

Section 1 Increasing Postsecondary Enrollment

Priority 1. Increase the number of students who enter postsecondary education in Nebraska.

The first priority recommended by the 2003 LR 174 Task Force is to increase the number of students who enter postsecondary education in Nebraska. To generally monitor progress toward achieving this goal, this section compares the latest available total student unduplicated headcounts and enrollments of first-time freshmen to fall 2003 baselines within the context of 12-year trends.

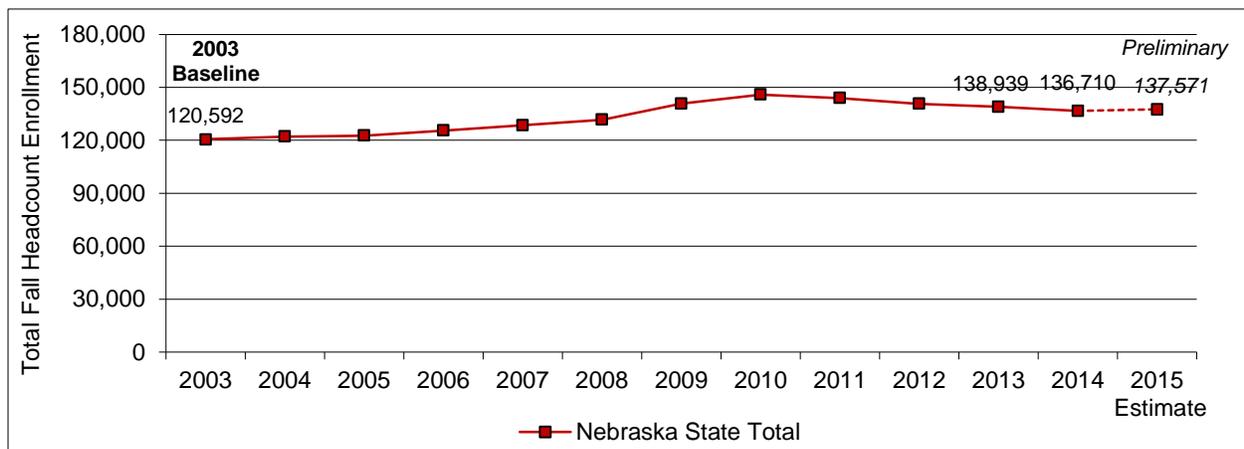
The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education is the official source of the enrollment data summarized for fall 2003 through fall 2014. Enrollments for fall 2015 are preliminary, based on estimates that institutions reported directly to the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education.

Nebraska Total Fall Headcount Enrollment

- Total headcount—the count of all students taking courses for credit—at Nebraska’s public, independent, and for-profit postsecondary institutions increased steadily from 120,592 in fall 2003, which is the baseline for this report, to 145,893 in fall 2010. However, total enrollment decreased an estimated 5.8% between fall 2010 and fall 2015. As a result, total headcount enrollment increased from 120,592 in fall 2003 to an estimated 137,571 in fall 2015, for a 12-year increase of 14.1%, as shown in [Figure 1.1](#).

Figure 1.1

**Total Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015**



Note. See [Table A1.1](#) and [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data. Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

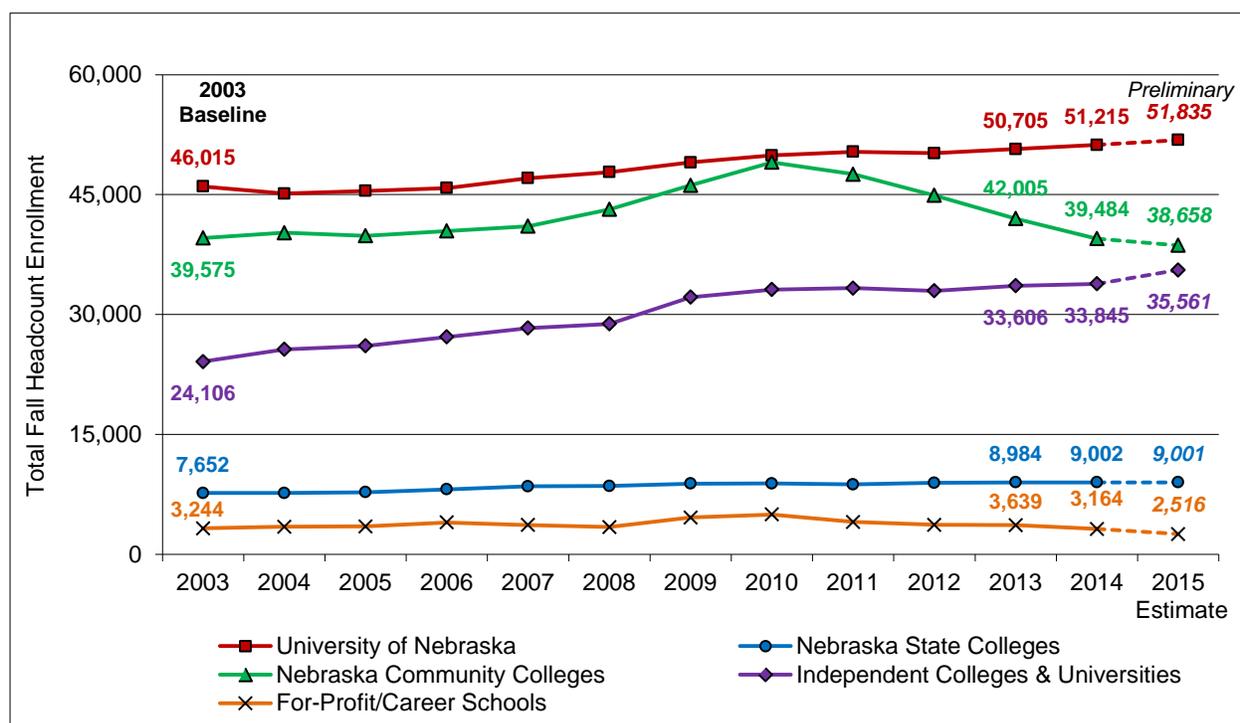
Nebraska Total Fall Headcount Enrollment by Sector

- The University of Nebraska continues to lead the state's higher education system in terms of fall headcount enrollment. As shown in [Figure 1.2](#), Nebraska's state colleges and independent (not-for-profit) institutions have also contributed positively to the state's increased enrollment since 2003. However, based on preliminary data for fall 2015, Nebraska's community colleges and for-profit/career schools experienced decreases in enrollments between fall 2003 and fall 2015.
- By sector, Nebraska's postsecondary enrollment has changed as follows:

Sector	1-Year Change 2013 to 2014	Est. 1-Year Change 2014 to 2015	11-Year Change 2003 to 2014	Est. 12-Year Change 2003 to 2015
University of Nebraska	1.0%	1.2%	11.3%	12.6%
Nebraska State College System	0.2%	0.0%	17.6%	17.6%
Nebraska Community Colleges	-6.0%	-2.1%	-0.2%	-2.3%
Independent Colleges & Universities	0.7%	5.1%	40.4%	47.5%
For-Profit/Career Schools	-13.1%	-20.5%	-2.5%	-22.4%

Figure 1.2

Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions by Sector
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015



Note. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data. Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

Nebraska Public Colleges and Universities: Fall Enrollment by Institution

Within all sectors, changes in enrollment vary from one institution to another. The charts in this section show the enrollment trends of the institutions in each public sector from fall 2003 to fall 2015.

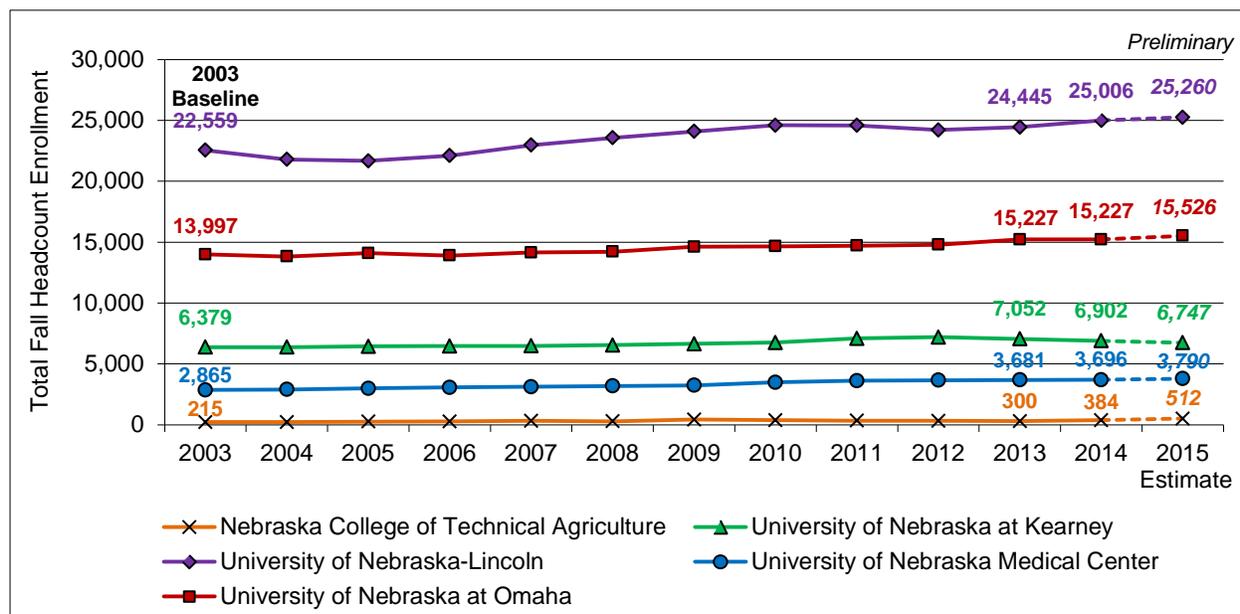
University of Nebraska

- From fall 2003 to fall 2015, fall enrollment increased an estimated 12.6% at the University of Nebraska. All institutions experienced increases during this 12-year period, with the largest increase seen at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (138.1%).
- Following are the most recent one-year changes in enrollment, as well as the total changes in enrollment between fall 2003 and fall 2015, at the institutions constituting the University of Nebraska:

