

2.2 College Graduation and Transfer Rates within 150% of Normal Time (Based on IPEDS Data)

Increase the percentage of students who complete associate degrees within three years and baccalaureate degrees within six years

The college graduation rates reported in this section are based on data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The latest available data are for undergraduates who completed degree programs during the 2023-2024 academic year. Completion data for students who finished their degree programs in 2024-2025 will not be available for analysis until mid-2026. Consequently, the following analysis focuses on how 2023-2024 graduation rates for Nebraska institutions compare to 2013-2014 rates. **Throughout this analysis, the terms “completion rate” and “graduation rate” are used interchangeably.**

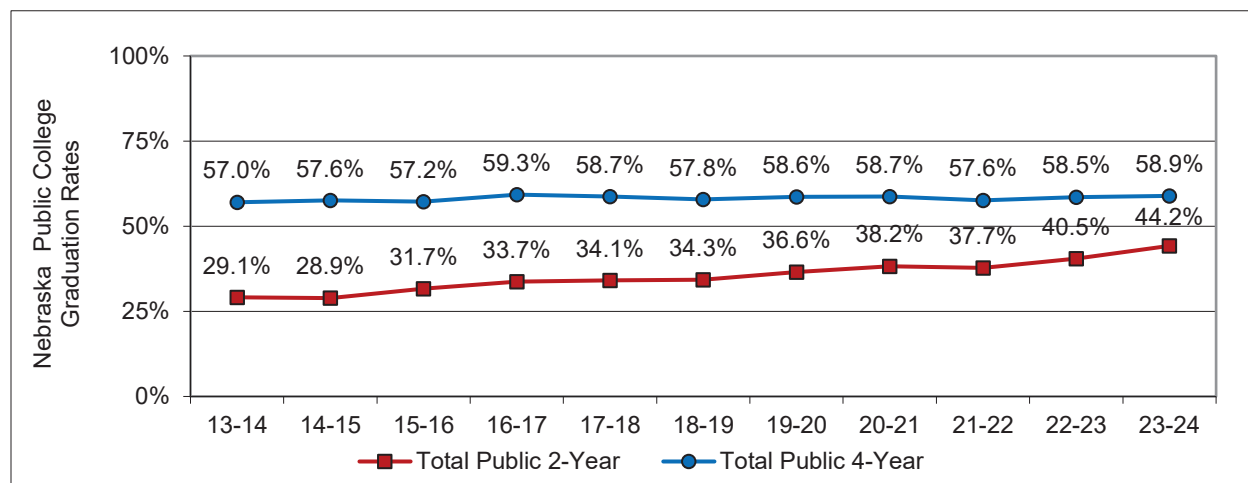
Based on the same cohorts as graduation rates, the 2023-2024 transfer rates for Nebraska’s six community colleges are presented at the end of this section. Presenting these rates provides an important supplement to the graduation rates reported for these institutions.

Generally, baccalaureate graduation and transfer rates are based on a six-year time frame, while rates for associate degrees are based on three years. In all cases, rates are calculated only for students who enrolled in degree programs as full-time, first-time freshmen. See Explanatory Note A10.1 in Appendix 10 and Explanatory Note A11.1 in Appendix 11 for further information on how completion and transfer rates are calculated.

College Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time for Nebraska Public Postsecondary Institutions

- As shown in Figure 2.2.1 the statewide graduation rate for Nebraska’s public four-year postsecondary institutions increased from 57.0% in 2013-2014 to 58.9% in 2023-2024. Meanwhile, the statewide graduation rate for Nebraska’s public two-year institutions increased from 29.1% in 2013-2014 to 44.2% in 2023-2024.

Figure 2.2.1
Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time
for Nebraska Public Postsecondary Institutions
2013-2014 through 2023-2024



Note. See Table A10.1 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2014 through 2024 surveys.

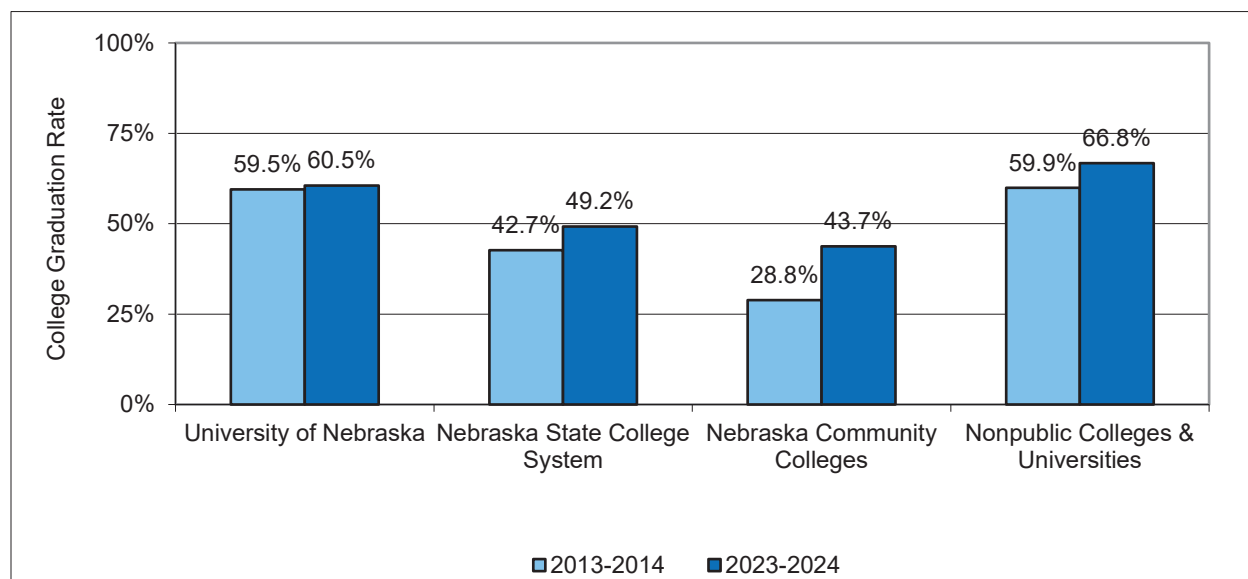
- The overall graduation rate for Nebraska’s postsecondary institutions increased from 50.0% in 2013-2014 to 57.5% in 2023-2024. (See [Table A10.3](#) in [Appendix 10](#).)

College Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time by Sector and by Institution

- Completion rates by sector varied noticeably, as shown in [Figure 2.2.2](#).
- The overall graduation rate for the University of Nebraska system increased from 59.5% in 2013-2014 to 60.5% in 2023-2024. The highest graduation rate within this sector in 2023-2024 was at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (67.0%) while the lowest rate was at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (47.1%).
- The overall graduation rate for the Nebraska State College System increased from 42.7% in 2013-2014 to 49.2% in 2023-2024. The highest graduation rate within this sector in 2023-2024 was at Wayne State College (52.1%) while the lowest rate was at Peru State College (37.6%).
- The overall graduation rate for Nebraska’s community colleges increased from 28.8% in 2013-2014 to 43.7% in 2023-2024. The highest graduation rate within this sector in 2023-2024 was at Northeast Community College (55.8%) while the lowest rate was at Metropolitan Community College (29.3%).
- Within the nonpublic sector, the graduation rate increased from 59.9% in 2013-2014 to 66.8% in 2023-2024. The highest graduation rate in the nonpublic sector in 2023-2024 was at Myotherapy Institute (100.0%). Meanwhile, Little Priest Tribal College reported the lowest graduation rate (13.3%) in the nonpublic sector. For some institutions, the cohorts are very small and graduation rates should be interpreted with caution. For example, while the 2023-2024 graduation rate for Myotherapy Institute was 100.0%, the cohort consisted of only six students. See [Table A10.4](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for more information.

Figure 2.2.2

**Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time
for Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions by Sector
2023-2024 Compared to 2013-2014**



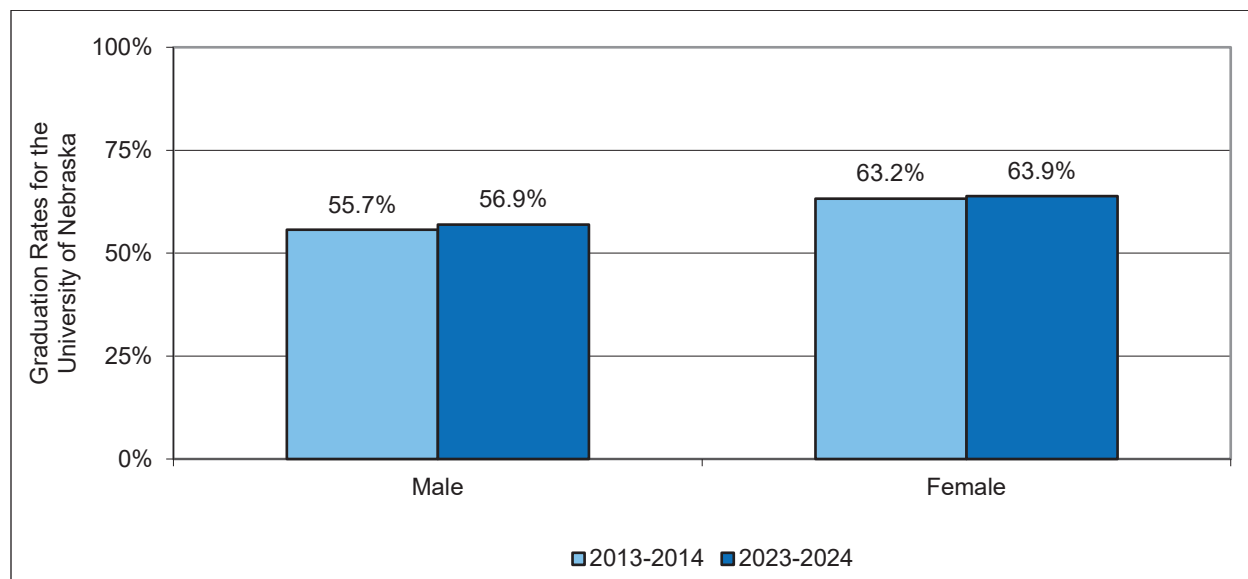
Note. See [Table A10.2](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2014 and 2024 surveys.

- Within all the sectors, some schools showed significant changes in their completion rates. Consequently, the sector completion rates shown in [Figure 2.2.2](#) should not be interpreted as an indicant of the performance of any particular school.
- See [Table A10.3](#) for the 2013-2014 and 2023-2024 completion rates by institution and by sector. See [Table A10.4](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for the data used to calculate the graduation rates by institution and by sector for 2013-2014 through 2023-2024.

College Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time by Sector and by Sex

- The following charts show how the graduation rates by sex varied and changed between 2013-2014 and 2023-2024 within each sector of higher education in Nebraska.
- Segmenting college graduation rates by sector and by sex results in graduation rates for eight subgroups.
- As shown in [Figure 2.2.3](#), graduation rates at the University of Nebraska increased for both male and female students. However, graduation rates were higher for female students than male students.

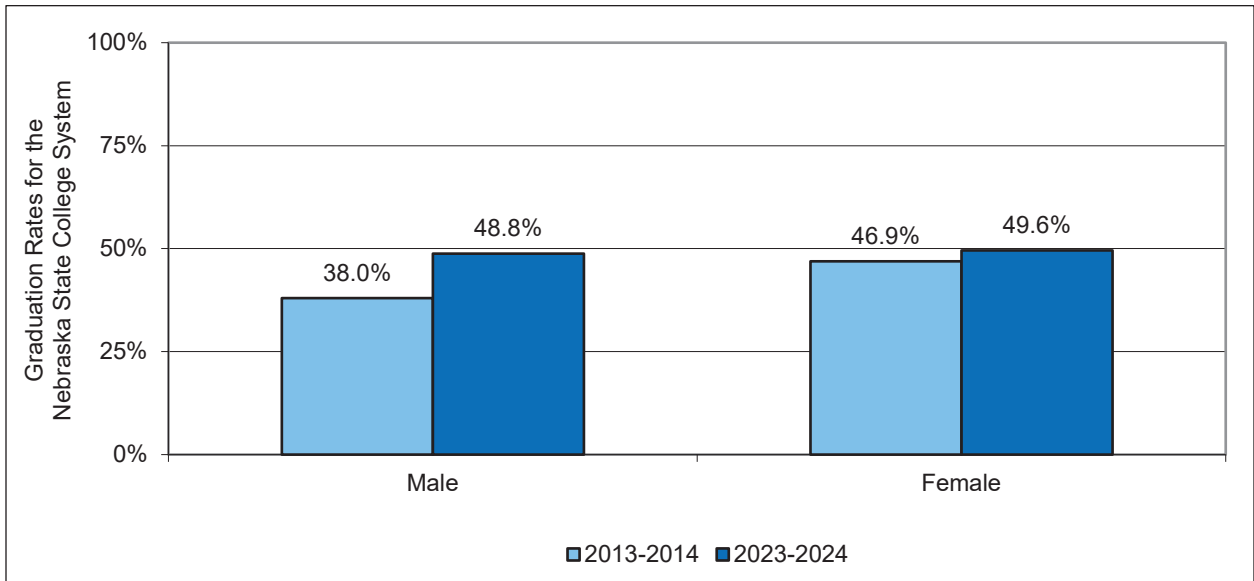
Figure 2.2.3
Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time
for the University of Nebraska by Sex
2023-2024 Compared to 2013-2014



Note. See [Table A10.5](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2014 and 2024 surveys.

