



2012 Biennial Report

Covering the period from December 2010 to December 2012

Approved by the Commission December 6, 2012

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2012 Biennial Report

Provided pursuant to §85-1412 (12) of Nebraska Statutes.

Welcome!

The 2012 Biennial Report provides an “insider’s view” of Nebraska’s Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education’s accomplishments during the past two years. Pursuant to state statute, the Coordinating Commission utilizes this report to inform its readers of what the Commission does and how well it is achieving its goals.

The Coordinating Commission is proud to share its activities during the past two years and how its accomplishments relate to the Commission’s overarching goals and mission.

What is the Commission?

In 1990, Nebraskans saw a need for an independent entity to coordinate the state’s public higher education institutions from a statewide — rather than an institutional — perspective. To accomplish this, voters amended the state constitution, creating the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education [Article VIII-14].

Nationwide, 29 states have coordinating commissions very much like Nebraska’s Coordinating Commission, providing an objective point of view of higher education statewide. An additional 28 states have statewide governing boards that provide a similar perspective. (Some states have both types of agencies.)

Nebraska's CCPE

Nebraska's Coordinating Commission is an independent agency with 11 Commissioners, who are appointed by the Governor and approved by the Legislature. There are 10 full-time state-funded employees, one part-time state-funded employee, and one federally-funded employee on the Commission's staff. The Commission promotes high quality, ready access and efficient use of resources in Nebraska higher education by carrying out its duties as outlined in the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education Act.

The Commission's duties primarily affect the community colleges, the Nebraska State College System and the University of Nebraska.

To assist in carrying out its duties, the Commission maintains regular contact with the State Board of Education, the Nebraska Community College Association Board of Directors, the Nebraska State College System Board of Trustees and the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. These contacts help improve communication and coordination of services among the Coordinating Commission and providers of higher education.

The following sections will address the points above and will describe the past two years of activities conducted under each of them.

What does the Commission do?

The Commission:

- Implements a statewide, comprehensive plan to guide Nebraska's higher education system, in collaboration with state colleges and universities;
- Administers student financial aid and other federal programs;
- Conducts research and publishes reports on issues pertaining to higher education;
- Provides information and advice on higher education to the Legislature;
- Authorizes academic programs;
- Considers and approves or disapproves proposals from new or out-of-state institutions to operate in Nebraska.
- Approves proposals for facilities; and
- Reviews institutions' budget proposals and makes recommendations on those requests to the Governor and the Legislature.

What does the Commission do?

◆—————◆
**Implements a statewide, comprehensive plan to guide
Nebraska’s higher education system, in collaboration
with the state’s colleges and universities**

◆—————◆
**Nebraska’s *Comprehensive Statewide Plan
for Postsecondary Education***

As required by statute, the Commission has developed and periodically revises a plan to provide direction for the future of higher education in Nebraska. This document, the *Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education*, identifies goals that lead to an educationally and economically sound, vigorous and “let’s-work-together” system of higher education.

The *Comprehensive Plan* was developed in collaboration with the state’s colleges and universities and guides the coordination of Nebraska’s public higher education institutions and sectors. The Commission uses the *Plan* to facilitate most of its statutory decision-making processes.

In addition to identifying the overall goals and objectives for Nebraska’s public higher education system, the *Plan* defines the role and mission of each public higher education institution in Nebraska.

When developing proposals for new facilities or academic programs, Nebraska’s public colleges and universities must do so in compliance with the *Plan*.

The *Plan* is considered a “living document,” meaning it is reviewed and revised as the environment for postsecondary education evolves. Substantive changes to the *Plan* are made with care, however, and only after distributing drafts of proposed changes to all affected parties, taking those parties’ concerns under advisement, and holding one or more public hearings in front of the Commission. After the Commission approves the revision, the Legislature’s Education Committee reviews the *Plan* and the revisions at a public hearing and reports its findings to the Legislature. The *Plan* is available on the Commission’s website, www.ccpe.state.ne.us, under the “Data Collection, Reports, and Presentations” link.

A Summary of the *Comprehensive Plan's* 14 Major Goals

Meeting the Needs of Students

Goal 1: Seek methods to increase participation and success in higher education for all students.

Goal 2: Be student-centered and offer lifelong learning opportunities.