Sector	1-Year Change 2013 to 2014	Est. 1-Year Change 2014 to 2015	11-Year Change 2003 to 2014	Est. 12-Year Change 2003 to 2015
Neb. College of Technical Agriculture	28.0%	33.3%	78.6%	138.1%
University of Nebraska at Kearney	-2.1%	-2.2%	8.2%	5.8%
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	2.3%	1.0%	10.8%	12.0%
University of Nebraska Medical Center	0.4%	2.5%	29.0%	32.3%
University of Nebraska at Omaha	0.0%	2.0%	8.8%	10.9%

Figure 1.3

Fall Headcount Enrollment at the University of Nebraska by Institution
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015



Note. See Table A1.2 in Appendix 1 for supporting data. Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

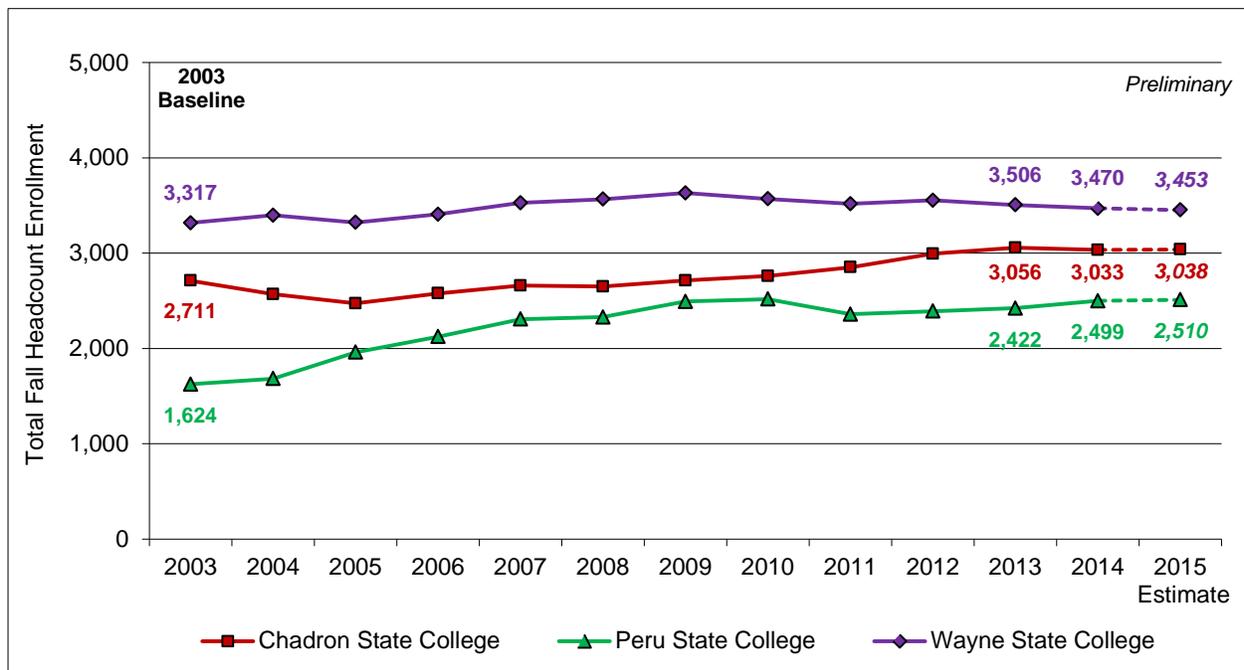
Nebraska State College System

- From fall 2003 to fall 2015, fall enrollment increased an estimated 17.6% within the Nebraska State College System. All institutions experienced increases during this 12-year period, ranging from 4.1% at Wayne State College to 54.6% at Peru State College.
- Following are the most recent one-year changes in enrollment, as well as the total changes in enrollment between fall 2003 and fall 2015, at the institutions constituting the Nebraska State College System:

Sector	1-Year Change 2013 to 2014	Est. 1-Year Change 2014 to 2015	11-Year Change 2003 to 2014	Est. 12-Year Change 2003 to 2015
Chadron State College	-0.8%	0.2%	11.9%	12.1%
Peru State College	3.2%	0.4%	53.9%	54.6%
Wayne State College	-1.0%	-0.5%	4.6%	4.1%

Figure 1.4

Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska State College System by Institution
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015



Note. See Table A1.2 in Appendix 1 for supporting data. Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

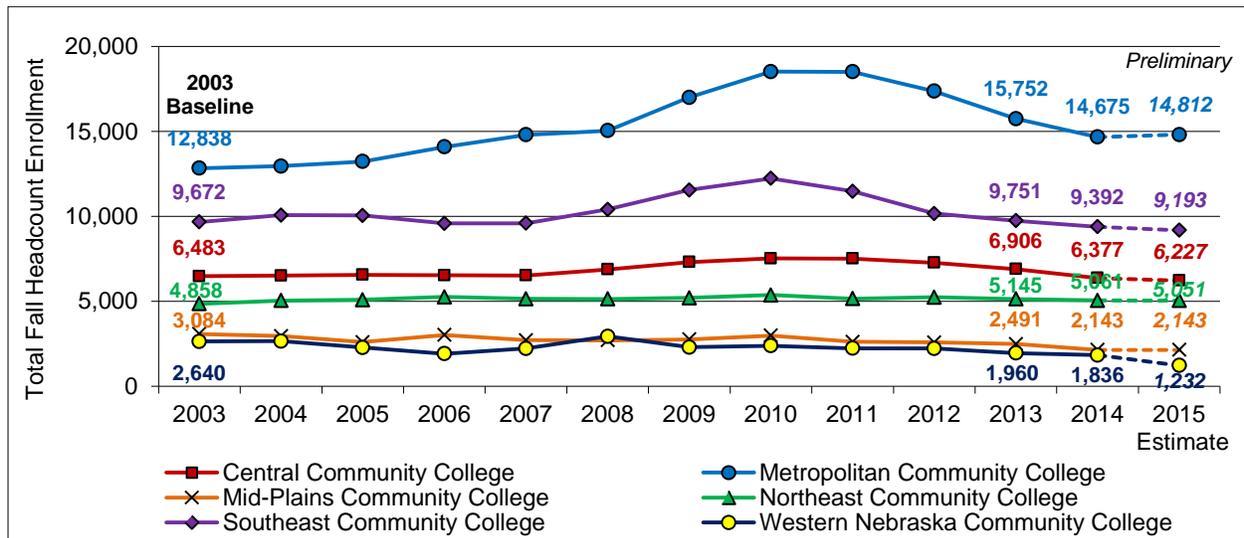
Nebraska Community Colleges

- From fall 2003 to fall 2015, total fall enrollment decreased an estimated 2.3% at the community colleges. Four out of six of Nebraska's community colleges experienced decreases during this 12-year period, with Western Nebraska Community College and Mid-Plains Community College reporting the largest decreases (-53.3% and -30.5%, respectively).
- Notably, all of the community colleges reported declines in fall enrollment between fall 2013 and fall 2014, and estimates for 2015 indicate that four out of six institutions also experienced declines between fall 2014 and fall 2015.
- Following are the most recent one-year changes in enrollment, as well as the total changes in enrollment between fall 2003 and fall 2015, at Nebraska's six community colleges:

Sector	1-Year Change 2013 to 2014	Est. 1-Year Change 2014 to 2015	11-Year Change 2003 to 2014	Est. 12-Year Change 2003 to 2015
Central Community College	-7.7%	-2.4%	-1.6%	-3.9%
Metropolitan Community College	-6.8%	0.9%	14.3%	15.4%
Mid-Plains Community College	-14.0%	0.0%	-30.5%	-30.5%
Northeast Community College	-1.6%	-0.2%	4.2%	4.0%
Southeast Community College	-3.7%	-2.1%	-2.9%	-5.0%
Western Nebraska Community College ³	-6.3%	-32.9%	-30.5%	-53.3%