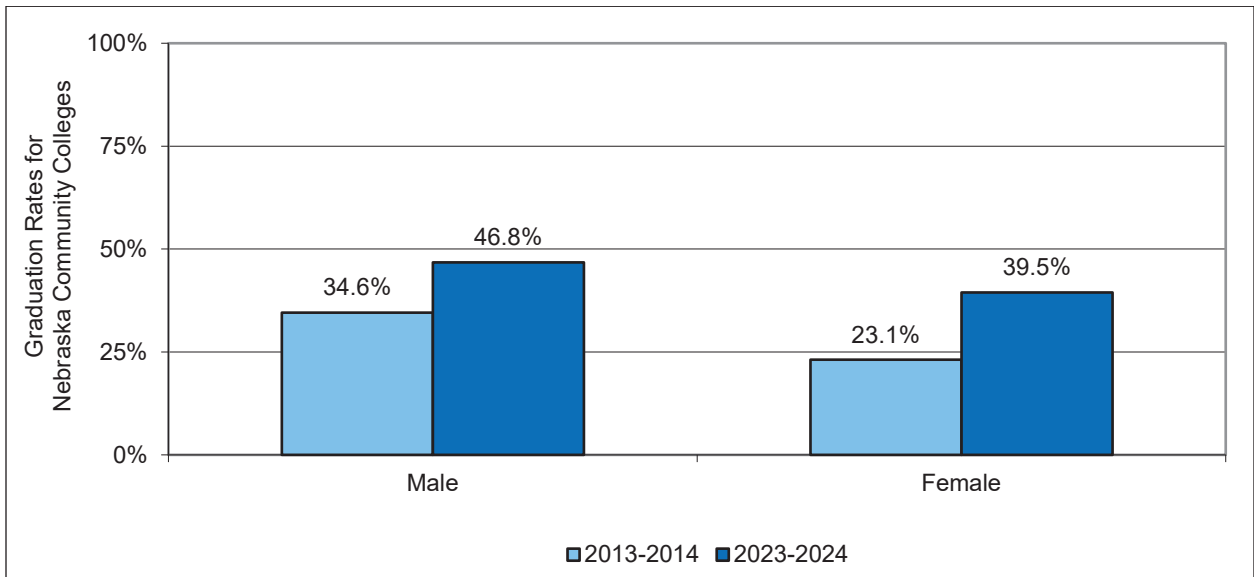
- At the state colleges, graduation rates increased for both male and female students (see [Figure 2.2.4](#)). Graduation rates were higher for female students than male students.
- As shown in [Figure 2.2.5](#), graduation rates at Nebraska’s community colleges increased for both male and female students. This was the only sector that reported higher graduation rates for male students than female students.

Figure 2.2.4
Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time
for the Nebraska State College System by Sex
2023-2024 Compared to 2013-2014



Note. See [Table A10.5](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2014 and 2024 surveys.

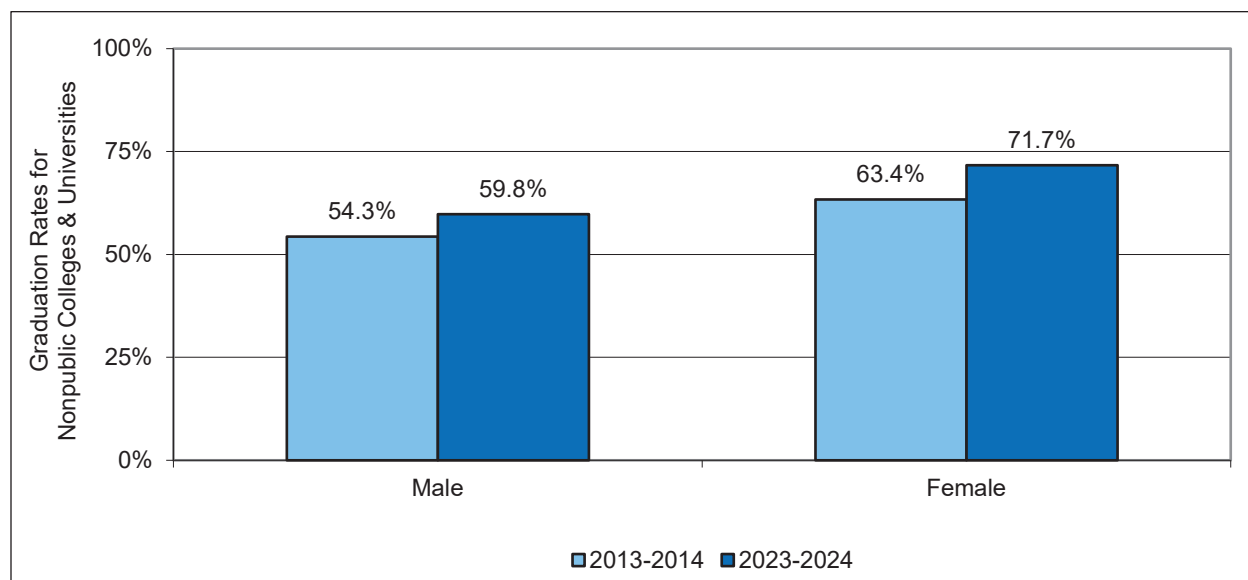
Figure 2.2.5
Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time
for Nebraska Community Colleges by Sex
2023-2024 Compared to 2013-2014



Note. See [Table A10.5](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2014 and 2024 surveys.

- As shown in [Figure 2.2.6](#), graduation rates at Nebraska’s nonpublic institutions increased for both male and female students. Graduation rates were higher for female students than male students.

Figure 2.2.6
Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time
for Nonpublic Colleges and Universities by Sex
2023-2024 Compared to 2013-2014

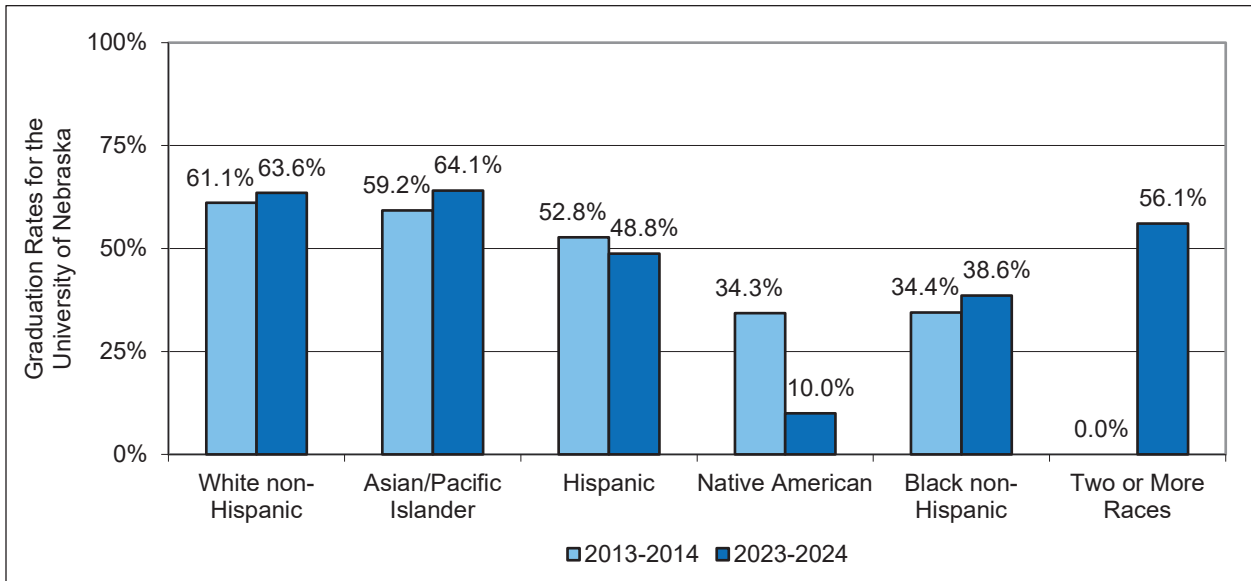


Note. See [Table A10.5](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2014 and 2024 surveys.

College Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time by Sector and by Race/Ethnicity

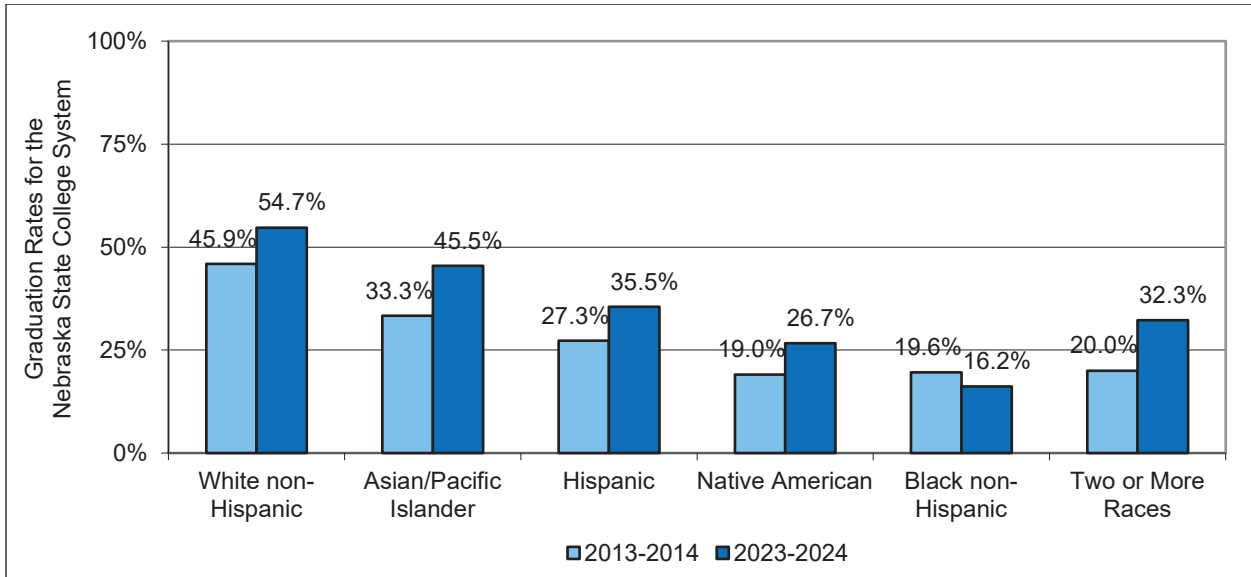
- The following charts show how the graduation rates for each racial/ethnic group varied and changed between 2013-2014 and 2023-2024 within each sector of higher education in Nebraska.
- Segmenting college graduation rates by sector and by race/ethnicity results in graduation rates for 24 subgroups. For some subgroups, the cohorts are very small and graduation rates should be interpreted with caution. For example, the 2013-2014 graduation rate for multiracial students at the state colleges was 20.0%, but the cohort consisted of only five students. See [Table A10.6](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for more information.
- As shown in [Figure 2.2.7](#), graduation rates at the University of Nebraska increased for White non-Hispanics, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Black non-Hispanics, and multiracial students but decreased for Hispanics and Native Americans.
- At the state colleges, graduation rates increased for all racial/ethnic groups except for Black non-Hispanics (see [Figure 2.2.8](#)).
- As shown in [Figure 2.2.9](#), graduation rates at Nebraska’s community colleges increased for all racial/ethnic groups.
- As shown in [Figure 2.2.10](#), graduation rates at Nebraska’s nonpublic institutions increased for all racial/ethnic groups.

Figure 2.2.7
Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time
for the University of Nebraska by Race/Ethnicity
2023-2024 Compared to 2013-2014



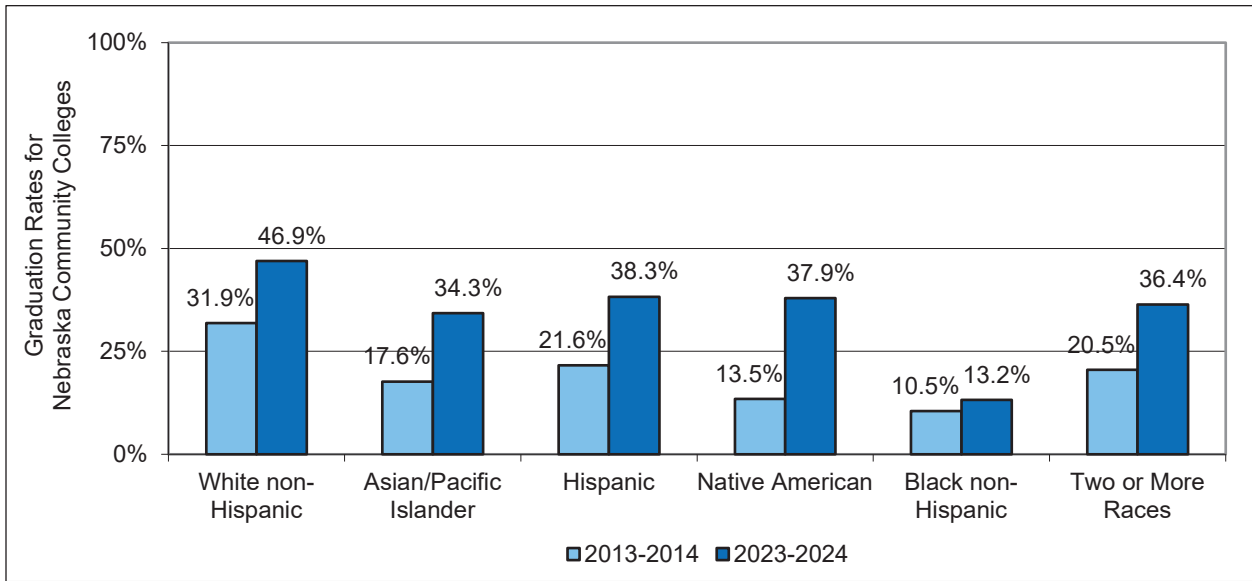
Note. See [Table A10.6](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2014 and 2024 surveys.