Goal 3: Provide appropriate support services to help all students reach their educational goals.

Goal 4: Provide graduates with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed as capable employees and responsible citizens.

Meeting the Needs of the State

Goal 5: Be responsive to the workforce development and ongoing training needs of employers.

Goal 6: Contribute to the health and prosperity of citizens through research and development efforts, technology and attracting external funds.

Goal 7: Prepare individuals for productive, fulfilling lives.

Goal 8: Assess evolving needs and priorities and adopt new methods and technologies to address them.

Meeting Needs by Building Exemplary Institutions

Goal 9: Fulfill roles and missions in an exemplary manner and compare favorably with peers.

Goal 10: Provide fair and reliable funding policies that provide appropriate levels of support to enable institutions to excel.

Goal 11: Be effective in meeting the needs of students and the state. Be efficient and accountable in expenditure of state resources.

Meeting Needs through Partnerships and Collaboration

Goal 12: Collaborate with one another and with other entities to share resources and deliver programs cooperatively.

Goal 13: Work effectively with elementary and secondary schools to improve teaching and learning and to facilitate articulation.

Facilities Planning to Meet Educational Needs

Goal 14: Advocate a physical environment for public postsecondary institutions that is: supportive of role and mission; well-utilized and effectively accommodates space needs; safe, accessible, cost-effective and well-maintained; and flexible to adapt to future changes.

Access College Early Scholarship Program

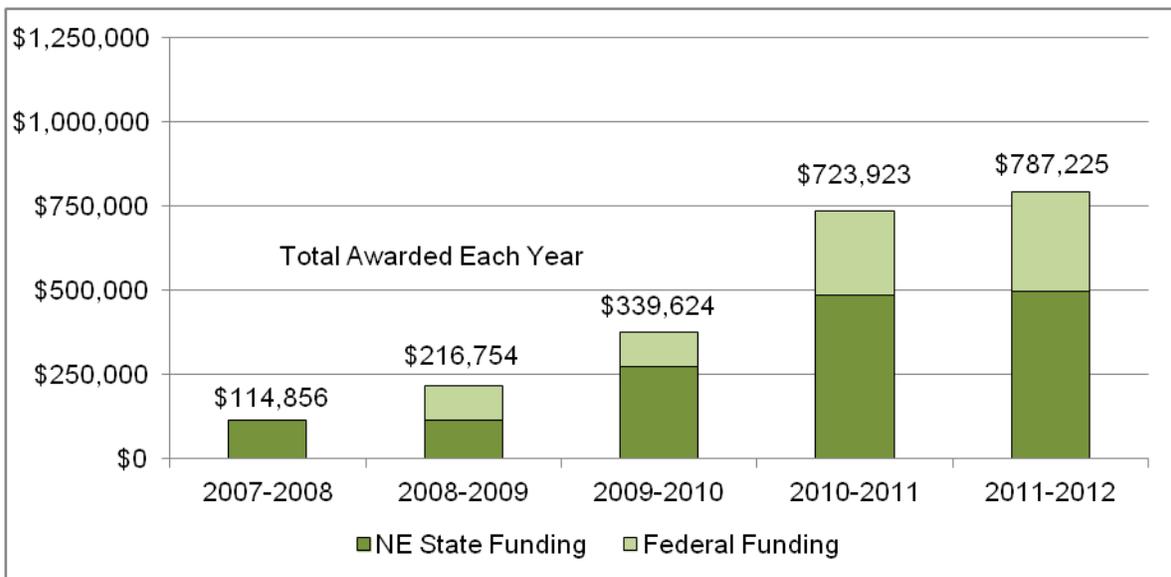
The Access College Early (ACE) Scholarship Program awards scholarships to low-income high school students who enroll in a college course at a participating public or private postsecondary institution while the student is still in high school. The Commission recommended the creation of this program in 2007, funding it through the transfer of funds from a relatively inactive program, the Community Scholarship Foundation Program, to the ACE program. (The CSFP was eliminated.)

Current research indicates that high school students who take college courses while in high school:

- increase academic rigor during high school;
- remain in school and graduate at higher rates;
- enroll in college at an increased rate;
- streamline their transitions from high school to college;
- have a head start on their chosen postsecondary programs;
- save money once in college; and
- return for their college sophomore years at higher rates.