Figure 1.5

Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska Community Colleges by Institution
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015



Note. See Table A1.2 in Appendix 1 for supporting data. Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

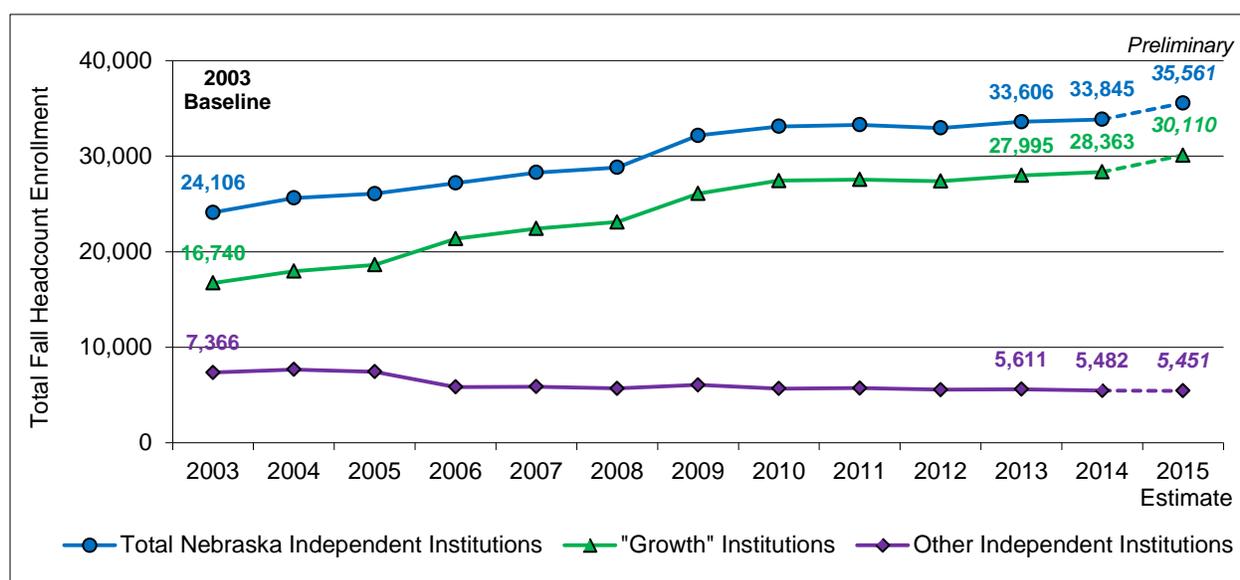
³ Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC) underwent a major change in 2014–2015 in counting enrollments for short-term business training. Many of these courses are now non-credit in nature, rather than credit. Thus, WNCC's credit headcount is down significantly.

Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities: Fall Enrollment

- From fall 2003 to fall 2015, total fall enrollment increased an estimated 47.5% at Nebraska’s independent colleges and universities.
- The following institutions accounted for nearly all of the sector’s growth between fall 2003 and fall 2015: Bellevue University, Bryan College of Health Sciences, Clarkson College, Concordia University-Seward, Creighton University, Doane College-Lincoln,⁴ Midland University, Nebraska Methodist College of Nursing and Allied Health, and Nebraska Wesleyan University.
- The combined enrollment of these “high growth” institutions increased an estimated 79.9% between fall 2003 and fall 2015. Meanwhile, the total enrollment of the remaining schools decreased an estimated 26.0% over the same period.⁵

Figure 1.6

Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015



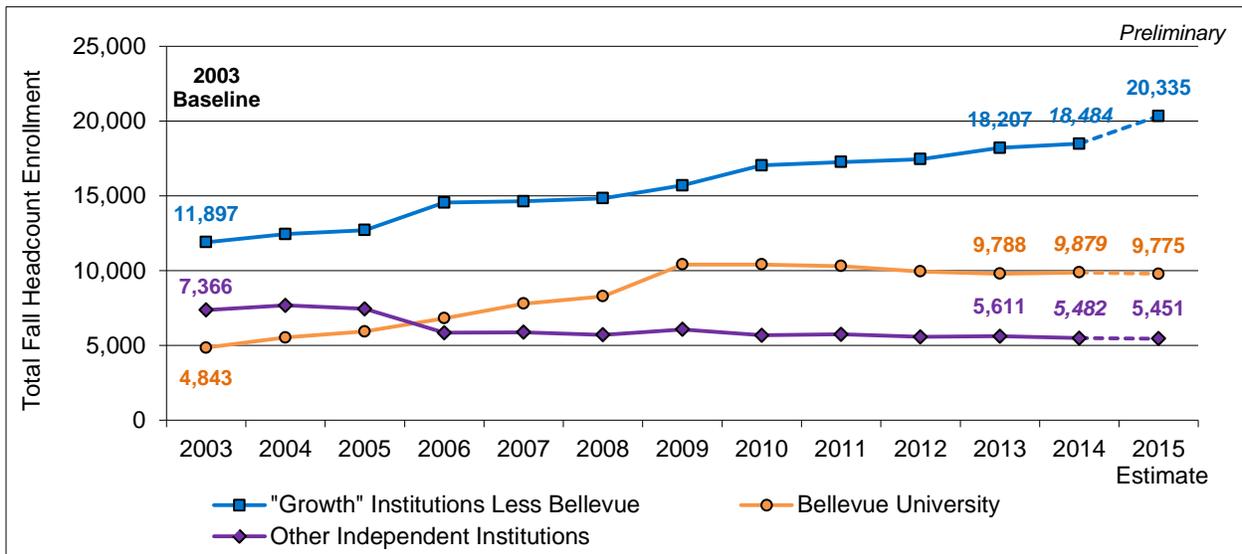
Note. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data. Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

- As shown in [Figure 1.7](#), Bellevue University’s fall 2015 estimated headcount enrollment was 9,775 full- and part-time students, or almost one-half of the combined enrollments of the other eight growth institutions.
- Between fall 2003 and fall 2015, Bellevue’s enrollment increased an estimated 101.8%. Fall enrollments for the other growth institutions in the independent sector increased 70.9% during this same time.

⁴ Doane College-Lincoln because a reporting institution as of 2006.

⁵ An institution is categorized by the Commission as “high growth” if the institution reported an increase of at least 200 students between fall 2003 and fall 2015. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

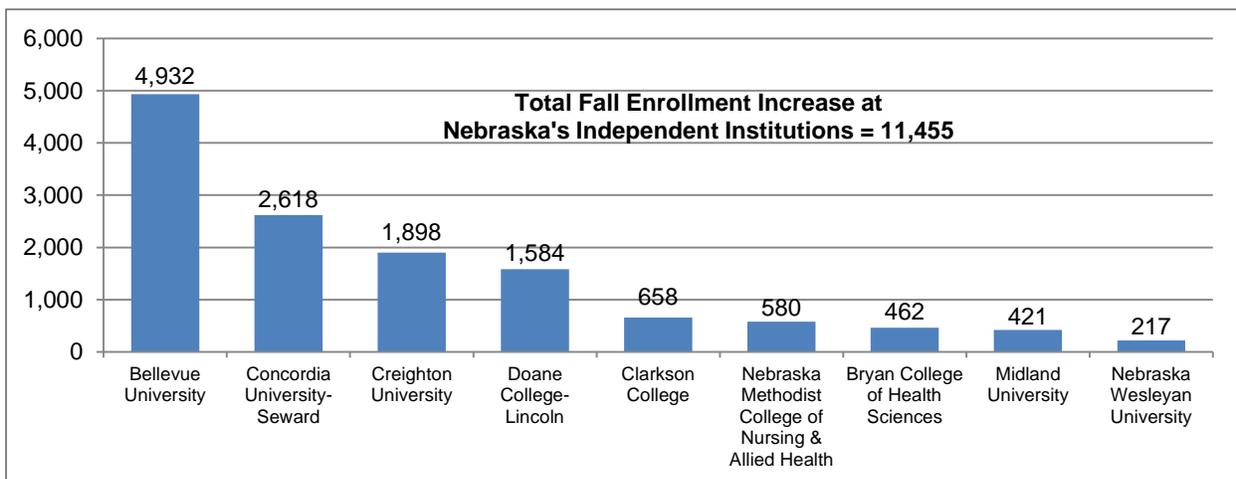
Figure 1.7
Fall Headcount Enrollment of Bellevue University
Compared to Other Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015



Note. See Table A1.2 in Appendix 1 for supporting data. Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

- As shown in Figure 1.8, Bellevue University alone accounted for 4,932, or 43.1%, of the estimated net increase of 11,455 students in the independent sector between fall 2003 and fall 2015. Meanwhile, Concordia University-Seward’s fall enrollment increased by 2,618 students, accounting for 22.9% of the sector’s growth.