Figure 2.2.8
Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time
for the Nebraska State College System by Race/Ethnicity
2023-2024 Compared to 2013-2014



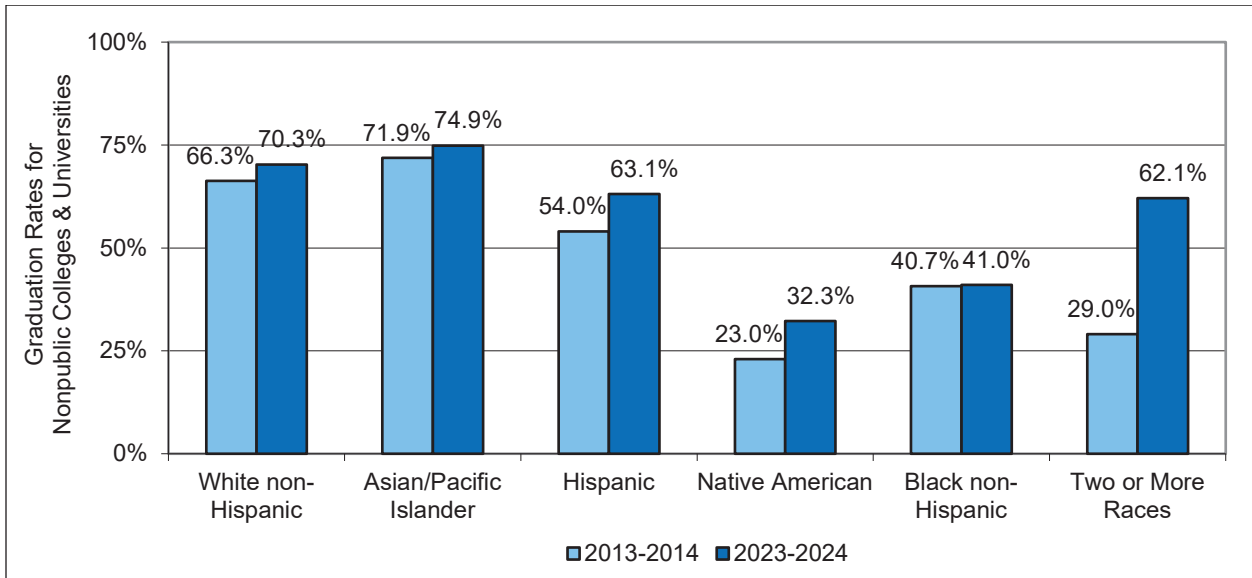
Note. See [Table A10.6](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2014 and 2024 surveys.

Figure 2.2.9
Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time
for Nebraska Community Colleges by Race/Ethnicity
2023-2024 Compared to 2013-2014



Note. See Table A10.6 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2014 and 2024 surveys.

Figure 2.2.10
Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time
for Nonpublic Colleges and Universities by Race/Ethnicity
2023-2024 Compared to 2013-2014



Note. See Table A10.6 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2014 and 2024 surveys.

College Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time by Financial Aid Received

IPEDS college graduation rates are also reported for Pell Grant recipients, Direct Subsidized Loan recipients that did not receive Pell Grants, and students that did not receive Pell Grants or Direct Subsidized Loans.³³ Students are placed into one of these mutually exclusive subgroups based on the financial aid the student received and used upon their entry into the institution. If a student received and used their Pell Grant or Direct Subsidized Loan *after* their initial entry into the institution, they would be counted in the ‘did not receive a Pell Grant or Direct Subsidized Loan’ subgroup. A student does not need to receive the aid throughout their time at the institution to be counted as part of these subgroups. As long as the student received and used their aid upon entry, they do not need to continue to be awarded that aid during their time at the institution to be counted as part of these subgroups.

Graduation rates by financial aid received are shown separately for two-year public institutions and four-year public institutions. For graduation rates from two-year public institutions, students who completed an award within 150% of normal time are included. For graduation rates from four-year public institutions, students who completed a bachelor’s or equivalent degree within 150% of normal time are included.

- As shown in [Table 2.2.1](#), the 2023-2024 graduation rates for Pell Grant recipients were generally lower than the graduation rates for Direct Subsidized Loan recipients and for students who did not receive Pell Grants or Direct Subsidized Loans at two-year public institutions.

Table 2.2.1 Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time for Two-Year Public Institutions by Financial Aid Received 2023-2024				
Institutions	Pell Grant Graduation Rate	Direct Subsidized Loan Graduation Rate^a	Did Not Receive a Pell Grant or Direct Subsidized Loan Graduation Rate	Total Graduation Rate
Neb. College of Technical Agr.	100.0%	60.0%	43.8%	60.7%
Central Community College	46.5%	51.7%	49.1%	48.1%
Metropolitan Community College	24.3%	46.2%	31.1%	29.3%
Mid-Plains Community College	47.5%	100.0%	57.1%	53.8%
Northeast Community College	51.9%	49.4%	60.1%	55.8%
Southeast Community College	29.2%	50.6%	41.5%	37.8%
Western Neb. Community College	28.7%	13.6%	48.7%	36.6%
Total Two-Year Public Institutions	40.5%	48.6%	46.4%	44.2%
<i>Note.</i> See Table A10.7 in Appendix 10 for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2024 survey.				
^a Only includes recipients that did not receive a Pell Grant.				

³³ Federal Pell Grants and Direct Subsidized Loans are awarded to students who have demonstrated financial need, and they serve as a proxy for low-income status. Direct Subsidized Loans were previously called Subsidized Stafford Loans.

- As shown in [Table 2.2.2](#), graduation rates for Pell Grant recipients and Direct Subsidized Loan recipients were generally lower than the rates for students who did not receive Pell Grants or Direct Subsidized Loans at four-year public institutions.

Table 2.2.2 Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time for Four-Year Public Institutions by Financial Aid Received 2023-2024				
Institutions	Pell Grant Graduation Rate	Direct Subsidized Loan Graduation Rate ^a	Did Not Receive a Pell Grant or Direct Subsidized Loan Graduation Rate	Total Graduation Rate
University of Nebraska at Kearney	54.1%	54.9%	60.7%	57.4%
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	55.2%	62.8%	72.9%	66.9%
University of Nebraska at Omaha	44.9%	42.2%	52.9%	48.6%
Chadron State College	53.0%	44.2%	50.2%	50.4%
Peru State College	27.5%	22.2%	57.5%	37.6%
Wayne State College	38.5%	56.9%	62.8%	52.1%
Total Four-Year Public Institutions	49.2%	56.6%	65.9%	59.3%

