



Minutes

**Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Willa Cather Dining Complex, Red Cloud Room A
530 No. 17th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska
Friday, September 11, 2026
8:30 a.m. (CDT)**

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 copy of the current 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 FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2026. THE MEETING WILL BEGIN AT 8:30 A.M. AND ADJOURN AT APPROXIMATELY 12:30 P.M.

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

TIM DANIELS, CHAIR

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Daniels called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and asked for a moment of silence in memory of the 25th anniversary of 9/11.

INTRODUCTIONS

Commissioners Present

Tim Daniels	Dannika Nelson
Beth Forney	Molly O'Holleran
Dr. Deborah Frison	Tami Weber
Dr. Dennis Headrick	W. Scott Wilson

Commissioners Absent

Dr. Paul Von Behren

Commission Staff Present

Dr. Michael Baumgartner	Helen Pope
Dr. Kathleen Fimple	Matthew Roque
Jill Heese	Gary Timm
J. Ritchie Morrow	

WELCOMES

Dr. Jeffrey Gold, President of the University of Nebraska, welcomed the CCPE and reflected on his experience living and working in New York City the day of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Dr. Katherine Ankerson, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Interim Chancellor, welcomed Commissioners to the UNL campus and the Willa Cather Dining Complex. As an architect by trade, and teacher of architecture and design, she stated that buildings have meaning. She spoke on young Willa Cather coming to Lincoln from Webster County to complete her education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and going on to be one of the great American novelists of the century. Dr. Ankerson reported on current enrollment and retention statistics and noted that the University is attracting high-achieving students.

2026 PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS BIENNIAL BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Baumgartner introduced representatives from the public institutions to present their biennial budget requests.

University of Nebraska

President Dr. Gold addressed the Commissioners and presented the University of Nebraska's biennial budget request. The University is requesting \$1.5 million each year of the biennium for the Presidential Scholars Program. The University will also seek \$1.5 million each year to support research excellence through the Nebraska Research Initiative, and \$5 million in the 2027-2029 biennium to support biomedical research. For core needs the University is requesting 4.25% each year.

Nebraska State College System

Chancellor Dr. Paul Turman stated the Nebraska State College System is requesting a 3% increase for salaries, 5.5% for health benefits, a 4% increase in utility costs, and a 3% annual increase in operating expenses. He noted three strategic initiatives included in the FY28 request: adjunct faculty compensation, supporting the Grow Grand Island initiative, and a \$10 million investment to establish a Systemwide Maintenance and Repair fund. He noted the state colleges prioritize renewing and preserving current facilities as more cost-effective than replacing them.

Metropolitan Community College

President Randy Schmailzl spoke briefly noting the community colleges are in agreement regarding the budget request that Dr. Paul Illich from Southeast Community College will present. He stated the community colleges have had many successful years, with the addition of dual enrollment, working with the manufacturing community and in collaboration with each other and the CCPE.

Nebraska Community College Association

Dr. Illich stated the budget request helps Nebraska Community Colleges support the CCPE educational attainment goals and priorities. The community colleges are requesting an additional \$4 million for dual-credit allocation for each year of the 2027-29 Biennium, and to restore \$5 million reduction in state aid for year one, with no change in state aid for year two of the biennium.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 23, 2026, WORK SESSION

Commissioner Frison made a motion to approve the July 23, 2026, Work Session minutes as written. Commissioner Weber seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Forney, Frison, Headrick, Nelson, O'Holleran, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 24, 2026, COMMISSION MEETING

Commissioner Headrick made a motion to approve the July 24, 2026, Commission meeting minutes as written. Commissioner Weber seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Forney, Frison, Headrick, Nelson, O'Holleran, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Daniels administered the Oath of Office to new Commissioner Beth Forney. Commissioner Forney is from Alliance and will be a Member-at-Large.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The following out-of-service area application request was approved by the executive director:

- Offered by Mid-Plains Community College
- In person at Springview Ambulance Service, Springview, Nebraska
- EMTL 1520 and EMTL 1530 – EMT – 4 credit hours/class
- August 31, 2026 – December 17, 2026

Dr. Baumgartner gave an update on several legislative bills of interest that staff have been involved with reports and meetings.

Dr. Baumgartner stated he is working on a long-term governance and sustainability plan with the P20 Alliance.

Dr. Baumgartner noted a core team of representatives from all public sectors are meeting with the Education Strategy Group (ESG) every other week on Proactive Admissions.

Dr. Kathleen Fimple, Academic Programs Officer, and Dr. Baumgartner attended the SHEEO Policy Conference August 3-6 in Chicago. J. Ritchie Morrow and Dr. Baumgartner attended the FAFSA Study Sensemaking session August 20 at the offices of EducationQuest. It is an ongoing study of the implementation of the FAFSA graduation requirement and its impact on college going.

Jill Heese, Research Director, and Dr. Baumgartner participated in the first meeting of the Nebraska Data and Impact Roundtable, which is a year-long initiative with the Harvard University's Strategic Data Project Team.