Figure 1.8
The Highest 11-Year Increases in Fall Headcount Enrollment
at Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015



Note. Doane College-Lincoln because a reporting institution as of 2006. See Table A1.2 in Appendix 1 for supporting data. Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

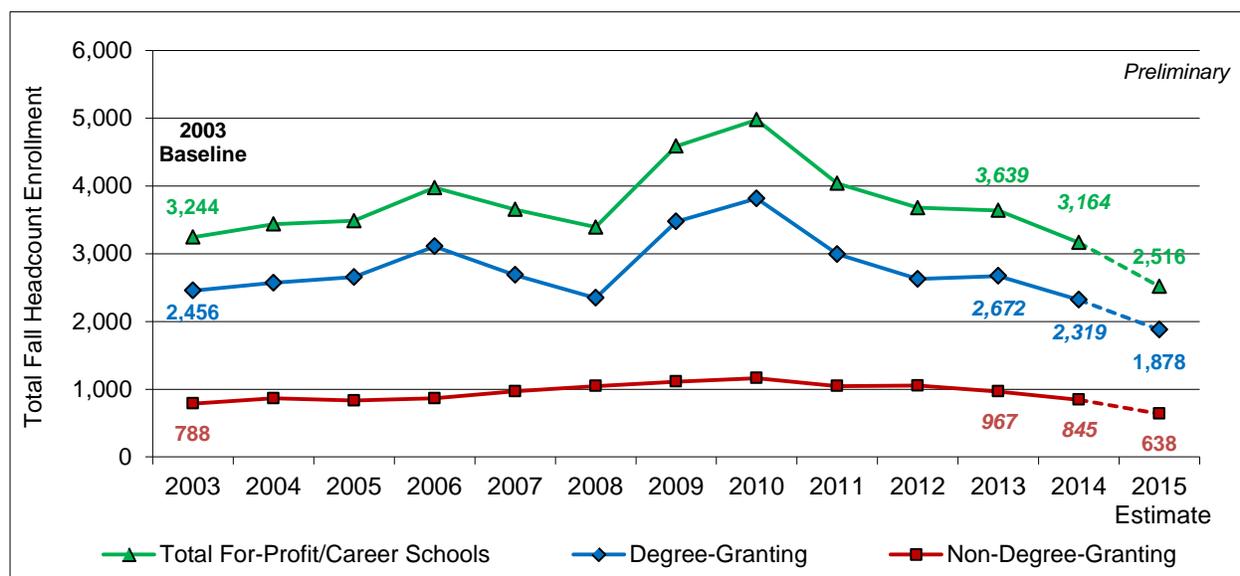
Nebraska For-Profit/Career Schools: Fall Enrollment

All of the institutions in the “for-profit/career school sector” are operated for profit *except* for three schools of radiologic technology, which are operated by not-for-profit hospitals or medical centers. This category is also referred to as the “private career school” sector. While this sector includes a variety of career schools, some of the institutions in this category have broadened their missions to include the offering of bachelor’s or more advanced degrees.

- As shown in [Figure 1.9](#), enrollment decreased 22.4% between fall 2003 and fall 2015 at the for-profit/career schools.
- The degree-granting schools within the for-profit/career school sector include a variety of institutions. As illustrated in [Figure 1.9](#), total headcount enrollment at the degree-granting schools has fluctuated between fall 2003 and fall 2015, decreasing an estimated 23.5% over this period.
- As also shown in [Figure 1.9](#), enrollment decreased 19.0% between fall 2003 and fall 2015 at the non-degree-granting schools, which consist of seven for-profit schools of hair design and one of the state’s three not-for-profit schools of radiologic technology.
- Notably, fall enrollment decreased an estimated 19.0% at the degree-granting schools between 2014 and 2015. Meanwhile, at the non-degree-granting schools, fall enrollment decreased an estimated 24.5% during this same one-year period.
- See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for a list of the schools in the for-profit sector and their total headcount enrollments from fall 2003 to fall 2015.

Figure 1.9

Total Fall Headcount Enrollment within the Nebraska For-Profit/Career School Sector Fall 2003 through Fall 2015



Note. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data. Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

Nebraska Fall Headcount Enrollment Summary by Sector

- Nebraska's total postsecondary headcount enrollment increased from 120,592 in fall 2003 to 137,571 in fall 2015, based on preliminary counts.
- As shown in [Table 1.1](#), the net effect of the changes in enrollment that occurred between the fall 2003 baseline and fall 2015 is that the enrollments at the state colleges and at the independent colleges and universities accounted for a higher percentage of Nebraska's total postsecondary enrollment in fall 2015 than they did in fall 2003.

Enrollment Sector	Fall 2003		<i>Estimated Fall 2015</i>	
	Enrollment	% of Enrollment	<i>Enrollment</i>	<i>% of Enrollment</i>
University of Nebraska	46,015	38.2%	<i>51,835</i>	<i>37.7%</i>
Nebraska State Colleges	7,652	6.3%	<i>9,001</i>	<i>6.5%</i>
Nebraska Community Colleges	39,575	32.8%	<i>38,658</i>	<i>28.1%</i>
Total Public Colleges and Universities	93,242	77.3%	<i>99,494</i>	<i>72.3%</i>
Independent Colleges and Universities	24,106	20.0%	<i>35,561</i>	<i>25.8%</i>
For-Profit/Career Schools	3,244	2.7%	<i>2,516</i>	<i>1.8%</i>
Total Nebraska Postsecondary Headcount Enrollment	120,592	100.0%	<i>137,571</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

Note. All institutions in the for-profit/career school category are operated for profit *except* for the three schools of radiologic technology, which are operated by not-for-profit hospitals or medical centers. Data sources: For 2003 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), IPEDS fall 2003 survey. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

12-Month Unduplicated Headcounts at Nebraska’s Public Institutions Compared to Fall Headcount Enrollment

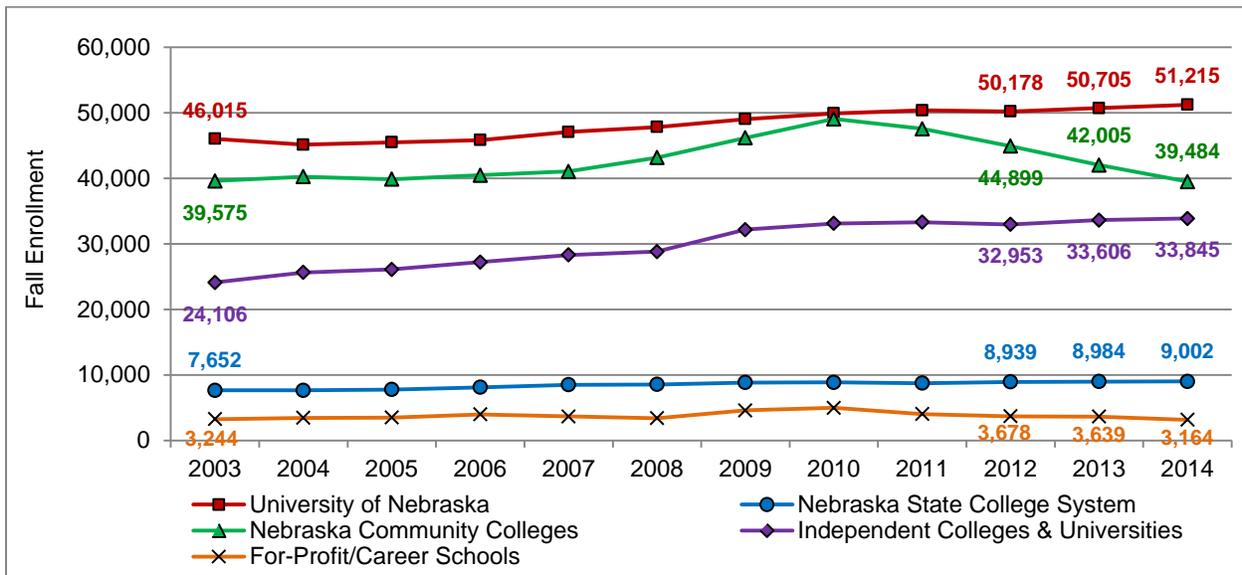
Fall headcount enrollment is the best available indicator of enrollment trends across all of the sectors of postsecondary education in Nebraska because it can be analyzed by race/ethnicity, gender, enrollment status (part-time/full-time), or level of study (undergraduate/graduate). However, fall enrollment totals provide only a snapshot of the number of students at an institution on a specific date during the fall of the academic year. As a result, fall enrollment totals do not include students who enrolled later in the fall or who were enrolled in college only during the spring or summer of the academic year.

Nebraska’s postsecondary institutions also report 12-month unduplicated headcounts to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Also referred to as 12-month enrollment, a 12-month unduplicated headcount is the total number of students who were enrolled at an institution at any time during the academic year. Each student is counted only once per academic year. For example, if a student was enrolled in the fall and spring semester at Wayne State College, that student would be counted only once for the entire academic year. The advantage of this count is that it captures students who were enrolled any time during the year. In this way, 12-month enrollment is designed to capture the total number of students an institution serves throughout the academic year.

