (see map, page 7-28).

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA SERVICE AREAS

The University of Nebraska - Lincoln's Geographic Service Area for undergraduate and selected masters degree programs includes all counties in the state except those shown as University of Nebraska at Kearney and the University of Nebraska at Omaha Service Areas.



Statewide Programmatic Responsibilities:

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Agriculture, engineering and other fields where UNL offers unique programs

University of Nebraska Medical Center
Health Care Education

University of Nebraska at Omaha
Graduate-level programs in criminal justice, social work, gerontology and public administration
Public service responsibility in urban-related programs

** Electronically delivered distance learning courses to individual homes and worksites are not restricted by service areas

▬ ▬ UNL and UNO share responsibility in Cass and Washington counties

University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK)

The University of Nebraska at Kearney is a comprehensive regional institution, classified as a Carnegie Master's (comprehensive) College/University I. The University of Nebraska at Kearney has a historic role of providing postsecondary education opportunities to the central region of the state. Its off-campus programming, in particular, provides an important educational service to place-bound students within its geographic service area.

- **The University of Nebraska at Kearney serves its region as a part of the University system, providing comprehensive, accessible four-year postsecondary education programs and services.**

INSTRUCTION

- **UNK's primary emphasis is undergraduate programs leading to baccalaureate degrees in arts and sciences, business, teacher education, and allied health.**

- **UNK will continue to identify disciplines for which needs exist, particularly within its geographic region.**

- **Teacher education remains one of UNK's primary discipline areas.**

- **UNK offers the Master of Education and Master of Business Administration degrees; specialist degrees in educational administration, school counseling, and school psychology; a Master of Science degree in Biology; and Master of Arts degrees in English and History. New master's degree programs at UNK are developed only when a definite need exists and when UNK has demonstrated the capacity—including fiscal, human, and physical resources—to meet that need.**

- **Given UNK's focus on strong undergraduate education and the availability of doctoral programs at other institutions, establishing doctoral programs at UNK is a low priority.**

RESEARCH

As an institution with a focus on strong undergraduate instruction, research at UNK is tied closely to scholarship and improvement of instruction. UNK's faculty have produced much valuable research and scholarship in their disciplines.

- **The majority of research conducted at UNK is directly related to enhancement of the instructional programs or the professional development of the faculty.**

PUBLIC SERVICE

The University of Nebraska at Kearney has a long tradition of service to its extensive geographic area. Involvement in the region's economic development and cultural climate continues to be an integral part of UNK's mission and supportive of its primary instructional role, to the extent resources permit.

- **UNK addresses its geographic service area's many public service needs by providing leadership, human resources, cultural activities, and enhancing volunteerism.**

- **UNK cooperates with regional leaders to advance the economic development of its geographic service area.**

- **Within its resources, UNK continues to provide continuing education services to its region.**

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA

- UNK's primary geographic service area is the south central region of the state, including the counties of Adams, Boone, Buffalo, Chase, Clay, Custer, Dawson, Dundy, Franklin, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Hayes, Hitchcock, Howard, Kearney, Keith, Lincoln, Merrick, Nance, Nuckolls, Perkins, Phelps, Platte, Polk, Red Willow, Sherman, Valley, Webster, and York.

PEERS

The list of University of Nebraska at Kearney peer institutions is found in Appendix 3.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL)

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is the most comprehensive public university in Nebraska, providing an array of courses and career options for its undergraduate and graduate students. This comprehensive role has resulted in UNL being the largest public higher education institution in the state, attracting students from throughout the state, as well as the region, country, and world. UNL also is the state's only Carnegie classified Doctoral/Research-Extensive Institution and the state's land grant university.

INSTRUCTION

- **UNL's first priority is instruction.**
  - UNL supports, recognizes, and rewards faculty for their instructional achievements in the classroom.
- **UNL is the primary doctoral degree granting public institution in the state for fields outside the health professions.**
- **UNL is the state's principal provider of graduate-level programs.**
- **UNL has primary responsibility for fulfilling the University of Nebraska's statewide responsibility for instruction in agriculture and natural resources.**
- **The ability of UNL to set priorities and to target areas of strength will advance UNL's evolution as an exemplary institution throughout our region and nation.**

RESEARCH

Research is integral to UNL's mission, particularly at the graduate level. UNL faculty have produced much valuable research and scholarship that has attracted national recognition and benefited the state, nation, and world.

Research and scholarship that is directly applicable to the classroom or that transfers new and emerging technologies to industry most easily demonstrates measurable results and practical, direct usage. Efforts such as Nebraska Research Initiative Centers, the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Center for Great Plains Studies, the Nebraska State Museum, the University Press, and interdisciplinary centers promote research while at the same time directly serving the state's economy and meeting the needs of our citizens. Basic research that advances our general core of knowledge also is essential for the students and for society as a whole.