The Commission believes the opportunity to take college courses while in high school should be available to all qualified students regardless of family income.

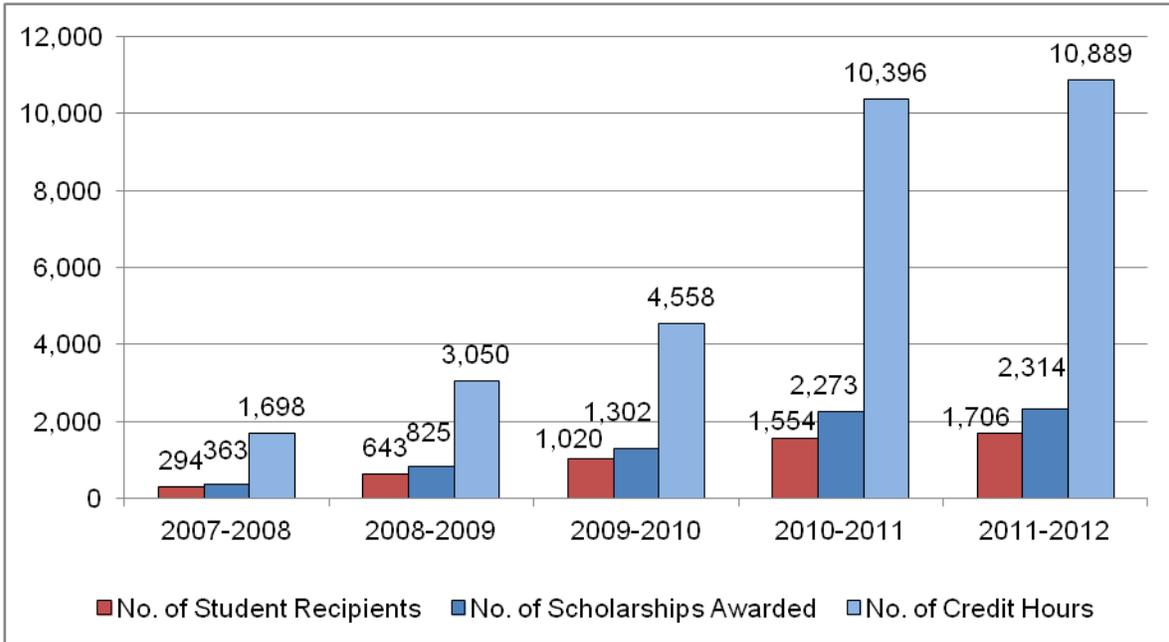
Growth of ACE Scholarship Program Funding



(ACE charts continued on next page)

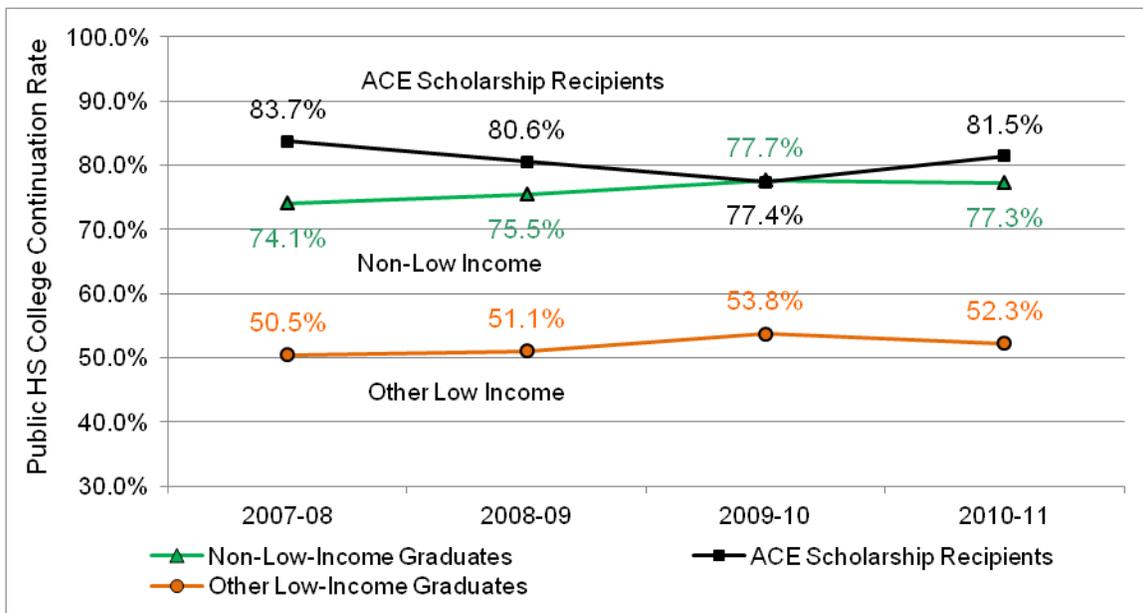
(ACE charts continued)