For some institutions, fall enrollment is about the same or only slightly lower than the school’s 12-month unduplicated headcount. However, for other institutions, fall enrollment is considerably lower than the total number of students the school serves over the course of an academic year. This is particularly true for Nebraska’s community colleges, where the number of students enrolled in the fall is about half of the number of students served over the course of an academic year. The following analysis compares fall and 12-month unduplicated headcounts for Nebraska’s five sectors of higher education.

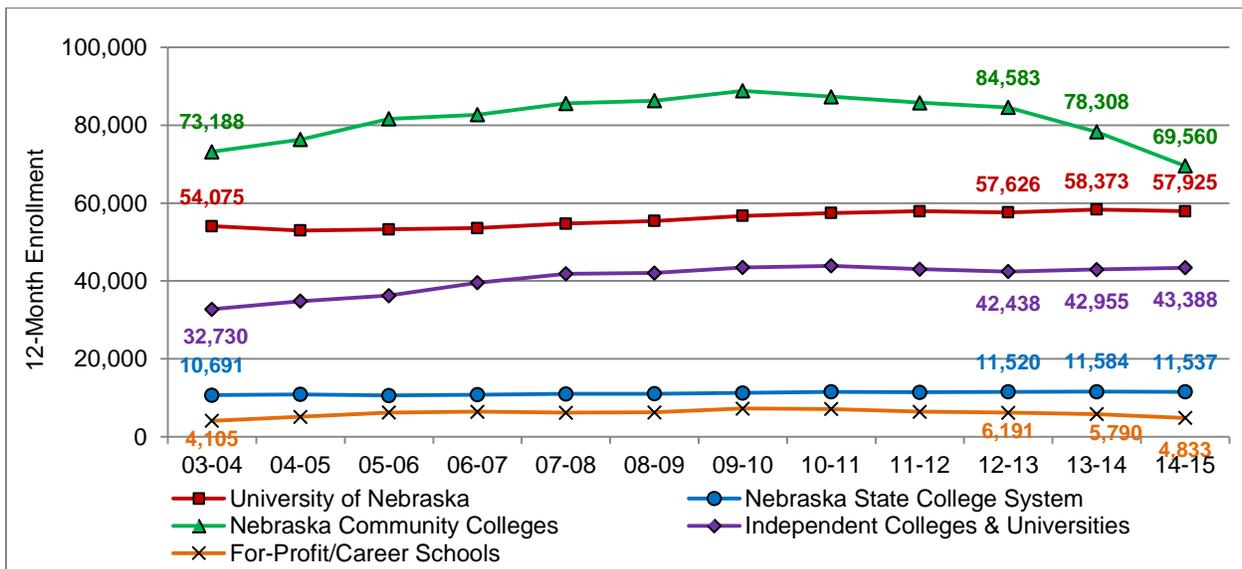
- Figure 1.10 shows total fall enrollment by sector from fall 2003 through fall 2014, the latest period for which official data are available from the NCES. Figure 1.11 shows the comparable 12-month enrollments reported to the NCES for the 2003–2004 academic year through the 2014–2015 academic year.
- The fall and 12-month enrollments shown in Figure 1.10 and Figure 1.11 are both valid measures for determining whether sector enrollments are generally increasing, decreasing or staying about the same. However, the two headcounts provide different information about sector enrollments.
- Based on the fall enrollments charted in Figure 1.10, the University of Nebraska enrolls a higher number of students than Nebraska’s six community colleges. In fall 2014, for example, the University of Nebraska enrolled 51,215 students compared to enrollment of 39,484 students at the community colleges.
- The 12-month enrollments summarized in Figure 1.11, on the other hand, show that Nebraska’s community colleges serve a greater number of students than the University of Nebraska over the course of an academic year. In 2014–2015, the community colleges served a total of 69,560 students over the course of the academic year, while the University of Nebraska served 57,925 students. This is not surprising, given the differences in the institutional missions and programs offered by these two sectors.

Figure 1.10
Fall Headcount Enrollment
at Nebraska Public Postsecondary Institutions by Sector
Fall 2003 through Fall 2014



Note. See Table A1.1 in Appendix 1 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys.

Figure 1.11
12-Month Unduplicated Headcount
at Nebraska Public Postsecondary Institutions by Sector
2003–2004 Academic Year through 2014–2015 Academic Year

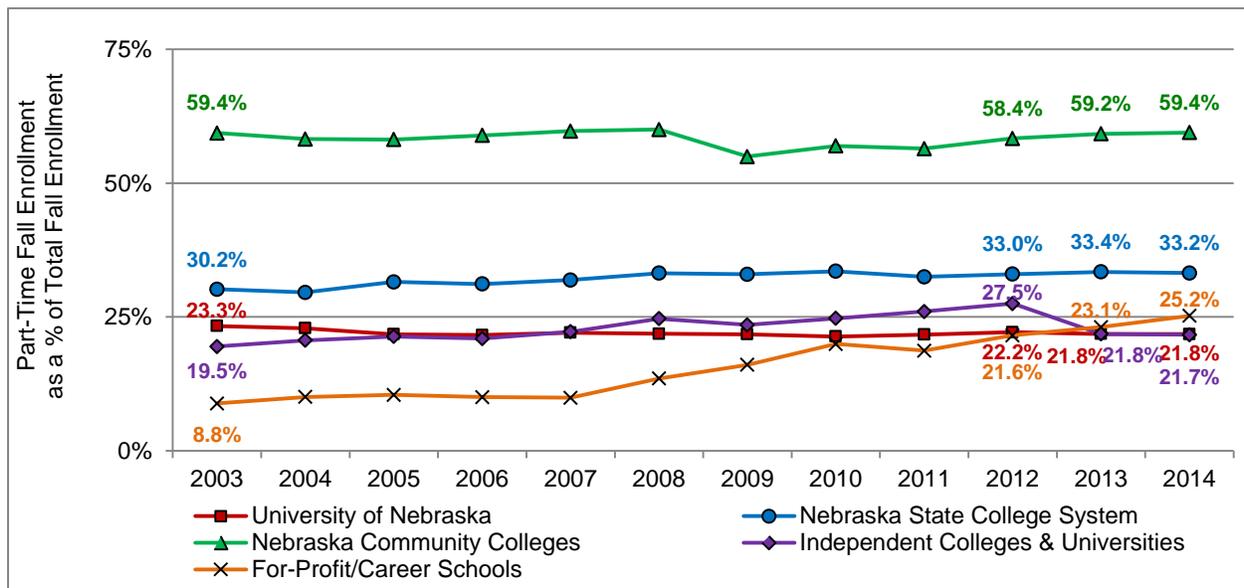


Note. See Table A1.3 in Appendix 1 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2004 through 2015 surveys.

- The higher 12-month headcount of the community colleges reflects the fact that these colleges serve many students who take courses only one semester or quarter of the academic year. Furthermore, the community colleges enroll more part-time students than the University of Nebraska, Nebraska state colleges, independent institutions, and for-profit/career schools. As shown in [Figure 1.12](#), part-time students accounted for 59.4% of total fall enrollment at the community colleges in fall 2014. In comparison, part-time students accounted for 21.8% of the University of Nebraska’s fall 2014 enrollment, 33.2% of the fall enrollment at the state colleges, 21.7% at the independent institutions, and 25.2% at the for-profit/career schools.⁶

Figure 1.12

Part-Time Fall Enrollment as a Percentage of Total Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska Public Postsecondary Institutions by Sector Fall 2003 through Fall 2014



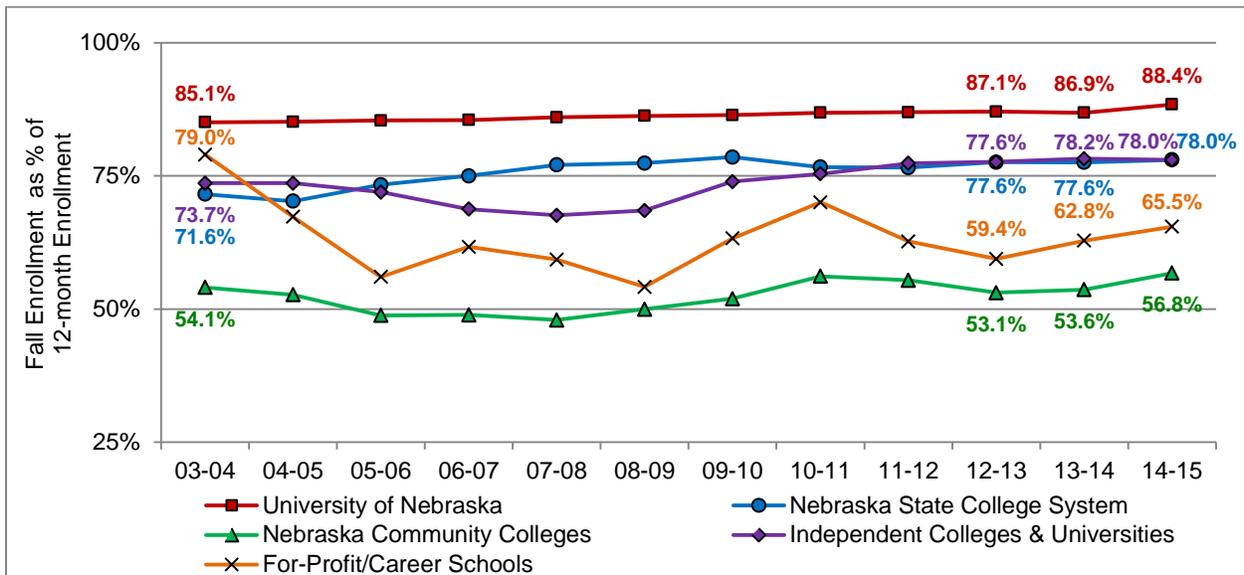
Note. For supporting data, see the *2015 Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska – Enrollment* on the Commission’s website at: ccpe.nebraska.gov/reports. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys.

