

---

# MINUTES

**Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education  
Apothecary/Ridnour Building  
140 North 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 300, Lincoln, NE  
Friday, January 24, 2025  
8:30 a.m. (CT) and Via Zoom**

*Public notice of meeting*

Public notice of this meeting was given by posting notice on the Commission's website; posting notice on the State of Nebraska's online public meeting calendar; e-mailing news media; and keeping a current copy of the agenda in the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education's office, listing the date, time, and location of the meeting. A current copy of the Open Meetings Act was posted beside the table containing the documents for the meeting.

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE COORDINATING COMMISSION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION WILL HOLD A MEETING ON JANUARY 24, 2025. THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 8:30 A.M. AND ADJOURN AT APPROXIMATELY 11:30 A.M.

AN AGENDA IS MAINTAINED IN THE COMMISSION OFFICE, 140 N. 8<sup>TH</sup> STREET, SUITE 300, LINCOLN, NEBRASKA.

DR. PAUL VON BEHREN, CHAIR

*Meeting called to order at 8:30 a.m.*

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Von Behren called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and asked for introductions.

**Commissioners Present**

Tim Daniels  
Dr. Deborah Frison  
Dr. LeDonna Griffin  
Dr. Dennis Headrick  
Mary Lauritzen

Dannika Nelson  
Molly O'Holleran  
Dr. Paul Von Behren  
Tami Weber  
W. Scott Wilson

**Commission Staff Present**

Dr. Michael Baumgartner  
Dr. Kathleen Fimple  
Kadi Lukesh  
J. Ritchie Morrow  
Helen Pope

Matthew Roque  
Celeste Thompson  
Gary Timm  
Joe Velaquez (moderator)

---

*Minutes of the December 13, 2025,  
Commission meeting approved*

*Commissioners Daniels and Lauritzen  
joined the meeting at 8:40 a.m.*

*Chair's Report*

*Executive Director's Report*

*Kadi Lukesh presented Second Quarter  
Budget Report*

*Legislative update*

*Budget update*

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 13, 2024, COMMISSION MEETING**

**Commissioner Wilson made a motion to approve the December 13, 2024, minutes as written. Commissioner Frison seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Frison, Griffin, Headrick, Nelson, O'Holleran, Von Behren, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.**

## **CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Von Behren did not have a report.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Dr. Baumgartner introduced Kadi Lukesh, Office Manager/Bookkeeper, to present the Second Quarter Budget Report as of December 31, 2024. Ms. Lukesh gave updates on the status of Administrative Funds, the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Program (NOG), the Higher Education Financial Aid, formerly the Community College Gap Assistance Program, Access College Early Scholarship (ACE), Guaranty Recovery Program, and the Community College ARPA Grants.

Dr. Baumgartner provided a brief legislative update, noting 730 bills and 18 constitutional amendments were introduced this session. The Commission is following several of the bills of interest. Gary Timm, Chief Finance Officer, is working on fiscal notes for a few bills, which were requested by the Legislative Fiscal Office and must be completed quickly.

Dr. Baumgartner reported that the state is facing a budget deficit currently projected at \$432 million for the next biennium. For Community Colleges, the Governor's budget includes additional funding for the Community College Future Fund, which replaces property taxes for operations, but it does not include additional state aid for operations, nor does it include the requested additional funds for dual credit.

For the State Colleges, the Governor's budget does not include any funding increases. For the University of Nebraska, the Governor's budget reduces operating appropriations by \$14.3 million in FY26 and maintains that reduced level in FY27. It also takes away from the University \$11 million of biomedical research funds annually.

For capital projects, none of the State College's new requests are funded; for the University, \$50 million is provided annually for the University Next Project; the two other requested projects at UNO are not funded.

For the Commission, the Governor's budget would roll back the General Fund appropriation for the Nebraska Opportunity Grant by \$1,000,000, increase the lottery funded portion by \$500,000, and sweep \$5 million for the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Fund. The effect of this is that we would have to reduce the amount of lottery funds distributed for NOG by at least a couple million dollars annually in the next biennium unless lottery proceeds grow much more than we anticipate.

---

*Budget update continued*

The Community College Gap Assistance Program Fund balance would be reduced by \$3 million, which would not affect awards immediately, and possibly never.

Other grant programs would remain essentially the same, but increased appropriations would give us authority to make more Excellence in Teaching Act awards.

Like all other agencies and our postsecondary institutions, we would not receive increases for operation expenses including salaries and benefits. We will be speaking to the Budget Division about a decrease they made for a mis-identified vacant position that should not have been included in the Governor's Budget.

Dr. Baumgartner noted that he has begun meeting with new Senators who are members of the Education Committee. Education Committee hearings on bills that affect the CCPE have not been set yet, but the committee will start work next week.