- **UNL's second priority is research; therefore, research does not overshadow UNL's primary mission of instruction. When possible, research supports and**

enhances teaching and benefits students.

- **UNL is the primary unit within the University of Nebraska for general research.**
- **UNL attracts increasing amounts of private and federal research funds, becoming more prominent in prioritized areas of research, often interdisciplinary in scope, that will advance knowledge in the field as well as meet the economic needs of the state.**
- **UNL has primary statewide responsibility for research service in agriculture and natural resources.**
- **UNL undertakes initiatives to inform the public of the direct benefits of its research.**
- **UNL promotes collaborative research with business, government, and other institutions that lead to the transfer of technology to benefit Nebraska.**

PUBLIC SERVICE

UNL has primary statewide responsibility for public service in agriculture and natural resources and for cooperative extension services in every area of the state. It also provides public service to citizens, businesses, and communities through its extensive and diverse continuing education programs. Distance learning technologies provide an excellent tool for enhancing access for both of these services. UNL's museums, fine art centers, and performing arts centers all greatly enhance the cultural opportunities of Nebraska's citizens and are viewed as a major public service to the state.

- **UNL supports the coordinated use of instructional technologies as one of the delivery systems for UNL's cooperative extension services and extended education programs.**
- **UNL continues efforts to help address the state's many public service needs through leadership, human resources, cultural enhancement, and examples of volunteerism.**

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA

- UNL's geographic service area for off-campus instruction and public service programs related to agriculture, engineering, and other fields in which UNL offers unique public postsecondary programs shall be the entire state. This includes the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.
- UNL's geographic service area for off-campus instruction and public service in other

fields includes the counties of: Antelope, Arthur, Banner, Blaine, Box Butte, Boyd, Brown, Burt, Butler, Cedar, Cherry, Cheyenne, Colfax, Cuming, Dakota, Dawes, Deuel, Dixon, Dodge, Fillmore, Gage, Garden, Garfield, Grant, Holt, Hooker, Jefferson, Johnson, Keya Paha, Kimball, Knox, Lancaster, Logan, Loup, McPherson, Madison, Morrill, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Pierce, Richardson, Rock, Saline, Saunders, Scottsbluff, Seward, Sheridan, Sioux, Stanton, Thayer, Thomas, Thurston, Wayne, and Wheeler, as well as shared responsibility in Cass and Washington with UNO.

PEERS

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's list of peer institutions is included in Appendix 3.

University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC)

University of Nebraska Medical Center is the University of Nebraska's primary unit for programs in health-related disciplines. This includes responsibility for educating dentists, nurses, pharmacists, physicians, the allied health professions, and biomedical scientists such as toxicologists and pharmacologists. UNMC is classified by Carnegie as a Medical School.

INSTRUCTION

- **As the primary unit of the University of Nebraska for programs in health-related disciplines, UNMC continues to provide the state's education in health care disciplines and professions.**
  - UNMC anticipates and prepares for the changing health-related needs of our citizens.
- **UNMC collaborates with other institutions and hospitals to consolidate programs, services, equipment usage, and activities when appropriate.**
  - Collaboration with other institutions and hospitals means appropriately shared funding responsibilities.
  - UNMC continues as a partner in the Nebraska Health Systems, a coalition of hospitals that provides the primary teaching sites for clinical activities of UNMC.
- **The continuation of UNMC's high standards for admission will assure students are prepared for success at this level of education**.
- **UNMC's areas of specialization serve as an excellent model to other institutions. By identifying and prioritizing specific areas for emphasis, UNMC has earned widespread recognition and has attracted students from throughout the nation.**

RESEARCH

Medical research is vital to the role and mission of the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Its research has brought it national recognition and has benefitted medical advancement. It has also provided a valuable health service to people of Nebraska and surrounding states.

- **UNMC maintains its excellence in research and in health-related services. It continues to prioritize research in emerging sciences in which UNMC has the potential to address Nebraska health-care needs and become nationally prominent in the field.**

PUBLIC SERVICE

UNMC provides many health-related public services to the state, including public health education, consultation, and direct patient services. It serves the state and, in some specialized areas, the nation as a health referral center. It also has a leading role in health-related continuing education throughout the state.