September 9 Dr. Baumgartner attended the Nebraska Workforce Summit at UNK, attending presentations and group work with UWHealth WorkForward, which has developed a continuum of employer-education initiatives.

Dr. Baumgartner noted he will be attending the ECS Steering Committee meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, September 14-16. The following week he will be with a Nebraska team at the Midwest Higher Education Compact's Midwest Workforce Pathways convening, looking at ways to improve policies to streamline the pathway from noncredit to credit instructions, along with prior learning assessments and prior learning examinations.

Dr. Fimple will be attending the NC-SARA annual meeting in San Antonio next week and presenting at a UNK Dual Enrollment conference on September 22. Mr. Morrow will be attending the National College Attainment Network meeting in Las Vegas October 4-7

Dr. Baumgartner commented that he will miss the October Commission meeting as he will be at the Lumina State Policy Retreat in Philadelphia October 14-16 with the P20 Alliance team.

PUBLIC HEARING ON MATTERS OF GENERAL CONCERN

There was no testimony on Matters of General Concern.

Chair Daniels closed the public hearing on Matters of General Concern.

PUBLIC HEARING ON ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE ITEMS

There was no testimony on Academic Programs Committee Items.

Chair Daniels closed the public hearing on Academic Programs Committee Items.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Commissioner O'Holleran, Committee Chair, introduced Dr. Fimple to present academic items on the agenda.

University of Nebraska System - Proposal for a New Organizational Unit - Artificial Intelligence Institute

Dr. Fimple presented the proposal, noting that the Artificial Intelligence Institute would focus on areas where Nebraska is already strong: agriculture and food systems, healthcare, engineering, rural and urban development, business, law, education, the humanities and arts, and national security.

Drs. Santosh Pitia and Adrian Wisnicki, co-directors of the proposed AI Institute, provided additional information on the proposal and answered questions from the Commissioners.

Committee recommendation: That the Commission approve the Artificial Intelligence Institute for the University of Nebraska System.

Chair O'Holleran, on behalf of the Academic Programs Committee, moved to approve the University of Nebraska System's Proposal for a New Organizational Unit - Artificial Intelligence Institute. A roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Forney, Frison, Headrick, Nelson, O'Holleran, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.

Existing Program Review

Information Items:

Chadron State College

- Psychological Science, BA

Peru State College

- Psychology, BA/BS

Wayne State College

- Psychology, BA, BS

University of Nebraska at Kearney

- Psychology/ Psychology Comprehensive, BA/BS
- Psychobiology Comprehensive, BS

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

- Psychology, BA/BS, MA, PhD

University of Nebraska at Omaha

- Psychology, BMS, BA/BS, MA, PhD
- Applied Behavior Analysis, Grad. Cert., MS
- Human Resources and Training-Human Resources, Grad. Cert.
- Industrial/Organizational Psychology, MS
- School Psychology, MS, EDS

University of Nebraska Medical Center

- Applied Behavior Analysis, MS
- Applied Behavior Analysis combined with UNO, MS

Annual Reports from Out-of-state and Private Institutions

Dr. Fimple discussed the annual reports from the following institutions;

- Crown College, St. Bonafacius, Minnesota, at Christ Community Church, Omaha
- Andrews University, Berrian Springs, Michigan, at Union Adventist University, Lincoln
- CHI Heath School of Radiologic Technology, Omaha

Annual Report from Southeast Community College on Dental Hygiene Program

Dr. Fimple reported that Southeast Community College Dental Hygiene Program is scheduled to submit an application to the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). As a condition of approval, Southeast Community College must submit annual reports to the Commission. The first report was received in August.

Report on Institutional Activities Related to Existing Programs

Reasonable and Moderate Extensions

- UNK – Learning and Visual Design, Graduate Certificate
- UNK – Leadership Communication, Graduate Certificate
- UNK – World Language Teaching and Learning, Graduate Certificate
- UNK – Education, Family and Consumer Sciences Occupational 6-12 Teaching Endorsement, BS
- UNO – Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Teaching and Learning, Graduate Certificate
- UNO – Mentoring and Instructional Coaching, Graduate Certificate
- UNO – Early Childhood Inclusive, MS
- UNO – Financial Planning, Post-baccalaureate Certificate
- UNO – Statistics and Operations Research, BA and BS
- PSC – Applied Business Administration, BA and BS (reduced credit degree)
- PSC - Applied Criminal Justice, BA and BS (reduced credit degree)
- WSC – Applied Elementary Education K-6, BS (reduced credit degree)

Program Name Changes

- WSC – Computer Information Systems – Programmer/Analyst to *Computer Information Systems – Systems Engineer*
- UNL – Master of Science in Agricultural and Biological Systems Engineering to Master of Science in *Biological Systems Engineering*

- UNL – Ph.D. in Biological Engineering to *Ph. D. in Biological Systems Engineering*
- UNO – Graduate Certificate in Systems Analysis and Design to *Graduate Certificate in Business Analysis and Systems Design*

Discontinued Programs

- CSC – SPED Early Childhood, M.Ed.
- WSC – Music & Music Education Options
- UNK – Education, Physics 7-12 Subject Endorsement, BS
- UNK – Physical Education Exercise Science, MA
- UNK – Long Term Care Management, MS
- UNMC – Medical Nutrition Education, Certificate
- UNMC – Infectious Disease Epidemiology, Certificate
- UNL – Russian, BS and BA
- UNL – Ethnic Studies, BS and BA
- UNL – Insect Science, BS
- UNO – Executive Business Analytics, Graduate Certificate
- UNO – Industrial and Organizational Psychology, MS
- UNO – Urban Studies, MS

Chair Daniels called for a break at 10:47 a.m. The meeting resumed at 11:00 a.m.

