
MINUTES

**Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education
Apothecary/Ridnour Building
140 North 8th Street, Suite 300, Lincoln, NE
Friday, February 21, 2025
8:30 a.m. (CT) and Via Zoom**

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.

Public notice of meeting

NOTICE OF MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE COORDINATING COMMISSION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION WILL HOLD A SPECIAL MEETING ON FEBRUARY 21, 2025. THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 8:30 A.M. AND ADJOURN AT APPROXIMATELY 9:30 A.M.

AN AGENDA IS MAINTAINED IN THE COMMISSION OFFICE, 140 N. 8TH 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	Dannika Nelson
Dr. Deborah Frison	Dr. Paul Von Behren
Dr. Dennis Headrick	Tami Weber
Mary Lauritzen	

Commissioners Absent

Dr. LeDonna Griffin	W. Scott Wilson
Molly O'Holleran	

Commission Staff Present

Dr. Michael Baumgartner	Matthew Roque
Dr. Kathleen Fimple	Celeste Thompson
Kadi Lukesh	Gary Timm
J. Ritchie Morrow	Joe Velaquez (moderator)
Helen Pope	

Chair's Report

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Von Behren stated that this is a special meeting that was called by the Commission at its January 24, 2025, Commission meeting. The Commission Bylaws state that during a special meeting, no business be can transacted other than the purpose specified for the meeting. Today's meeting is to discuss Southeast Community College's proposal to establish an Associate of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene.

Chair Von Behren asked that individuals identify themselves and are allowed five minutes each to comment, with proponents speaking first and then opponents. Following the public hearing, the floor will be open to Commissioners for discussion.

Public Hearing

PUBLIC HEARING

Individuals that spoke in support of the Southeast Community College Dental Hygiene, AAS, program proposal:

Dr. Joel Michaelis, Southeast Community College

Dr. Joel Michaelis, Vice President of Instruction at Southeast Community College, spoke on the significant demand for dental hygienists, citing over 40 letters of support from various stakeholders. He explained the method used to assess the need for the program, including data from the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA), the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and other sources and emphasized the importance of meeting workforce needs and the program's alignment with the statutory priority of providing applied technology programs.

Jill H. Sand, Southeast Community College

Jill H. Sand, Dean of Health Sciences at Southeast Community College, discussed the curriculum and lab utilization, stressing the importance of CODA approval. Ms. Sand also outlined the curriculum, including the number of dental hygiene courses and the integration of essential content areas. She addressed the need for a program director and collaboration with other schools to meet the demand and emphasized the importance of meeting CODA standards and providing a quality education.

Judd Smith, Lincoln, Nebraska

Judd Smith, DDS, Superior Dental Health, Lincoln, Nebraska, came forward in support of the program, citing his difficulty in finding a hygienist for his practice.

Ben Iske, Bridgeport, Nebraska

Ben Iske, DDS, from Bridgeport Family Dental, spoke in support of the program, highlighting the national and statewide shortage of dental hygienists and the need for more options for patient care.

Darlene Carritt, UNMC

Individuals that spoke in opposition of the Southeast Community College Dental Hygiene, AAS, program proposal: Darlene Carritt, RDH, retired Clinical Instructor in the UNMC Dental Hygiene Department, cited a 2006 Task Force Report on Dental Hygiene and suggested a new task force to study the issue thoroughly before establishing a new program. Ms. Carritt emphasized the importance of expanding current programs and the significant cost of establishing a new one while questioning the quality of applicants and the challenges of meeting CODA standards.

Julie Marshall, University of Nebraska

Julie Marshall, DDS, MS, from the University of Nebraska, raised concerns about the program's adequacy, faculty qualifications, and the need for a comprehensive statewide approach. She stated that the proposal faces scrutiny over its compliance with CODA standards and the potential cost implications.

Chair Von Behren closed the public hearing.

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

Dr. Kathleen Fimple

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

Dr. Kathleen Fimple, Academic Programs Officer, provided information on the proposal, noting that more letters of opposition and support were received after the agenda was printed. She read the Commission's requests for additional information from Southeast Community College regarding the proposal and discussed responses that were received.

*Commissioners Lauritzen, Nelson, Von
Behren and Headrick*

Dr. Michaelis, Ms. Sand

Commissioners Lauritzen, Nelson, Von Behren and Headrick made comments and discussed their views on the proposal. Dr. Michaelis and Ms. Sand responded to their questions.

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

Commissioner Headrick made a motion to approve the Associate of Applied Science in Dental Hygiene at Southeast Community College. As a condition of approval, Southeast Community College must submit annual reports to the Commission no later than June 30, 2026; June 30, 2027; and June 30, 2028, that demonstrate that the program has hired necessary staff, is financially viable, and is making progress toward and will achieve accreditation from the Commission on Dental Accreditation. Commissioner Daniels seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Those voting aye: Daniels, Frison, Headrick, Lauritzen, Von Behren, and Weber. Commissioner Nelson voted no. The motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Von Behren adjourned the meeting at 9:38 a.m.