Dr. Baumgartner stated that Susan Heegard and other staff from the Midwestern Higher Education Compact will be visiting Nebraska next week to meet with legislators and Nebraska's MHEC Commissioners. Dr. Baumgartner will be participating in a meeting of MHEC's ad hoc strategic planning committee next week and monthly for the next several months.

*Staff activities*

J. Ritchie Morrow, Financial Aid Officer, has been named to the National Association of State Student Grant Aid Programs strategic planning committee.

Dr. Baumgartner reminded Commissioners that Statements of Financial Interests are due to the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Committee by March 3, 2025.

*Public Hearing on Matters of General Concern*

**PUBLIC HEARING ON MATTERS OF GENERAL CONCERN**

There was no testimony on Matters of General Concern.

**Chair Von Behren closed the public hearing on Matters of General Concern.**

*Public Hearing on Academic Programs Committee Items*

**PUBLIC HEARING ON ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE ITEMS**

There was no testimony on Academic Programs Committee Items.

**Chair Von Behren closed the public hearing on Academic Programs Committee Items.**

*Academic Programs Committee  
Commissioner Weber*

**ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE**

Commissioner Weber, Committee Chair, introduced Dr. Kathleen Fimple, Academic Programs Officer, to present the programs listed on the agenda.

---

*Chadron, Peru, and Wayne State Colleges – Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Associate of General Studies Degree*

*Dr. Kathleen Fimple*

*Dr. Paul Turman and Dr. Jodi Kuper, Nebraska State College System*

*Committee recommendation*

*Chadron, Peru, and Wayne State Colleges – Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Associate of General Studies Degree, approved*

*Southeast Community College – Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Data Science, AS*

*Dr. Fimple*

*Committee recommendation*

*Southeast Community College – Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Data Science, AS, approved*

*Southeast Community College – Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Agricultural Teacher Education, AAS*

*Dr. Fimple*

### **Chadron, Peru, and Wayne State Colleges - Proposal for a New Instructional Program - Associate of General Studies Degree**

Dr. Fimple presented the proposal, indicating this program is designed for students who have attended one of the three state colleges but have not been awarded a degree, diploma, or certificate. If those students meet eligibility requirements, they may apply for an associate of general studies degree. Dr. Fimple noted there is no comparable program in the state, and offering this degree would contribute to the state meeting its 70% attainment goal.

Dr. Paul Turman, Chancellor, and Dr. Jodi Kuper, Vice-Chancellor, from the Nebraska State College System, were present and provided additional information on the proposal.

Committee recommendation: That the Commission approve the Associate of General Studies degree at Chadron, Peru, and Wayne State Colleges with a report on the Colleges' 2030 analysis of program success due September 15, 2030.

**Commissioner Weber, on behalf of the Academic Programs Committee, moved to approve Chadron, Peru, and Wayne State Colleges' Proposal for a New Instructional Program - Associate of General Studies Degree. A roll call was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Frison, Griffin, Lauritzen, Nelson, O'Holleran, Von Behren, Weber, and Wilson. Voting no: Headrick. The motion carried.**

### **Southeast Community College - Proposal for a New Instructional Program - Data Science, AS**

Dr. Fimple presented the proposal, noting this program is an Associate of Science, not applied science. There is a high demand with numerous jobs in data science-related fields, with local companies accepting candidates with any degree or experience in data science. The proposed program would be housed in the new Sandhills Global Technology Center on SCC's campus that recently opened. Kelsy Ronk, Mathematics Instructor from SCC, was available to answer questions regarding the proposal.

Committee recommendation: That the Commission approve the Associate of Science degree in Data Science at Southeast Community College.

**Commissioner Weber, on behalf of the Academic Programs Committee, moved to approve Southeast Community College's Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Data Science, AS. A roll call was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Frison, Griffin, Headrick, Lauritzen, Nelson, O'Holleran, Von Behren, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.**

### **Southeast Community College - Proposal for a New Instructional Program - Agricultural Teacher Education, AAS**

Dr. Fimple presented the proposal, stating the purpose of this program is to prepare students to transfer to a four-year institution to ultimately become an agricultural teacher. There are no AAS programs in

---

*Dr. Joel Michaelis, Dr. Bev Cummins,  
Dr. Jon Kisby, Southeast Community  
College*

*Dr. David Jackson, University of  
Nebraska*

*Dr. Leah Barrett, Northeast  
Community College*

*Chair Von Behren briefly stepped away  
from the meeting asking Vice Chair  
Daniels to preside*

*Committee recommendation*

*Motion to approve proposal*

*Chair Von Behren returned to the  
meeting*

*Discussion following motion regarding  
program name*

*Amended motion*

*Chair Von Behren*

*Southeast Community College –  
Proposal for a New Instructional  
Program – Agricultural Teacher  
Education, AAS, approved*

*Southeast Community College –  
Proposal for a New Instructional  
Program – Utility Line Worker, AAS*

*Dr. Fimple*

agricultural teacher education in Nebraska, so it is difficult to evaluate the demand for the program. There was much discussion regarding the name of the proposed program.