Growth of ACE Scholarship Program Awards and Recipients



Nationally and in Nebraska, students who take college courses while in high school go on to college at higher rates.

Nebraska Public High School College Continuation Rates - 2007-08 Through 2010-11



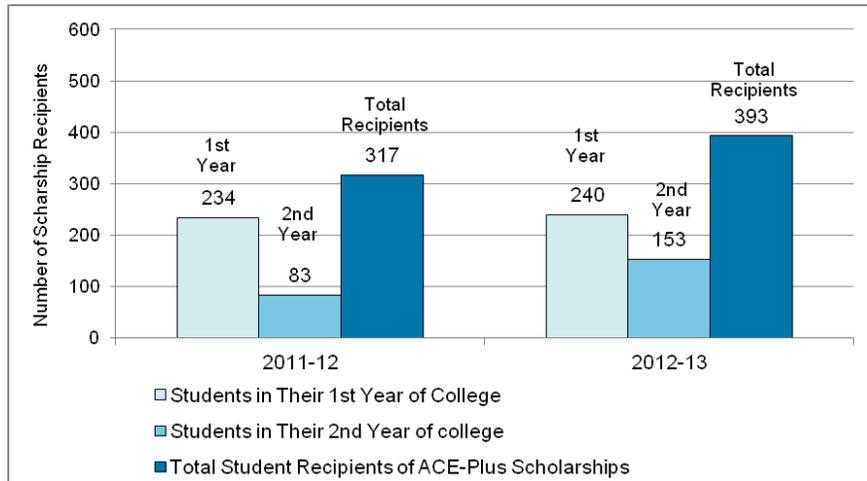
ACE Plus Scholarship Program

The Commission initiated the ACE Plus Scholarship Program in 2010-2011, with the first year of awards in 2011-2012. This program provides assistance to first- and second-year college students who were ACE scholarship recipients prior to graduating from high school. The ACE Plus scholarship was initially funded with \$223,000 of a federal College Access Challenge Grant (CACG). In 2011-2012, the Commission awarded a total of \$220,750 in scholarships to 317 students. For 2012-2013, the Commission awarded

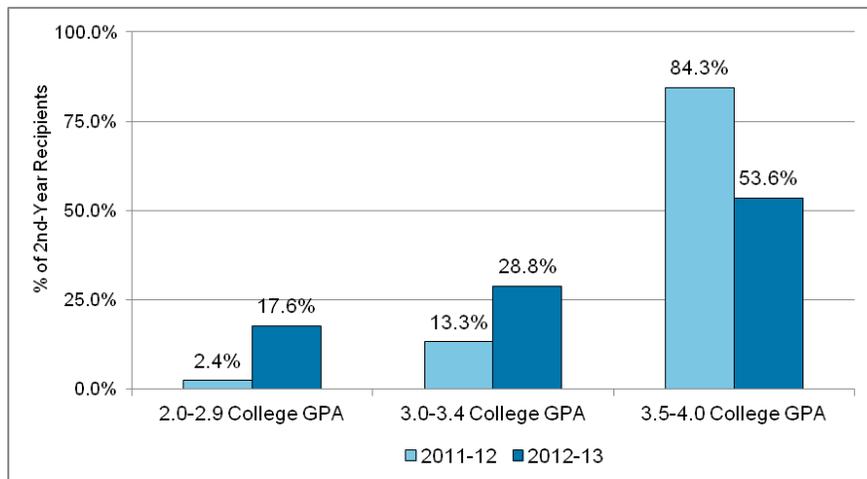
393 college students a total of \$269,750, again funded through CACG.