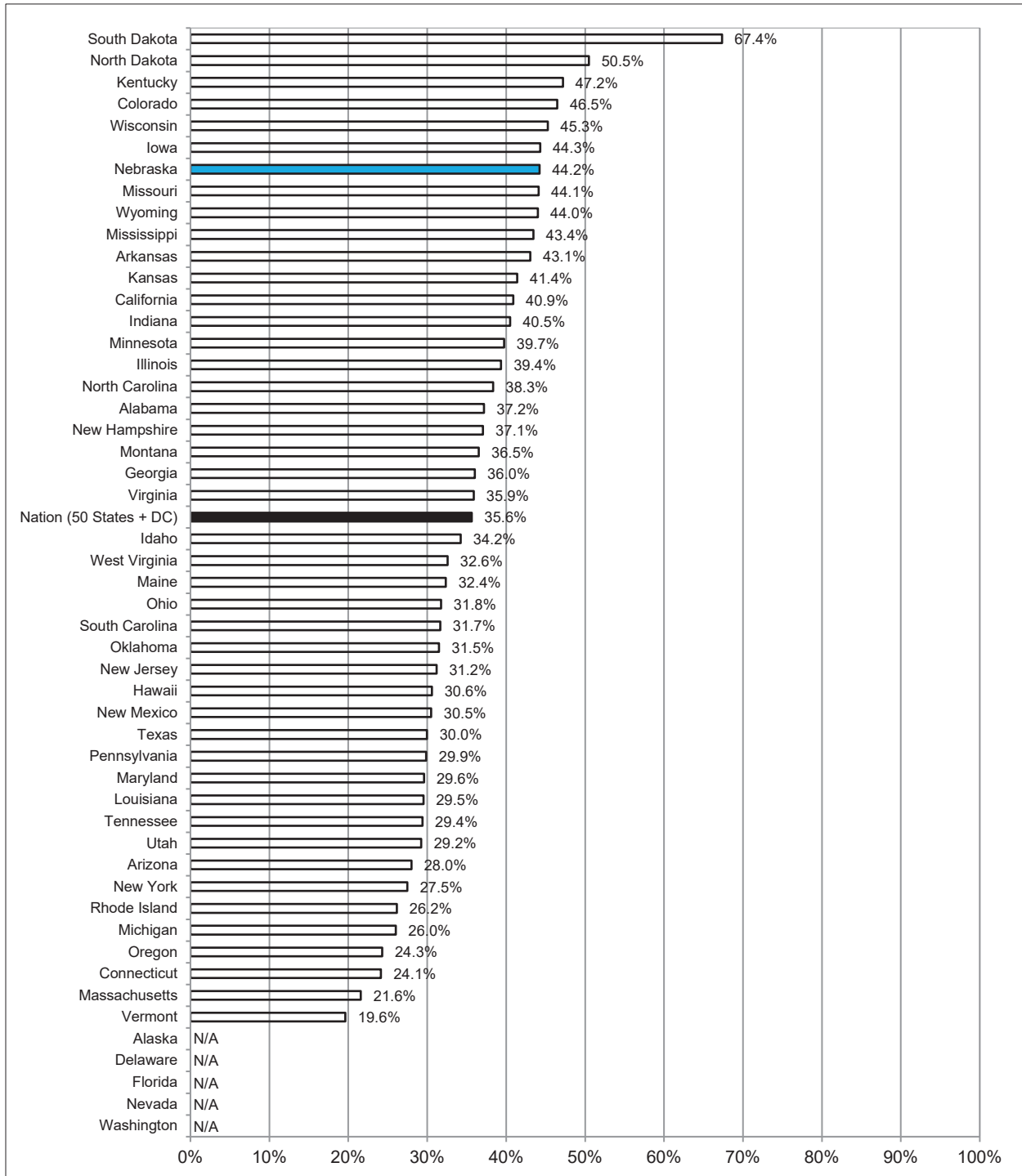
Note. Includes students who completed a bachelor's or equivalent degree within 150% of normal time. See [Table A10.8](#) in [Appendix 10](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2024 survey.

^a Only includes recipients that did not receive a Pell Grant.

Nebraska Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time Compared to Those of Other States

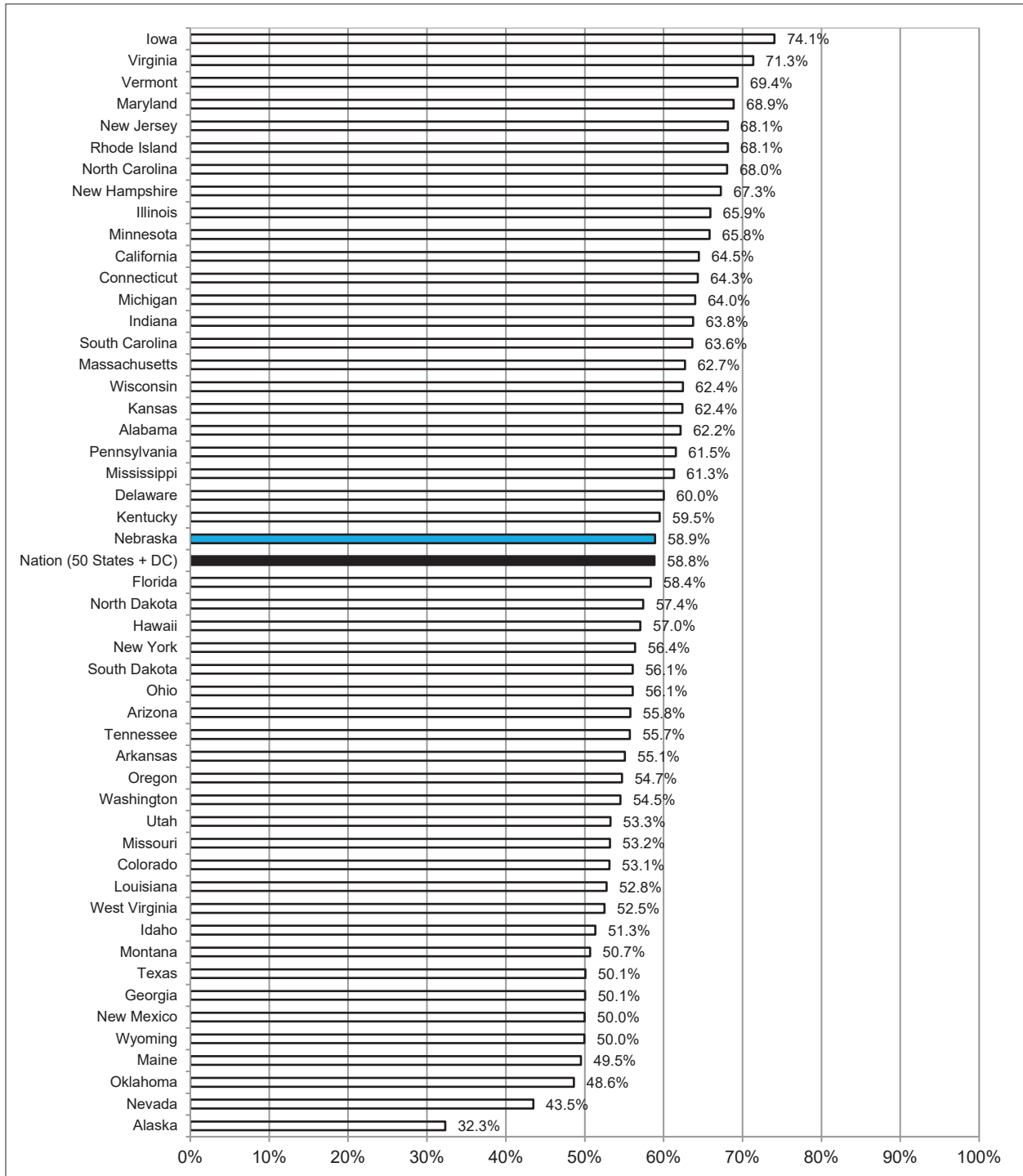
- [Figure 2.2.11](#) and [Figure 2.2.12](#) show how the graduation rates of Nebraska's public two-year and public four-year institutions compare to the rates calculated for other states and the United States as a whole. These rates are calculated for all public degree-granting institutions within each state. These rates are for all awards conferred. For example, the graduation rate for Nebraska's public two-year schools encompasses awards of diplomas and certificates as well as two-year associate degrees.
- As illustrated in [Figure 2.2.11](#), the graduation rate for Nebraska's public two-year institutions was 44.2% for 2023-2024, or 7th highest nationally, and 8.6 percentage points higher than the graduation rate of 35.6% for all public two-year institutions in the United States.
- As shown in [Figure 2.2.12](#), the graduation rate for Nebraska's public four-year institutions was 58.9%, or 24th highest nationally, and 0.1 percentage points higher than the graduation rate for all public four-year institutions in the United States.