- [Figure 1.13](#) shows fall enrollment as a percentage of 12-month enrollment as a means of directly comparing these two headcounts. As shown in this chart, fall enrollment in fall 2014 accounted for 88.4%, 78.0%, and 78.0% of 12-month enrollment during the 2014–2015 academic year at the University of Nebraska, Nebraska State College System, and independent sector, respectively. In contrast, fall enrollments accounted for 65.5% of the students served annually by the for-profit/career schools and 56.8% of the students served annually by the state’s six community colleges.
- The Commission will continue to use fall unduplicated headcounts as the primary measure of the number of students enrolled at colleges and universities in Nebraska. However, fall headcount enrollments should be interpreted with the understanding that there are many more students who are served by Nebraska’s postsecondary education system over the course of any given academic year, and this is especially true in the case of the state’s community colleges and for-profit/career schools.

⁶ The NCES does not ask institutions to report 12-month unduplicated headcounts by full-time/part-time enrollment status. Consequently, the numbers and percentages of students who attend any institution on a part-time basis are available only for fall headcount enrollments.

Figure 1.13

Fall Headcount Enrollment as a Percentage of 12-Month Unduplicated Headcount at Nebraska Public Postsecondary Institutions by Sector 2003–2004 Academic Year through 2014–2015 Academic Year



Note. See Table A1.1 and Table A1.3 in Appendix 1 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2003 through 2015 surveys.

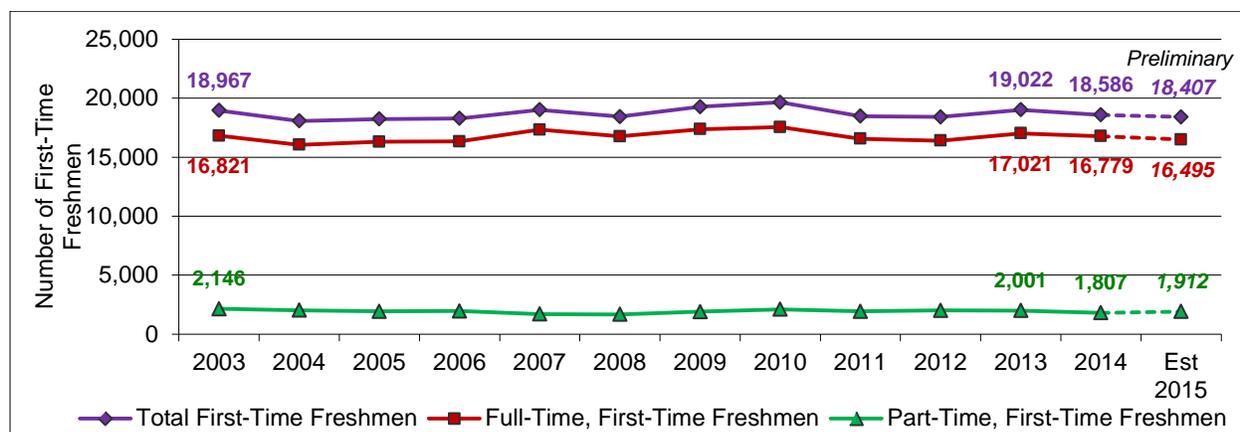
Nebraska First-Time Freshmen Enrollments

First-time freshmen enrollments are indicators of the general direction undergraduate enrollments are headed as well as general measures of the numbers of high school graduates who go on to college in Nebraska. Consequently, this section compares 2003 baseline enrollments of first-time freshmen to estimated first-time freshmen enrollment in fall 2015. Enrollments for fall 2015 are preliminary, based on estimates that institutions reported directly to the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

Nebraska Total Enrollment of Full- and Part-Time, First-Time Freshmen

- As shown in [Figure 1.14](#), total enrollment of first-time freshmen at all of Nebraska's colleges and universities, including for-profit/career schools, decreased an estimated 3.0% between fall 2003 and fall 2015.
- Full-time first-time freshmen accounted for an estimated 89.6% of the first-time freshmen attending postsecondary institutions in Nebraska in fall 2015, up from 88.7% in fall 2003.
- Full-time first-time freshmen enrollment decreased an estimated 1.9% over the 12-year period between fall 2003 and fall 2015. Meanwhile, part-time first-time freshmen enrollment decreased an estimated 10.9% over the 12-year period, despite an estimated increase of 5.8% between fall 2014 and fall 2015.
- Analyzing the actual changes in fall enrollment between 2003 and 2014 reveals that Nebraska's total first-time freshmen enrollment decreased 2.0% while full-time first-time freshmen enrollment decreased 0.2% and part-time first-time freshmen enrollment decreased 15.8%.

Figure 1.14
Nebraska Total First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by Full- and Part-Time Student Status
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015



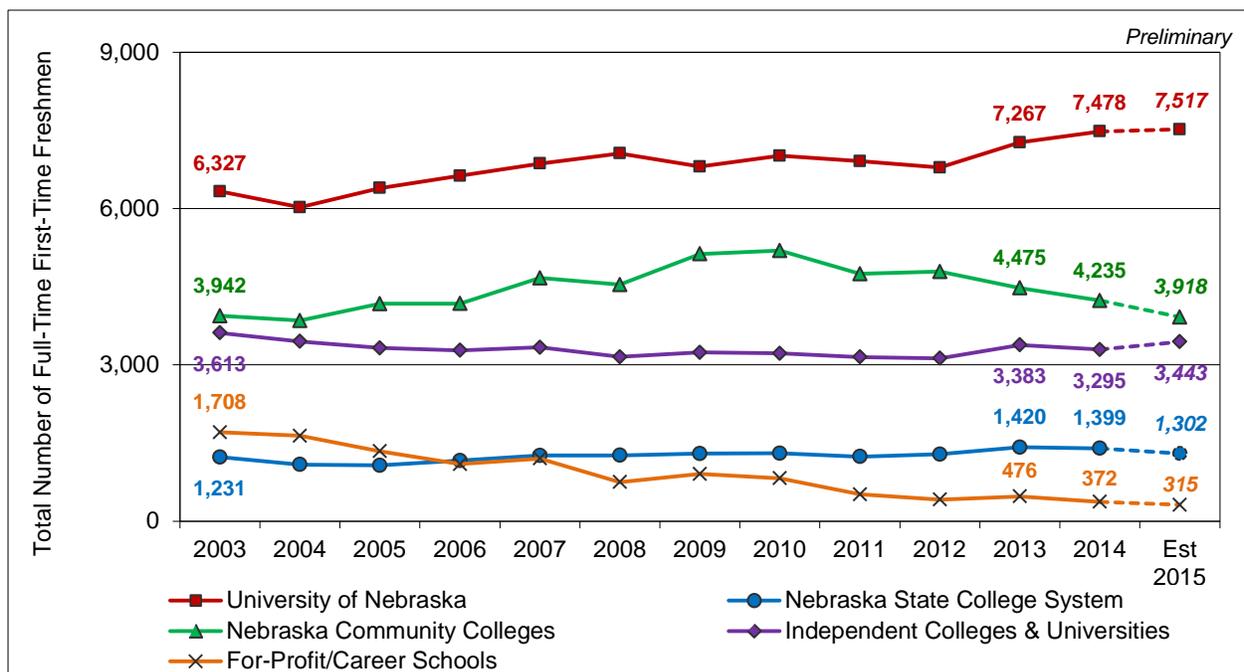
Note. See Table A1.4 in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data. Data sources: Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

Nebraska Enrollment of Full- and Part-Time, First-Time Freshmen by Sector

- As illustrated in [Figure 1.15](#), estimated full-time first-time freshmen enrollment at the University of Nebraska increased 0.5% between fall 2014 and fall 2015, resulting in a 18.8% 12-year increase since fall 2003.
- Full-time first-time freshmen enrollment at Nebraska’s state colleges decreased an estimated 6.9% between fall 2014 and fall 2015, resulting in a 5.8% 12-year increase since fall 2003.
- At Nebraska’s community colleges, full-time first-time freshmen enrollment decreased an estimated 7.5% between fall 2014 and fall 2015, resulting in a 0.6% 12-year increase since fall 2003.
- Full-time first-time freshmen enrollment at Nebraska’s independent colleges and universities increased an estimated 4.5% between fall 2014 and fall 2015, resulting in a 4.7% 12-year decrease since fall 2003.
- The for-profit/career schools reported an estimated decrease of 15.3% in full-time first-time freshmen enrollment between fall 2014 and fall 2015, resulting in a 81.6% 12-year decrease since fall 2003.