Dr. Joel Michaelis, Vice President of Instruction, stated a late email to the Commission indicated that SCC offered to change the name to *Agricultural Educator* to better reflect the program's intention. Discussion included using that suggestion or the wording *Pre-Educator*. Others that came forward with discussion included Dr. David Jackson, University of Nebraska Executive Vice President and Provost, Dr. Bev Cummins, SCC Vice President Program Development, Dr. Jon Kisby, SCC Associate Vice President, Milford Campus (former Dean of Agriculture), and Dr. Leah Barrett, President of Northeast Community College

Committee recommendation: That the proposal be forwarded to the full Commission without a recommendation for the purpose of discussion with Southeast Community College regarding the name of the program.

**Commissioner Headrick made a motion to approve the Southeast Community College's Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Agricultural Teacher Education, AAS. Commissioner O'Holleran seconded the motion.**

There was discussion regarding clarity of the program's name following the motion and second. Chair Von Behren requested an amended motion to clearly state the name of the proposed program.

**Commissioner Headrick made a motion to amend the Southeast Community College's Proposal for a New Instructional Program including the name – Agricultural Teacher Education, AAS. Commissioner O'Holleran seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Frison, Griffin, Headrick, Lauritzen, Nelson, O'Holleran, Von Behren, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.**

Chair Von Behren stated that a vote on the amended motion was required.

**Commissioner Headrick made a motion to approve the amended motion to clearly state the name of Southeast Community College's Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Agricultural Teacher Education, AAS. Commissioner Griffin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Frison, Griffin, Headrick, Lauritzen, Nelson, O'Holleran, Von Behren, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.**

**Southeast Community College - Proposal for a New Instructional Program - Utility Line Worker, AAS**

Dr. Fimple presented the proposal, noting this is a new program designed to prepare students to apply technical knowledge and skills to install, operate, maintain, and repair electric power distribution systems both

---

*Dr. Michaelis and Caleb Herwick,  
Southeast Community College*

*Committee recommendation*

*Southeast Community College –  
Proposal for a New Instructional  
Program – Utility Line Worker, AAS,  
approved*

*Southeast Community College –  
Proposal for a New Instructional  
Program – Dental Hygiene, AAS*

*Dr. Fimple*

*Dr. Wanda Cloet, Central Community  
College*

*Darlene Carritt, UNMC (Ret)*

*Jill Sand, Dr. Michaelis, Southeast  
Community College*

*Dr. David Jackson, University of  
Nebraska*

*Dr. Charlene Widener, Northeast  
Community College*

*Committee recommendation*

*Dr. Baumgartner*

overhead and underground. The demand and need for workers is high in the utility industry. Dr. Fimple gave an update on the revised budget that the Commission received from Southeast Community College.

Dr. Michaelis, along with Caleb Herwick, new dean of Construction, Manufacturing, Engineering Technology at Southeast Community College, answered Commissioners' questions.

Committee recommendation: That the proposal be forwarded to the full Commission without a recommendation pending further details on revenues.

**Commissioner Headrick made a motion to approve Southeast Community College's Proposal for a New Instructional Program - Utility Line Worker, AAS. Commissioner Frison seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Frison, Griffin, Headrick, Lauritzen, Nelson, O'Holleran, Von Behren, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.**

**Southeast Community College - Proposal for a New Instructional Program - Dental Hygiene, AAS**

Dr. Fimple presented the proposal, stating the proposed program would prepare students to work as dental hygienists and successfully complete the written National Board of Dental Hygiene Examination and state and regional board exams for professional licensure. It was noted this program indicates a high need and demand, as other programs in the state are not producing enough graduates to meet the demand. SCC would have to employ a qualified director and other faculty prior to initiating this program. Dr. Fimple provided information on details of budget changes.

There was discussion regarding the Dental Hygiene proposal with comments from Dr. Wanda Cloet, Dental Hygiene Program Director at Central Community College, Hastings Campus; Darlene Carritt, RDH, retired Clinical Instructor in the UNMC Dental Hygiene Department; Dr. Joel Michaelis, SCC Vice President of Instruction; Jill Sand, Dean of Health Sciences at Southeast Community College; Dr. David Jackson, Interim Executive Vice President and Provost from the University of Nebraska; and Dr. Charlene Widener, Vice President of Educational Services at Northeast Community College.

Committee recommendation: That the proposal be forwarded to the full Commission without a recommendation pending further details on revenues.