Figure 2.2.11
2023-2024 Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time for
Two-Year Public Institutions by State



Note. Data includes only Title IV participating, degree-granting institutions. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2024 survey.

Figure 2.2.12
2023-2024 Graduation Rates within 150% of Normal Time for
Four-Year Public Institutions by State



Note. Data includes only Title IV participating, degree-granting institutions. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2024 survey.

Transfer Rates within 150% of Normal Time for Nebraska Community Colleges

A college’s graduation and transfer rates are based on the same full-time, first-time freshmen cohort. Consequently, a college’s graduation and transfer rates can be added together to determine the total percentage of the full-time, first-time freshmen who either completed their programs or transferred to other schools within 150% of the time specified for normal program completion.

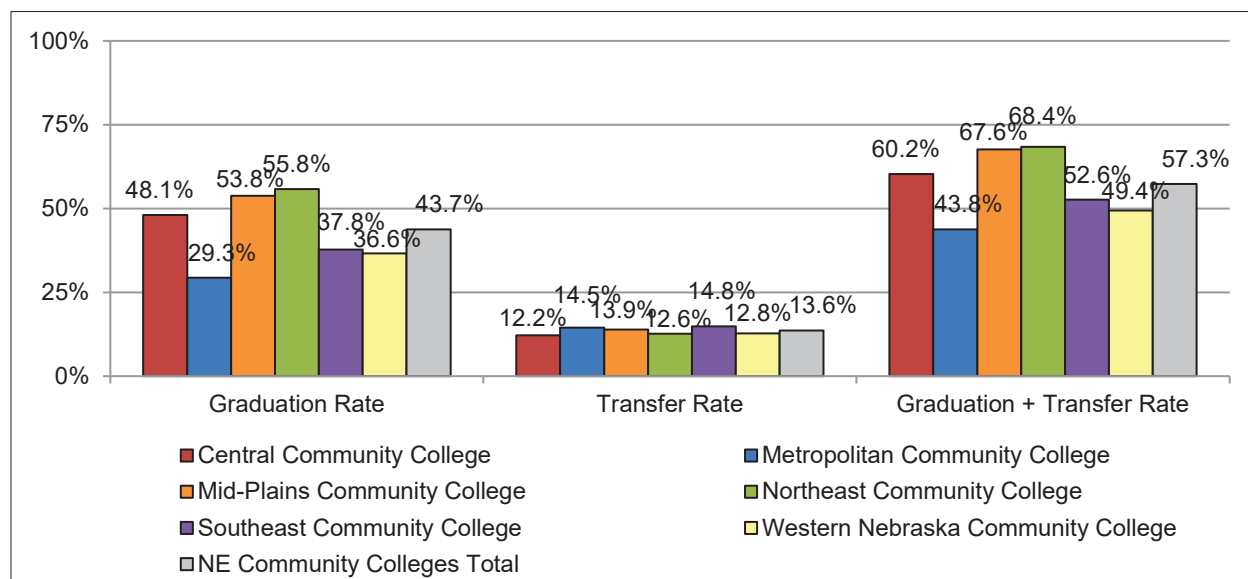
Institutions are not required to report the number of students in their freshmen cohorts who transfer to other institutions unless the mission of the institution, “...includes providing substantial preparation for students to enroll in another eligible institution without having completed a program...” (IPEDS Graduation Rates Full Instructions). Since 2010-2011, all six of Nebraska’s community colleges have reported transfer data. (For more information about computed college transfer rates based on IPEDS data, see [Explanatory Note A11.1](#) in [Appendix 11](#).)

[Figure 2.2.13](#) compares the 2023-2024 graduation rates, transfer rates, and graduation plus transfer rates for Nebraska’s six community colleges.

- As shown in [Figure 2.2.13](#), the overall graduation rate for Nebraska’s community colleges in 2023-2024 was 43.7% while the overall transfer rate was 13.6%.
- The 2023-2024 graduation rates for the community colleges ranged from 29.3% at Metropolitan Community College to 55.8% at Northeast Community College.
- Meanwhile, the schools’ transfer rates ranged from 12.2% at Central Community College to 14.8% at Southeast Community College.
- The rates produced by combining each institution’s graduation rate and transfer rate ranged from 43.8% at Metropolitan Community College to 68.4% at Northeast Community College.

Figure 2.2.13

2023-2024 Graduation Rates and Transfers Rates within 150% of Normal Time for Nebraska Community Colleges