- **UNMC's health-related public service roles includes enhancement and support of rural health care and support of health care in rural and other under-served areas. As the need for rural health care increases, UNMC may need to devise further strategies to improve access and maintain quality within its resources.**

- **UNMC develops strategies to mitigate the escalating economic impact of health care.**

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA

- UNMC is the public institution with statewide responsibilities in the areas of baccalaureate and graduate-level health-care education.

PEERS

The list of University of Nebraska Medical Center peer institutions is in Appendix 3.

University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO)

The University of Nebraska at Omaha is a metropolitan campus serving the educational needs of the Omaha metropolitan area. One of its responsibilities is to play a major role in preparing teachers and administrators for service in local K/12 school systems. UNO is classified as a Carnegie Master's (Comprehensive) College/University I.

INSTRUCTION

- **UNO's programmatic service area, based on statute, is to serve as the primary unit within the University of Nebraska for urban-oriented programs.**

- **UNO has statewide responsibility for graduate-level programs in Criminal Justice, Social Work, Gerontology, and Public Administration. UNO also offers graduate and undergraduate education in Information Science and Technology on a statewide basis through its partnerships in the Peter Kiewit Institute for Information Sciences, Technology and Engineering.**

- **UNO offers degree programs from baccalaureate through master's and specialist in disciplines where it has a demonstrated capacity—including appropriate fiscal, human and physical resources to meet needs—and appropriate approval from the Coordinating Commission.**

- **The University of Nebraska at Omaha may offer doctoral programs upon demonstration of a clear need for disciplines in which UNO has a demonstrated capacity, including appropriate fiscal, human and physical resources, and as approved by the Board of Regents and authorized and approved by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education.**

RESEARCH

UNO's faculty has produced much valuable research and scholarship in a wide variety of disciplines, as is appropriate for faculty at a senior institution where research is integral to graduate-level programs. UNO serves as a source of urban, economic and business-related research that will serve its geographic and programmatic service areas and support its instructional programs.

- **UNO's research mission does not overshadow UNO's primary role of instruction. When possible, research ideally would support and enhance teaching and benefit students.**

- **UNO engages in collaborative research with business, government, organizations, and other institutions on issues of significance to the metropolitan area and in those fields in which UNO has statewide responsibilities.**

PUBLIC SERVICE

UNO has a special responsibility to use its resources and expertise to provide leadership in solving problems of the Omaha metropolitan area and support its social, cultural, international, and economic environment.

- **UNO works within the Omaha metropolitan area to provide leadership and to build partnerships with appropriate constituencies to meet urban needs.**

- **UNO's public service activities generally support and relate to its instructional and research activities.**

- **UNO maintains its linkages with businesses, providing public service appropriate to its areas of expertise and within its resources. In this capacity, UNO serves as the lead institution for the Nebraska Business Development Center.**

GEOGRAPHIC SERVICE AREA

- UNO's geographic service area is Douglas and Sarpy counties, with shared responsibilities with UNL in Washington and Cass counties.

- UNO has statewide responsibility for off-campus instruction and public service in urban-related programs.

- For University of Nebraska institutions, UNO has statewide programmatic responsibility for graduate-level programs in Criminal Justice, Social Work, Gerontology, and Public Administration and for graduate and undergraduate programs in Information Science and Technology.

PEERS

The list of University of Nebraska at Omaha peer institutions is in Appendix 3.

Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA)

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) at Curtis is a two-year, Associate of Applied Science degree-granting institution that offers technical agriculture-related programs. This institution is managed by the University through the UNL Institute of Agriculture and National Resources (IANR).

- **NCTA operates under the administration and management of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska. NCTA is recognized as fully integrated in the academic programs of the IANR at UNL.**

- **The Nebraska Legislature funds NCTA at appropriate levels through a separate line-item appropriation.**

Role and Mission
Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education was created in 1990 by a constitutional amendment approved by the people of Nebraska. It became operational in January of 1992. The Commission's primary purposes and responsibilities are identified in the state's constitution and further explained and expanded in state statutes.

The primary statutory purposes of the Coordinating Commission are to:

1) Develop an ongoing comprehensive statewide plan for the operation of an educationally and economically sound, vigorous, progressive, and coordinated system of postsecondary education;
2) Identify and recommend or implement policies to meet the educational, research, and public service needs of the state; and
3) Effect the best use of available resources through the elimination of unnecessary duplication of programs and facilities among Nebraska's public institutions.

The Commission's role as a state-level coordinating agency includes:

- Serving as a focal point for identifying the critical needs of the state to which higher education can respond.
- Facilitating collaboration and innovation by higher education in meeting the needs of the state and its people in an increasingly competitive environment.
- Serving as an agent of the state to foster efficiency and effectiveness in higher education programs, facilities, and budgets.
- Acting as a catalyst for improvements in higher education in Nebraska.
- Providing reliable, timely, and pertinent data and information to assist the public, government, and institutions to make wise policy choices and individual decisions concerning higher education.