Figure 1.15

**Nebraska Total Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by Sector
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015**

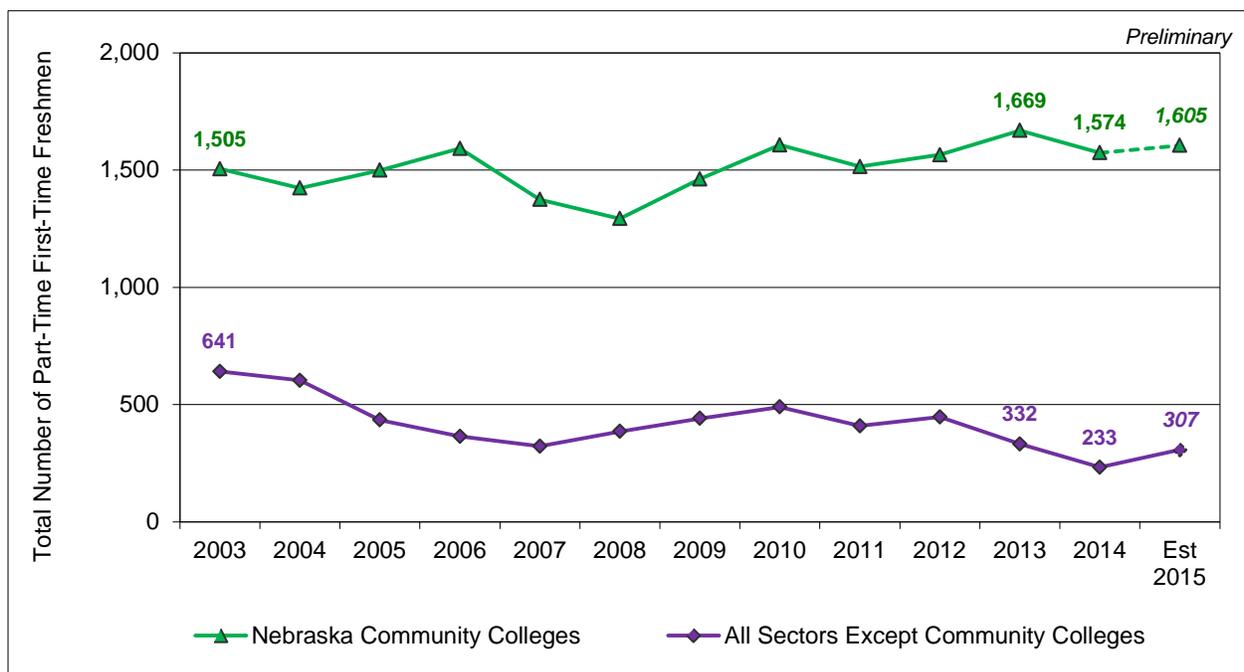


Note. See [Table A1.4](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data. Data sources: Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

- As shown in [Figure 1.16](#), Nebraska's community colleges account for the majority of first-time freshmen who attend school part-time (70.1% of the state total in fall 2003 and 83.9% in fall 2015).
- Enrollment of part-time first-time freshmen at Nebraska's community colleges increased an estimated 2.0% from fall 2014 to fall 2015, resulting in a 12-year increase of 6.6%.
- The number of part-time first-time freshmen enrolled at other types of institutions increased an estimated 31.6% from fall 2014 to fall 2015, resulting in a 12-year decrease of 52.1%.

Figure 1.16

**Nebraska Total Part-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by Sector
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015**



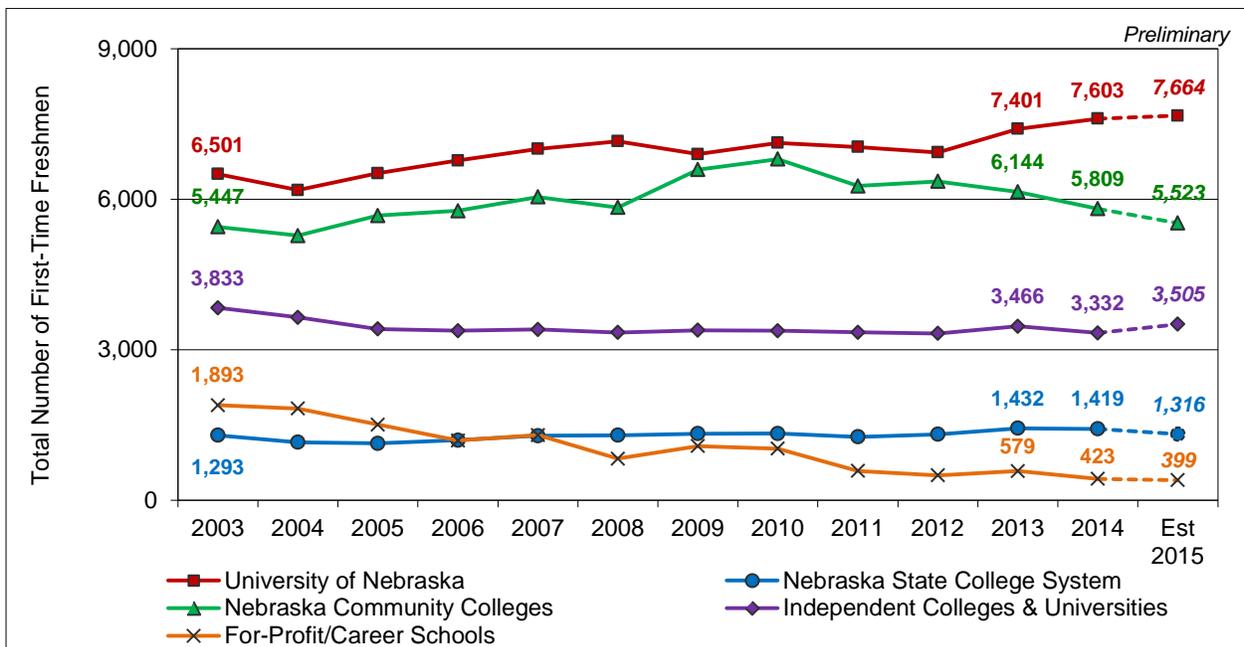
Note. See [Table A1.4](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data. Data sources: Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

Nebraska Total Enrollment of First-Time Freshmen by Sector

- When full-time and part-time enrollments of first-time freshmen are combined as shown in [Figure 1.17](#), the University of Nebraska has enrolled more first-time freshmen than any other sector since fall 2003.
- With an estimated increase of 0.8% between fall 2014 and fall 2015, fall enrollment of first-time freshmen at the University of Nebraska has increased 17.9% between fall 2003 and fall 2015.
- The state colleges experienced an estimated decrease of 7.3% for fall enrollment of first-time freshmen between 2014 and 2015, resulting in a 12-year increase of 1.8% from 2003 to 2015.

- Nebraska’s community colleges reported an estimated 4.9% decrease in total first-time freshmen fall enrollment from 2014 to 2015, resulting in a 12-year increase of 1.4% from 2003 to 2015.
- The independent institutions reported an estimated 5.2% increase in total first-time freshmen fall enrollment from 2014 to 2015, resulting in a 12-year decrease of 8.6% from 2003 to 2015.
- Meanwhile, the for-profit/career schools reported an estimated decrease of 5.7% in total first-time freshmen between fall 2014 and fall 2015, resulting in a 78.9% decrease between 2003 and 2015.

Figure 1.17
Nebraska Total First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by Sector
Fall 2003 through Fall 2015



Note. See Table A1.4 in Appendix 1 for supporting data. Data sources: Data sources: For 2003–2014 data, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fall 2003 through fall 2014 surveys. Preliminary enrollments for fall 2015 were collected from each institution by the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, February 2016.