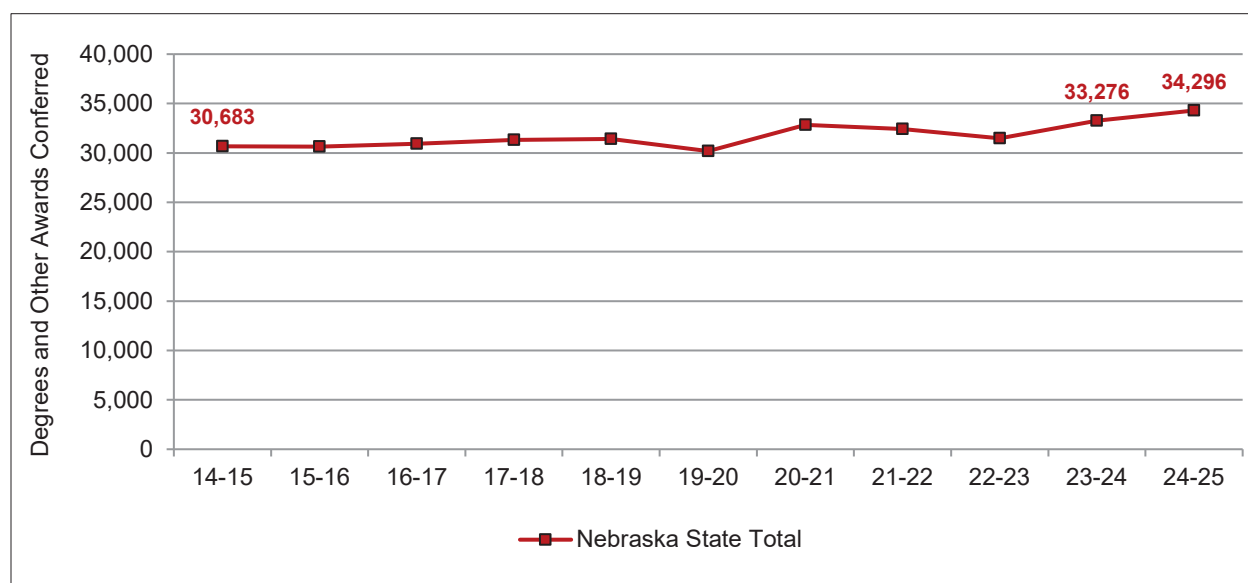
Note. See [Table A10.4](#) in [Appendix 10](#) and [Table A11.1](#) and [Table A11.2](#) in [Appendix 11](#) for supporting data. Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, IPEDS 2024 survey.

Number of Degrees Conferred at Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions

The 2003 LR 174 Higher Education Task Force stated that “increasing the number of Nebraskans with high levels of educational attainment is essential to support economic expansion and diversification.” Increasing educational attainment ultimately depends on increasing the number of degrees and credentials awarded, retaining the graduates in the state, and attracting highly educated persons to Nebraska.

- As shown in [Figure 2.2.14](#), the total number of degrees and awards conferred by Nebraska institutions increased 11.8% from 30,683 in 2014-2015 to 34,296 in 2024-2025.

Figure 2.2.14
Total Number of Degrees and Other Awards Conferred
by Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions
2014-2015 Academic Year through 2024-2025 Academic Year



Note. For more information, see the *2025 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 2015 through 2025 surveys.

- As shown in [Figure 2.2.15](#), the University of Nebraska, state colleges, and community colleges awarded more degrees and other awards in 2024-2025 than in 2014-2015.
- By sector, the number of degrees and other awards conferred by Nebraska’s postsecondary institutions changed as follows:

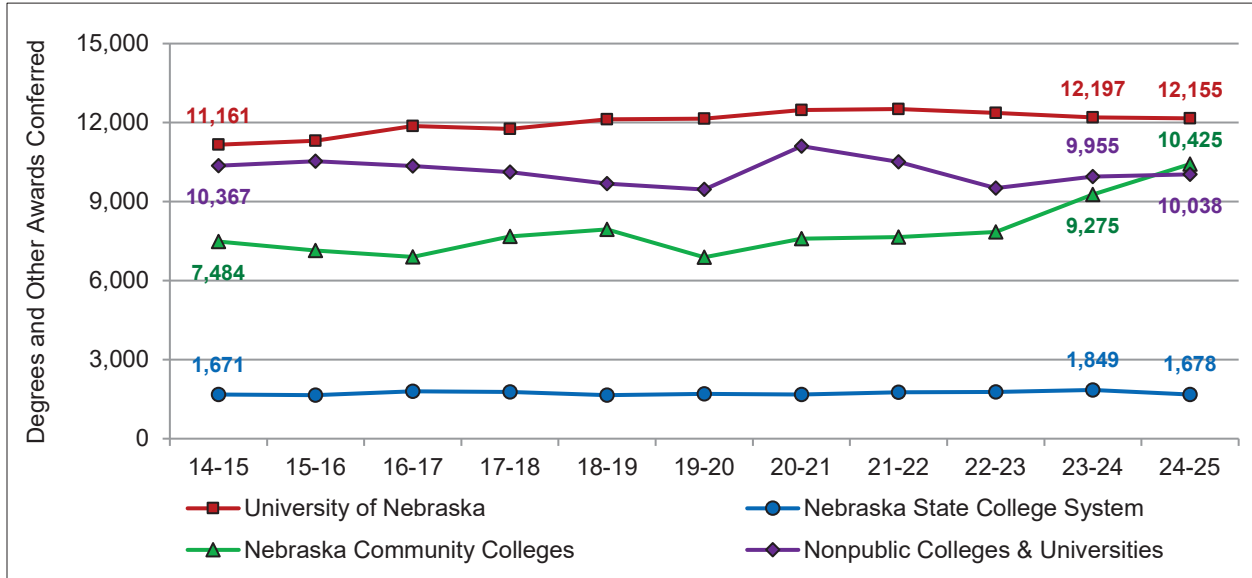
Sector	1-Year Change 23-24 to 24-25	10-Year Change 14-15 to 24-25
University of Nebraska	-0.3%	8.9%
Nebraska State College System	-9.2%	0.4%
Nebraska Community Colleges	12.4%	39.3%
Nonpublic Colleges & Universities	0.8%	-3.2%

- [Table 2.2.3](#) shows, by award level, the number of degrees and other awards conferred by all Nebraska colleges and universities. Based on these data, from 2014-2015 to 2024-2025,

the largest percentage point increase was at the less-than-four-year certificate level (94.1%).

Figure 2.2.15

**Total Number of Degrees and Other Awards Conferred by Sector
2014-2015 Academic Year through 2024-2025 Academic Year**



Note. For more information, see the *2025 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 2015 through 2025 surveys.

Table 2.2.3
Total Number of Degrees and Other Awards Conferred by Award Level
Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions
2014-2015 Academic Year through 2024-2025 Academic Year

Award Level	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	10-Yr. Chg.
Less-than-Four-Year Certificates	3,393	3,282	3,009	4,032	3,868	3,407	3,812	3,895	4,208	5,534	6,585	94.1%
Associate Degrees	5,712	5,144	5,067	4,703	5,007	4,389	4,680	4,780	4,639	4,873	5,103	-10.7%
Bachelor's Degrees & Post-Baccalaureate Certificates	14,514	14,734	14,965	14,950	15,072	14,801	15,860	15,506	15,046	14,974	15,057	3.7%
Master's Degrees & Post-Master's Certificates	5,481	5,788	6,268	5,980	5,690	5,853	6,681	6,276	5,643	5,889	5,572	1.7%
Doctor's Degrees	1,583	1,699	1,607	1,663	1,779	1,735	1,814	1,970	1,956	2,006	1,979	25.0%
Total Awards Conferred	30,683	30,647	30,916	31,328	31,416	30,185	32,847	32,427	31,492	33,276	34,296	11.8%

Note. For more information, see the *2025 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 2015 through 2025 surveys.