Both the state constitution and statutes clearly state that the Coordinating Commission's role is one of coordination, not governance. The governance and ongoing management of the institutions is the proper role of their governing boards.

COMMISSION DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary constitutional responsibilities of the Commission are as follows:

Academic program responsibilities

The Commission has responsibility to review, monitor, and approve or disapprove new and existing instructional programs at public postsecondary educational institutions; to authorize out-of-state institutions to offer programs within Nebraska; to authorize new

private postsecondary education institutions to operate in Nebraska; to authorize Nebraska public institutions to offer programs outside their designated geographic service areas; and to review and approve or disapprove new off-campus branches as education centers, colleges, and institutes.

- **The Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education and governing boards of postsecondary education institutions work together to avoid unnecessary duplication of academic programs and to deter unnecessary proliferation of new program offerings**

- **Short-term job training programs for business and industry are exempt from the Coordinating Commission's program review process.**

Budget and capital construction responsibilities

The Commission has responsibility to review, monitor, and approve or disapprove proposed capital construction projects of public postsecondary education institutions that use a set amount of state funds to build or operate; to make biennial recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding capital construction project prioritizations; and to review the budget requests of governing boards and recommend modifications to the Governor and Legislature, if needed, to promote compliance and consistency with the *Comprehensive Statewide Plan* and prevent unnecessary duplication.

- **It is important that postsecondary education institutions have stable and adequate funding upon which they can plan.**

- **Budget requests are reviewed by the Commission with an emphasis on specific outcomes to meet the goals of the *Comprehensive Statewide Plan* and the changing needs of the state.**

- **The Commission promotes postsecondary educational funding that achieves all of the following:**

  - Reflects institutional and state priorities.
  - Does not unnecessarily duplicate existing services, programs and facilities.
  - Is consistent with the goals of the *Comprehensive Statewide Plan*.
  - Represents efficient and effective utilization of state funds.

Comprehensive planning responsibilities

The Commission has responsibility to develop an ongoing *Comprehensive Statewide Plan* for the operation of an educationally and economically sound, vigorous, progressive, and coordinated system of postsecondary education.

- **The *Comprehensive Plan* establishes widely shared goals for higher education and strategies for their accomplishment, facilitates continuity of higher education policy, and provides a consistent direction for higher education as a whole within the state.**

- **The Commission collaborates with higher education leaders in the state toward the achievement of the goals set forth in the *Comprehensive Statewide Plan*.**

- **The Commission, in collaboration with the public postsecondary institutions, will periodically report on the extent to which the goals of the *Comprehensive Plan* are being met and identify what, if any, revisions are needed to the *Plan* to address needs.**

  – When special concerns arise regarding progress toward accomplishing the goals of the *Plan*, the Commission may collaborate with public institutions to convene study and work groups to address the issues of concern, discuss state and student needs, suggest solutions, and establish outcomes, measures, and benchmarks to encourage improvements.

- **The *Comprehensive Plan* will be revised as needed to reflect changing educational and state needs.**

Other statutory responsibilities of the Commission include:

- Recommend to the Legislature and the Governor legislation it deems necessary or appropriate to improve postsecondary education in Nebraska.
- Administer the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and the Nebraska Educational Data System (NEEDS).
- Administer the State's Scholarship Assistance Program (SAP), the State Scholarship Award Program (SSAP), and Postsecondary Education Award Program (PEAP).
- Administer the postsecondary education component of Nebraska's federal Improving Teacher Quality Grant program (formerly the Eisenhower Professional Development Grant program).
- Conduct surveys and studies as may be necessary to accomplish its purposes.

Goals and Strategies

In fulfilling its constitutional and statutory responsibilities, the Commission will strive to accomplish the following goals:

- **The Commission will function as a coordinating body with the intent to work as closely as possible with each of the various educational sectors and institutions.**