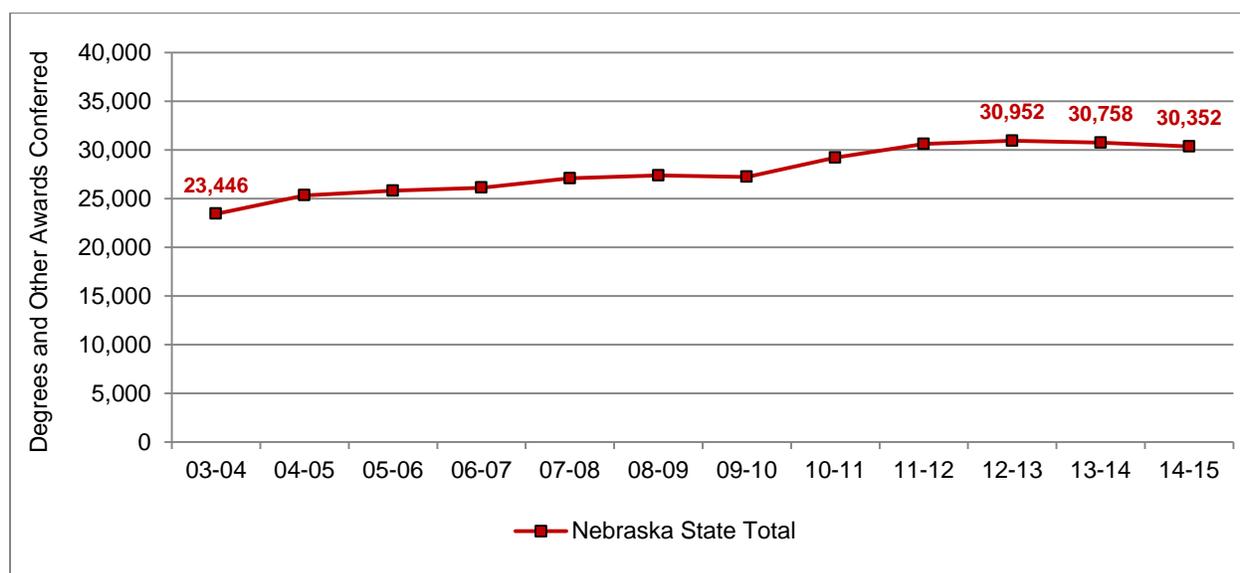
Number of Degrees Conferred at Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions

Although not specified as a state priority by the 2003 LR 174 Higher Education Task Force, increasing the number of degrees is a logical outcome of increasing enrollment and increasing the percentage of students who complete degree programs.

- As shown in [Figure 1.18](#), the total number of degrees and awards conferred by Nebraska institutions increased 29.5% from 23,446 in 2003–2004 to 30,352 in 2014–2015.

Figure 1.18

Total Number of Degrees and Other Awards Conferred by Nebraska Public and Independent Institutions and For-Profit/Career Schools 2003–2004 Academic Year through 2014–2015 Academic Year



Note. For supporting data, see the *2015 Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska – Degrees and Other Awards* on the Commission’s website at: ccpe.nebraska.gov/reports. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2004 through 2015 surveys.

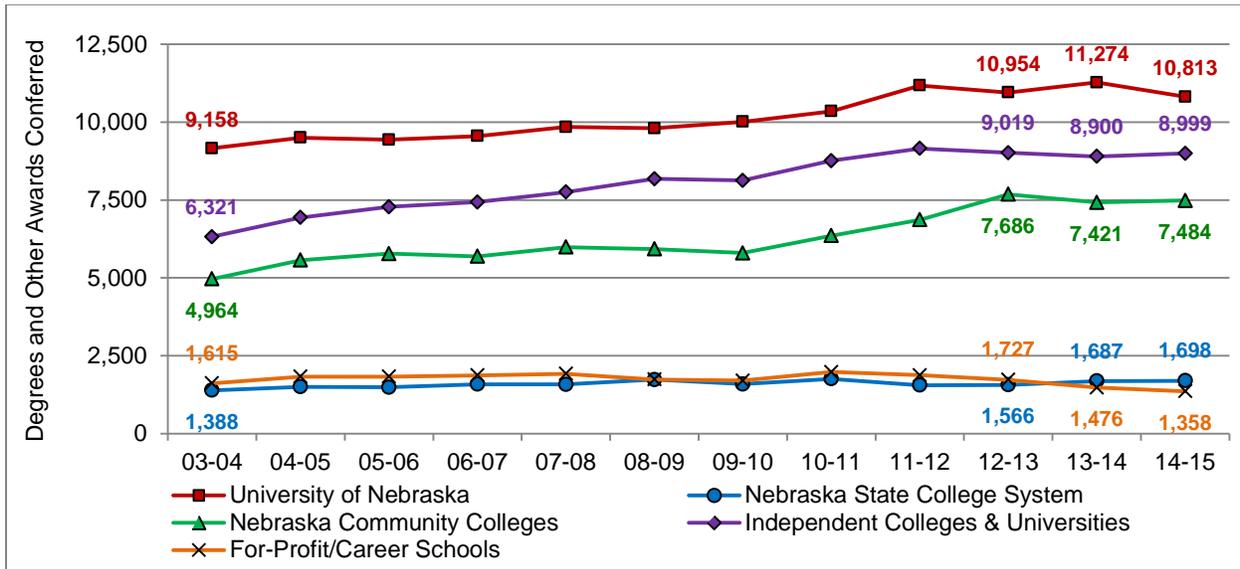
- [Figure 1.19](#) summarizes the number of degrees and other awards conferred by sector. As shown in this chart, all sectors, except for the for-profit/career school sector, awarded more degrees and other awards in 2014–2015 than in 2003–2004:

University of Nebraska	18.1%
Nebraska State College System	22.3%
Nebraska Community Colleges	50.8%
Independent Colleges & Universities	42.4%
For-Profit/Career Schools	-15.9%

- [Table 1.2](#) shows, by degree level, the number of degrees conferred by all Nebraska colleges and universities. Based on these data, from 2003–2004 to 2014–2015, the highest growth was 43.0% at the master’s level. The number of associate’s degrees increased 32.9% and the number of doctorates increased 32.5%, while the number of bachelor’s degrees and post-baccalaureate certificates increased 24.8% and the number of less-than-four-year certificates increased 23.9% between 2003–2004 and 2014–2015.

Figure 1.19

**Total Number of Degrees and Other Awards Conferred by Sector
2003–2004 Academic Year through 2014–2015 Academic Year**



Note. For supporting data, see the *2015 Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska – Degrees and Other Awards* on the Commission’s website at: ccpe.nebraska.gov/reports. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2004 through 2015 surveys.

**Table 1.2
Total Number of Degrees Conferred by Degree Level
Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions
2003–2004 Academic Year through 2014–2015 Academic Year**

Degree Level	03–04	04–05	05–06	06–07	07–08	08–09	09–10	10–11	11–12	12–13	13–14	14–15
Less-than-Four-Year Certificates	2,730	3,224	3,200	3,118	3,450	3,251	2,975	3,261	3,227	3,746	3,404	3,383
Associate Degrees	4,299	4,662	4,926	4,919	4,837	4,763	4,862	5,352	5,765	5,944	5,755	5,712
Bachelor’s Degrees & Post-Baccalaureate Certificates	11,503	12,091	12,355	12,640	12,775	13,017	13,091	14,061	14,548	14,523	15,028	14,354
Master’s Degrees & Post-Master’s Certificates	3,719	4,013	4,040	4,135	4,696	4,979	4,914	5,163	5,692	5,244	5,068	5,320
Doctor’s Degrees	1,195	1,356	1,292	1,320	1,330	1,371	1,392	1,371	1,392	1,495	1,503	1,583
Total Degrees Conferred	23,446	25,346	25,813	26,132	27,088	27,381	27,234	29,208	30,624	30,952	30,758	30,352

Note. For supporting data, see the *2015 Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska – Degrees and Other Awards* on the Commission’s website at: ccpe.nebraska.gov/reports. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2004 through 2015 surveys.

Strategic Objectives to Increase Postsecondary Enrollment Recommended by the 2003 LR 174 Task Force

Given the first priority **to increase the number of students who enter postsecondary education in Nebraska**, the 2003 LR 174 Task Force recommended a series of strategic objectives to increase college enrollments. For the purposes of establishing baseline statistical indicators and monitoring progress toward achieving these objectives, they are stated as follows:

- 1.1 Increase the proportion of PK-12 students who graduate from high school, enroll in postsecondary education and are adequately prepared to proceed through postsecondary degree completion.**
- 1.2 Increase the proportion of Nebraska high school graduates who pursue their postsecondary education in Nebraska.**
- 1.3 Increase the number of non-Nebraska high school graduates who pursue postsecondary education in Nebraska.**
- 1.4 Increase the number and proportion of Nebraska postsecondary students who have been underrepresented in the state's higher education system.**
- 1.5 Increase need-based financial aid in order to improve access to higher education for Nebraskans with limited financial means.**

Following this outline, the remainder of this section focuses on the extent to which each of these measurable objectives is being achieved. Throughout this analysis, the latest available data are compared to the baseline statistics that were established and reported in the *2004 Baseline Report for the LR 174 Higher Education Task Force* or the *2005 Nebraska Higher Education Progress Report for the LR 75 Legislative Evaluation Task Force*.