PUBLIC HEARING ON BUDGET, CONSTRUCTION, AND FINANCIAL AID COMMITTEE ITEMS

There was no testimony on Budget, Construction, and Financial Aid Committee Items.

Chair Daniels closed the public hearing on Budget, Construction, and Financial Aid Committee Items.

BUDGET, CONSTRUCTION, AND FINANCIAL AID COMMITTEE

Commissioner Wilson, Committee Chair, introduced Mr. Morrow to present the 2026 Tuition, Fees, and College Affordability Report.

2026 Tuition, Fees, and College Affordability Report

Mr. Morrow presented the report and stated that this report is required by statute and due to the Governor and Appropriations Committee by October 1 of each even-numbered year. Mr. Morrow gave a brief overview of tuition and fees, cost of attendance, net price of attendance, student payment share, and the state's investment in higher education. The report provides graphs showing state and local appropriations per FTE and includes policy and budgetary recommendations to maintain Nebraska's competitive position on tuition and fees and to improve affordability for all students. The report concludes with a review of Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions and how they compare to their peer institutions.

Committee recommendation: The Budget, Construction, and Financial Aid Committee recommends approval of the 2026 Tuition, Fees, and College Affordability Report.

Commissioner Wilson, on behalf of the Budget, Construction, and Financial Aid Committee, moved to approve the 2026 Tuition, Fees, and College Affordability Report. A roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Forney, Frison, Headrick, Nelson, O'Holleran, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Approval of the 2027 CCPE Meeting Calendar

Chair Daniels presented the 2027 CCPE Calendar.

Chair Daniels, on behalf of the Executive Committee, moved to approve the 2027 CCPE Meeting Calendar. A roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Forney, Frison, Headrick, Nelson, O'Holleran, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.

CCPE Biennial Budget Request for 2027-2029

Gary Timm, Chief Finance & Administration Officer, presented the budget request and reviewed the six budgetary programs, noting that Program 297 First Responders is new, and funding for this program comes from the General Fund. The CCPE agency budget is due to the DAS-Budget Division on September 15, 2026. The request is broken down into two categories: Financial Aid and Operating Funds. He stated in the Financial Aid Program Aid Payments, the CCPE is requesting an increase in NOG General fund appropriations with a corresponding decrease in the NOG cash fund expenditures; a decrease in ACE General fund appropriation aid and an increase in operating costs to fund the annual costs associated with the student application portal; and initial appropriation for the First Responders program.

In Operating Funds, General Fund appropriation increases are requested for salary and health insurance; inflationary adjustments for certain operating expenses; non-inflationary increases for budget division assessment (new) and increased rates for IT related expenses; Midwest Higher Education Compact dues; and to transfer \$35,000 estimated OCIO costs related to the ACE portal from program 640 (Administration) to the ACE Program.

Committee recommendation: That the Commission approve the July 1, 2027, through June 30, 2029, Agency Budget Request. The Committee also recommends authorizing the Executive Director to make minor revisions to the budget request.

Chair Daniels, on behalf of the Executive Committee, moved to approve the July 1, 2027, through June 30, 2029, Agency Budget Request, with approval to make minor revisions by the Executive Director. A roll call vote was taken. Voting aye: Daniels, Forney, Frison, Headrick, Nelson, O'Holleran, Weber, and Wilson. The motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING ON PLANNING AND CONSUMER INFORMATION COMMITTEE ITEMS

There was no testimony on Planning and Consumer Information Committee Items.

Chair Daniels closed the public hearing on Planning and Consumer Information Items.

PLANNING AND CONSUMER INFORMATION COMMITTEE

Commissioner Wilson chaired the committee in Commissioner Von Behren's absence. He introduced Jill Heese, Research Director, to present the *Factual Look* Report.

2026 Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska – Enrollment

Ms. Heese delivered a presentation summarizing the Enrollment section of the *2026 Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska*. The Coordinating Commission is required by statute to report Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data. Total fall enrollment was up 1.8 percent over the last year and up 4.9 percent over the 10-year period. The report includes graphs and details regarding enrollment for students by sector, student level, full-time/part-time classification, sex, race/ethnicity, age, and distance education status. Ms. Heese

also provided a demonstration on the enrollment data dashboard and answered Commissioner's questions.

FUTURE MEETING

The next Commission meeting will be Friday, October 16, 2026, 8:30 a.m. at the Lincoln Public Schools District Office Boardroom, Lincoln, Nebraska

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Daniels adjourned the meeting at 12:26 p.m.