- **The Commission will be a responsible partner in education, sharing common goals with all of the state's postsecondary educational sectors and institutions.**
  - The Commission will avoid placing unnecessary burdens on the institutions.
  - The Commission will strive to promote coordination, cooperation, and efficiency in institutions that will help create an exemplary postsecondary educational network within the state.
  - The Commission's primary role is leadership in fostering cooperation and coordination, which is dependent on good working relationships with public institutions, as well as with independent colleges and universities and private career schools.
- **The Coordinating Commission will act as a student-centered, statewide entity that is responsive to the postsecondary educational needs and concerns of the people of Nebraska.**
- **The Commission will provide postsecondary educational memory for the state. Through this role, the Commission can provide continuity and stability regardless of changes in the state's office holders or in governance at institutions.**
- **The Commission will serve as an advocate for effective and productive Nebraska postsecondary education and, in this role, will communicate to Nebraska citizens—and in particular to K/12 students—the many educational options that exist within the state's postsecondary educational sectors.**
- **The Commission will inform citizens about the learning, research, and public service opportunities in Nebraska, including those provided via distance learning.**
- **The Commission is dedicated to its own effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability and will not evolve into a bureaucratic state that becomes a hindrance to effective cooperation and responsiveness among institutions.**
- **The Commission will abide by its official code of ethics in performance of all of its responsibilities and functions.**

Chapter Eight

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS AND NEXT STEPS

This *Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education* is the product of a significant collaborative planning effort of the Coordinating Commission, administrators and governing board members of public and private postsecondary institutions, and state officials. Focus groups and meetings held across the state contributed to the planning process on a number of topics.

The goal of key stakeholders throughout the planning effort was to create a focused and action-oriented state plan built upon a framework of shared vision, goals, and strategies. The polestar of the planning process was the identification of key student and state needs that can be met through exemplary higher education institutions and multi-level partnerships.

Those involved in the development of this plan for higher education understand that the *Plan* will not implement itself. Higher education leaders must identify the most important next steps that can be taken to accomplish the goals and strategies identified throughout the *Plan* .

A successful planning process is ongoing, evaluative, and persistent. With the vision, goals, and strategies agreed upon, responsible people at the campus and state levels need to consider benchmarks of success and decide who will work on the various strategies to accomplish the stated goals and to realize the shared visions. The hard work of *Plan* implementation is just beginning. Continued collaboration and cooperation is even more essential for the next phase in order to produce success.

APPENDIX ONE

NEBRASKA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS	
COMMUNITY COLLEGES	Central Community College Area - Grand Island, Hastings, Platte (Columbus) Metropolitan Community College Area - Elkhorn Valley, South Omaha, Fort Omaha Mid-Plains Community College Area - Vocational/Technical (North Platte), McDonald-Belton (North Platte), McCook Northeast Community College Area - Norfolk Southeast Community College Area - Beatrice, Lincoln, Milford Western Nebraska Community College Area - Scottsbluff (Centers in Alliance and Sidney)
NEBRASKA STATE COLLEGE SYSTEM	Chadron State College Peru State College Wayne State College
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA	University of Nebraska at Kearney University of Nebraska-Lincoln University of Nebraska Medical Center University of Nebraska at Omaha Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture
INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES	Bellevue University, Clarkson College, College of Saint Mary, Concordia University, Creighton University, Dana College, Doane College, Grace University, Hastings College, Little Priest Tribal College, Midland Lutheran College, Nebraska Christian College, Nebraska Indian Community College, Nebraska Methodist College, Nebraska Wesleyan University, Summit Christian College, Union College, York College
PRIVATE CAREER SCHOOLS	
Business Schools	Vatterott College
Barber & Cosmetology Schools	Academy of Nails, Bahner College of Hairstyling Beauty and Barber Training, Capitol School of Hairstyling, College of Hair Design, Columbus Beauty College, EQ School of Hair Design, Fullen School of Hair Design, Joseph's College of Beauty, LaRose's Beauty Academy, McCook Beauty Academy, Xenon International School of Hair Design

NEBRASKA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS	
Driver Training Schools	Custom Diesel Drivers Training, Inc.
Hospitals offering Nursing & Allied Health Programs	Alegent Health School of Radiologic Technology, Alegent Immanuel Medical Center - Midland Lutheran College, Bryan Memorial Hospital/University of Kansas School of Nurse Anesthesia, Bryan School of Nursing, Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital School of Radiologic Technology, Omaha College of Health Careers, Regional West Medical Center School of Radiologic Technology, Saint Joseph Hospital School of Radiologic Technology
Junior Colleges of Business	Lincoln School of Commerce, Nebraska College of Business
Pilot Schools	Offutt Aero Club, Sky Harbor Air Service, Inc.
Real Estate Schools	Great Plains School of Real Estate, Larabee School of Real Estate & Insurance, McMahon School of Real Estate, The Moore Group, Randall School of Real Estate
Trade & Technical Schools	Advanced Network Technologies, The Craftsman School, ITT Technical Institute, The Creative Center, Midwest Bartenders School, North American Travel School, Omaha Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc., The Railway Educational Bureau, Travel Careers Institute, Universal Technical Institute
Modeling Schools	International School of Modeling, Nancy Bounds Studios
Miscellaneous Schools	Career Achievement, H&R Block Tuition Tax Schools, Kaplan Educational Centers, Myotherapy Institute, Omaha School of Massage Therapy

APPENDIX 2

Guidelines for Distance Learning

Courses offered in Nebraska via instructional technologies are expected to meet or exceed the following distance-learning standards of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools:

Curriculum and Instruction

- Programs provide for timely and appropriate interaction between students and faculty, and among students.