Dr. Baumgartner stated that with the extent of concerns regarding the proposed program brought forward, a motion and second is needed to either approve or disapprove the program, or Southeast Community College could withdraw the proposal, or the Commission could postpone the proposal to allow for additional time to gather additional information.



---

Commissioner O'Holleran left the meeting

*Motion to approve Southeast Community College's – Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Dental Hygiene, AAS, motion failed*

Dr. Baumgartner

*Motion to disapprove Southeast Community College's – Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Dental Hygiene, AAS, motion failed*

*Motion and second to hold a special meeting regarding Southeast Community College's – Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Dental Hygiene, AAS, approved*

Dr. Fimple

Chair Von Behren left the meeting

*University of Nebraska at Omaha – Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Healthcare Logistics & Supply Chain Management, MS*

Dr. Fimple

Committee recommendation

*University of Nebraska at Omaha – Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Healthcare Logistics & Supply Chain Management, MS, approved*

Commissioner Headrick made a motion to approve Southeast Community College's Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Dental Hygiene, AAS. Commissioner Frison seconded the motion. A roll call was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Griffin, Headrick, and Wilson. Voting no: Frison, Lauritzen, Von Behren, and Weber. Abstaining from the vote: Nelson. The motion failed.

Dr. Baumgartner stated a majority vote (six Commissioners) is needed to approve the program. If the program is not voted on within a 90-day period, to approve or disapprove, the program will stand as approved.

Commissioner Weber made a motion to disapprove Southeast Community College's Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Dental Hygiene, AAS. Commissioner Lauritzen seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Frison, Lauritzen, Von Behren, and Weber. Voting no: Daniels, Griffin, Headrick, and Wilson. Abstaining from the vote: Nelson. The motion failed. Without a majority vote, and without a special meeting, the program will stand approved.

Commissioner Frison made a motion to hold a special meeting to address additional questions and information regarding Southeast Community College's Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Dental Hygiene, AAS. Commissioner Nelson seconded the motion. Voting aye: Daniels, Frison, Griffin, Headrick, Lauritzen, Nelson, Von Behren, Wilson, and Weber. The motion carried.

Dr. Fimple stated the since the Commissioners voted to hold a special meeting, it must be held before February 24, 2025, which is 90 days from the Commission's receipt of the program, and to direct questions to her or Dr. Baumgartner.

**University of Nebraska at Omaha - Proposal for a New Instructional Program - Healthcare Logistics & Supply Chain Management, MS**

Dr. Fimple presented the proposal, noting this program focuses specifically on healthcare. Healthcare providers rely on supply chains and staff with specific skills in logistics to improve patient outcomes and access to healthcare. This program will be online, and it was noted there are no other master's programs in Healthcare Logistics and Supply Chain Management in Nebraska. Dr. Fimple stated that Dr. Steve Schulz, Interim Dean, College of Business, and Program Chair from UNO, along with Dr. David Jackson were available to discuss the proposal.

Committee recommendation: That the Commission approve the Master of Science in Healthcare Logistics and Supply Chain Management at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Commissioner Weber, on behalf of the Academic Programs Committee, moved to approve the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Proposal for a New Instructional Program – Healthcare Logistics & Supply Chain Management, MS. A roll call was taken.

---

**Voting aye: Daniels, Frison, Griffin, Headrick, Lauritzen, Nelson, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.**

*Report on Institutional Activities  
Related to Existing Programs*

*Dr. Fimple*

*Reasonable and Moderate Extensions*

*Program Name Changes*

*Eliminated Centers*

*Discontinued Programs*

*Next Commission meeting will be held  
on March 14, 2025*

*Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.*

**Report on Institutional Activities Related to Existing Programs**

Dr. Fimple presented and discussed the following information items.

**Reasonable and Moderate Extensions**

- UNL - Sports Promotion, Graduate Certificate
- SCC - Precision Agriculture, Certificate & Diploma
- SCC - Microsoft Office Specialist, Certificate
- SCC - Manufacturing Engineering, Certificate & Diploma

**Program Name Changes**

- UNL - Master of Science (MS) degree in Mechanized Systems Management to *Master of Science (MS) degree in Agricultural Systems Technology*

**Eliminated Centers**

- UNL - Academy for Child and Family Wellbeing
- UNL - W.M. Keck Center for Mesospin and Quantum Information Systems

**Discontinued Programs**

- UNL - Undergraduate Certificate in Civic Engagement
- UNL - Undergraduate Certificate in Meat Culinology

**FUTURE MEETING**

The next Commission meeting will be Friday, March 14, 2025, 8:30 a.m. at the Lincoln Public Schools District Office Boardroom, Lincoln, Nebraska.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Vice Chair Daniels adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.