- The institution's faculty assumes responsibility for and exercises oversight of distance education, ensuring both the rigor of programs and the quality of instruction.

- The institution ensures that the technology used is appropriate to the nature and objectives of the program.

- The institution ensures the currency of materials, programs, and courses.

- The institution's distance education policies are clear concerning the ownership of materials, faculty compensation, copyright issues, and the utilization of revenue derived from the creation and production of software, telecourses, or other media products.

- The institution provides appropriate faculty support specifically related to distance education.

- The institution provides appropriate training for faculty who teach in distance education programs.

Evaluation and Assessment

- The institution assesses student capability to succeed in distance education programs and applies this information to admission and recruiting policies and decisions.

- The institution evaluates the educational effectiveness of its distance education programs (including assessments of student learning outcomes, student retention, and student satisfaction) to ensure comparability to campus-based programs.

- The institution ensures the integrity of student work and the credibility of the degrees and credits it awards.

Library and Learning Resources

- The institution ensures that students have access to and can effectively use appropriate library resources.

- The institution monitors whether students make appropriate use of learning resources.

- The institution provides laboratories, facilities, and equipment appropriate to the courses or programs.

Student Services

- The institution provides adequate access to the range of student services appropriate to support the programs, including admissions, financial aid, academic advising, delivery of course materials, and placement and counseling.

- The institution provides an adequate means for resolving student complaints.

- The institution provides to students advertising, recruiting, and admissions information that adequately and accurately represents the programs, requirements, and services available.

- The institution ensures that students admitted possess the knowledge and equipment necessary to use the technology employed in the program, and provides technical assistance to students who are experiencing difficulty using the required technology.

Facilities and Finances

- The institution possesses the equipment and technical expertise required for distance education.

- The institution's long-range planning, budgeting, and policy development processes reflect the facilities, staffing, equipment and other resources essential to the viability and effectiveness of the distance education program.

The Coordinating Commission will use the North Central Association's Guidelines for Distance Learning in fulfilling its constitutional and statutory duties, including review of new programs and review of applications for out-of-state programs and new private colleges.

APPENDIX 3 – *Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education*

(Revised July 31, 2014; highlight denotes revised sections)

COMMISSION ESTABLISHED PEER LISTS

Community College Peers

Central Community College

~~Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, Nebraska~~
~~Trinity Valley Community College, Athens, Texas~~
~~Southeastern Community College, W. Burlington, Iowa~~
~~Southeast Community College, Lincoln, Nebraska~~
~~Northcentral Technical College, Wausau, Wisconsin~~
~~Moraine Park Technical College, Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin~~
~~Mid-Plains Community College, North Platte, Nebraska~~
~~Indian Hills Community College, Iowa~~
~~Fox Valley Technical College, Appleton, Wisconsin~~
~~Laramie County Community College, Cheyenne Wyoming~~

Black Hawk College, Illinois
Central Carolina Community College, North Carolina
Eastern Arizona College, Arizona
Hutchinson Community College, Kansas
Indian Hills Community College, Iowa
Iowa Central Community College, Iowa
Jackson Community College, Michigan
Laramie County College, Wyoming
Paris Junior College, Texas
Shasta College, California

Alternates:
North Idaho College, Idaho
Western Iowa Tech Community College, Iowa

Metropolitan Community College

~~Aims Community College, Greeley, Colorado~~
~~Casper College, Casper, Wyoming~~
~~Central Community College, Grand Island, Nebraska~~
~~Central Texas College, Killeen, Texas~~
~~Delgado Community College, Delgado Louisiana~~
~~Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa~~
~~Linn-Benton Community College, Albany, Oregon~~

~~San Jacinto College, Pasadena, Texas~~
~~Seminole Community College, Sanford, Florida~~
~~Southeast Community College, Lincoln, Nebraska~~

Community College of Alleghany County, Pennsylvania
Des Moines Area Community College, Iowa
Erie Community College, New York
Greenville Technical College, South Carolina
Guilford Technical Community College, North Carolina
Joliet Junior College, Illinois
Mesa Community College, Arizona
San Jacinto Community College, Texas
Tulsa Community College, Oklahoma
Wake Technical Community College, North Carolina

Alternates:
Milwaukee Area Technical College, Wisconsin
Trident Technical College, South Carolina

Mid-Plains Community College

~~Carl Sandburg College, Galesburg, Illinois~~
~~College of Southern Idaho, Twin Falls, Idaho~~
~~Dodge City Community College, Dodge City, Kansas~~
~~Indian Hills Community College, Ottumwa, Iowa~~
~~North Idaho College, Coeur D'Alene, Idaho~~
~~Paris Junior College, Paris, Texas~~
~~San Juan Community College, Farmington, New Mexico~~
~~Sauk Valley Community College, Dixon, Illinois~~
~~Southeastern Community College, W. Burlington, Iowa~~
~~Western Nebraska Community College, Scottsbluff, Nebraska~~

Carl Sandburg College, Illinois
Cloud County Community College, Kansas
College of the Albermarle, North Carolina
Flathead Valley Community College, Montana
Highland Community College, Kansas
Iowa Lakes Community College, Iowa
Lake Michigan College, Michigan
Southeastern Community College, Iowa
Southwestern Michigan College, Michigan
Western Nebraska Community College

Alternates:
Bay de Noc Community College, Michigan

Blue Mountain Community College, Oregon

Northeast Community College

~~Colorado Northwestern Community College, Rangely, Colorado~~
~~Dodge City Community College, Dodge City, Kansas~~
~~Eastern Arizona College, Thatcher, Arizona~~
~~Iowa Lakes Community College, Estherville, Iowa~~
~~Laramie County Community College, Cheyenne, Wyoming~~
~~Mid-Plains Community College, North Platte, Nebraska~~
~~North Idaho College, Coeur D'Alene, Idaho~~
~~Paris Junior College, Paris, Texas~~
~~Southeastern Illinois College, Harrisburg, Illinois~~

Casper College, Wyoming
Central Community College, Nebraska
Crowder College, Missouri
Eastern Arizona College, Arizona
Grayson College, Texas
Hutchinson Community College, Kansas
Illinois Valley Community College, Illinois
Linn-Benton Community College, Oregon
State Fair Community College, Missouri
Western Iowa Tech Community College, Iowa

Alternates:
Rend Lake College, Illinois
Yavapai College, Arizona

Southeast Community College

~~Aims Community College, Greeley, Colorado~~
~~Casper College, Casper, Wyoming~~
~~Central Community College, Grand Island, Nebraska~~
~~Fox Valley Technical College, Appleton, Wisconsin~~
~~Indian Hills Community College, Ottumwa, Iowa~~
~~Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa~~
~~Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, Nebraska~~
~~Trinity Valley Community College, Athens, Texas~~

Cape Fear Community College, North Carolina
Cochise College, Arizona
College of Lake County, Illinois
Des Moines Area Community College, Iowa
Elgin Community College, Illinois
Guilford Technical Community College, North Carolina

Hinds Community College, Mississippi
Joliet Junior College, Illinois
Kirkwood Community College, Iowa
Madison Area Technical College, Wisconsin

Alternates:
San Jacinto Community College, Texas
The Community College of Baltimore County, Maryland

Western Nebraska Community College

~~Bee County College, Beeville, Texas~~
~~Dodge City Community College, Dodge City, Kansas~~
~~Glenn Oaks Community College, Centerville, Michigan~~
~~Iowa Lakes Community College, Estherville Iowa~~
~~Mid-Plains Community College, North Platte, Nebraska~~
~~Northwest Community College, Powell, Wyoming~~
~~Paris Junior College, Paris, Texas~~
~~San Juan College, Farmington, New Mexico~~
~~Sheridan College, Sheridan, Wyoming~~

Central Wyoming College, Wyoming
Coffeyville Community College, Kansas
Dodge City Community College, Kansas
Flathead Valley Community College, Montana
Mid-Plains Community College, Nebraska
Rockingham Community College, North Carolina
Shawnee Community College, Illinois
Southeastern Community College, Iowa
Southeastern Illinois College, Illinois
Surry Community College, North Carolina

Alternates:
Highland Community College, Illinois
Treasure Valley Community College, Oregon

State College Peers

Chadron State College

~~Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico~~
~~Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas~~
~~Lander University, Greenwood, South Carolina~~
~~North Georgia College, Dahlonega, Georgia~~
~~Northern State University, Aberdeen, South Dakota~~
~~Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Alva, Oklahoma~~

~~Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia, Arkansas~~
~~Southern Oregon State College, Ashland, Oregon~~
~~Southwest State University, Marshall, Minnesota~~
~~University of North Carolina at Pembroke, Pembroke, North Carolina~~

Granite State College, New Hampshire
Lincoln University, Missouri
Missouri Western State University, Missouri
Montana State University Billings, Montana
Ohio State University – Lima Campus, Ohio
Ohio State University – Newark Campus, Ohio
Peru State College, Nebraska
Shawnee State University, Ohio
University of Arkansas at Monticello, Arkansas
Wayne State College, Nebraska

Alternates:
Mayville State University, New Hampshire
Wright State University – Lake Campus, Ohio

Peru State College

~~Black Hills State College, Spearfish, South Dakota~~
~~Concord College, Athens, West Virginia~~
~~Dakota State University, Madison, South Dakota~~
~~Dickinson State University, Dickinson, North Dakota~~
~~Indiana University-east, Richmond, Indiana~~
~~Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Alva, Oklahoma~~
~~Southwest State University, Marshall, Minnesota~~
~~University of Arkansas-Monticello, Monticello, Arkansas~~
~~University of South Carolina at Aiken, Aiken, South Carolina~~
~~Western State College-Colorado, Gunnison, Colorado~~

Chadron State College, Nebraska
Granite State College, New Hampshire
Lincoln University, Missouri
Missouri Western State University, Missouri
Montana State University Billings, Montana
Ohio State University – Lima Campus, Ohio
Ohio State University – Newark Campus, Ohio
Shawnee State University, Ohio
University of Arkansas at Monticello, Arkansas
Wayne State College, Nebraska

Alternates:

Mayville State University, New Hampshire
Wright State University – Lake Campus, Ohio

Wayne State College

~~Bemidji State University, Bemidji, Minnesota~~
~~Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico~~
~~Fort Hays State University, Hays, Kansas~~
~~Georgia Southwestern State University, Americus, Georgia~~
~~Minot State University, Minot, North Dakota~~
~~Northern State University, Aberdeen, South Dakota~~
~~Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, Oklahoma~~
~~Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia, Arkansas~~
~~Southern Oregon State College, Ashland, Oregon~~

Chadron State College, Nebraska
Granite State College, New Hampshire
Lincoln University, Missouri
Missouri Western State University, Missouri
Montana State University Billings, Montana
Ohio State University – Lima Campus, Ohio
Ohio State University – Newark Campus, Ohio
Peru State College, Nebraska
Shawnee State University, Ohio
University of Arkansas at Monticello, Arkansas

Alternates:
Mayville State University, New Hampshire
Wright State University – Lake Campus, Ohio

University of Nebraska Peers

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama
Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado
Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa
Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas
Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma
Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana
University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado
University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia
University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas
University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee

University of Nebraska at Omaha

Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio
Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan
Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, Tennessee
Portland State University, Portland, Oregon
University of Arkansas-Little Rock, Little Rock, Arkansas
University of Missouri-St. Louis, St. Louis, Missouri
University of Northern Iowa-Cedar Falls, Waterloo, Iowa
Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas
Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio

University of Nebraska at Kearney

Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania
Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg, Missouri
Moorhead State University, Moorhead, Minnesota
Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kansas
Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau, Missouri
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, La Crosse, Wisconsin
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Whitewater, Wisconsin
Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, North Carolina
Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois

University of Nebraska Medical Center

Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
Oregon Health Science University, Portland, Oregon
University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio
University of Colorado Health Science Center, Denver, Colorado
University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida
University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City, Kansas
University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky
University of Oklahoma Health Science Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
University of Tennessee-Memphis, Memphis, Tennessee
University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah

University of Nebraska Board of Regents Peer Lists

For information purposes only: The Commission has not endorsed or approved these lists.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Regents' List

Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado
Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa
Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana
University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado
University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois
University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas
University of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota
University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri

University of Nebraska at Omaha Regents' List

Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio
Northern Illinois University, De Kalb, Illinois
University of Arkansas-Little Rock, Little Rock, Arkansas
University of Colorado-Denver, Denver, Colorado
University of Missouri-St. Louis, St. Louis, Missouri
University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa
University of Texas-El Paso, El Paso, Texas
Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas

University of Nebraska at Kearney Regents' List

Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg, Missouri
Moorhead State University, Moorhead, Minnesota
South Dakota State University, Brookings, South Dakota
University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado
University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa
University of Tennessee-Martin, Martin, Tennessee
University of Wisconsin-Steven's Point, Steven's Point, Wisconsin
Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois

University of Nebraska Medical Center Regents' List

Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

University of Colorado Health Science Center, Denver, Colorado
University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois
University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City, Kansas
University of Oklahoma Health Science Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
University of Tennessee-Memphis, Memphis, Tennessee