The ACE Plus program has already proven its effectiveness. Among first-year college students who received an ACE Plus scholarship, nearly 95 percent earned a grade of “B” or better in the course they took during their first or second year of college. Furthermore, 279 of the 317 recipients attended in-state colleges or universities in 2011-2012 and 349 of the 393 recipients in 2012-2013 are attending in-state institutions.

Number of ACE Plus recipients



College Grade-Point Average of Students Who Received ACE Plus Scholarships Their Second Year of College



What does the Commission do?

Provides information and advice on higher education to the Legislature and Governor. Conducts research, publishes reports on issues regarding higher education.

Reports and Analysis

The Commission utilizes extensive data to produce a wide array of objective, comprehensive reports. This in-depth research provides an independent —and invaluable — voice within Nebraska’s postsecondary education system. No other entity in Nebraska maintains and reports all of these kinds of data.

CCPE research is used by legislators, the governor’s office, reporters, higher education institutions, other state agencies and the public. Following are descriptions of the Commission-produced reports during the last two years.

All of these reports are available on the Commission’s website, www.ccpe.state.ne.us, under the “Data Collection, Reports, and Presentations” link.

Budget and Financial Analyses

Postsecondary Education Operating Budget Recommendations for 2013-15

(October 2012)

This is a statutorily required analysis of public institutional budget requests. It includes information about higher education appropriations, affordability, access and accountability, discussions of statewide funding issues, and recommendations. See page 21 of this document for more information.

Capital Construction Budget Recommendations and Prioritization for 2013-15 *(October 2012)*

This statutorily required report includes the Commission’s funding and priority recommendations on capital construction budget requests from the Nebraska State College System, the University of Nebraska and the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis. See page 19 for more information.

2012 Tuition, Fees, Financial Aid Report *(September 2012)*

This statutorily required report covers public policy issues relating to tuition, fees and financial aid for students in Nebraska. It shows how Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions rank on these points when compared to their Commission-designated peer institutions.

Among the report's general findings:

- Higher education is becoming less affordable—and therefore less attainable—for students as tuition continues to rise;
- State appropriations per full-time equivalent student are increasingly threatened by other state obligations. This was increasingly true during the economic challenges of the past two years;
- Financial aid is a necessity and increasingly important for many students;
- Participation and success rates for students from median-, low- and very low-income families would likely increase if additional financial assistance could be provided by the state.

Did you know?

In 2010-11, Nebraska ranked 33rd among states in need-based student aid grant dollars per full-time undergraduate enrollment. In 2008-09, the state ranked 38th.

From the "2012 Tuition, Fees, and Financial Aid Report."

Academic Analyses

Delivering Courses Beyond Campus Walls *(July 2012)*

This report describes the types of distance education courses available to Nebraska residents, what institutions offer distance education, how distance education is delivered and how many students are taking advantage of distance education.

Survey of Programs and Courses Offered in Nebraska By Out-of-State Institutions *(January 2011)*

This report provides information on the current course and program offerings as well as a historical perspective that includes institutions approved in the past but no longer offering courses or programs in the state.

Other Analyses, Publications

College-Going Rates for Nebraska Public High Schools for the High School Class of 2009-2010 *(July 2011)*

This report presents the estimated college-going rates for each of Nebraska's 276 public high schools that awarded high school diplomas in 2009-2010. These estimates are based on data obtained from the Nebraska Department of Education and the National Student Clearinghouse.

Excel Workbook for College-Going Rates for Nebraska Public High Schools for the High School Class of 2010-2011 *(May 2012)*

This document provides our estimate of college-going rate, by school, for the high school graduating class of 2010-11.

LB 637 Dual Enrollment and Career Academy Study *(December 2011)*

LB 637 directed the Coordinating Commission to study the need for uniform policies and practices regarding dual-enrollment courses and career academies in Nebraska, as well as to examine other opportunities for Nebraska high-school students to earn college credit, such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs. This report provides the results of that study, as well as policy recommendations.

2012 Nebraska Higher Education Progress Report *(March 2012)*

This statutorily required annual report provides data to the Nebraska Legislature, with comparative statistics to monitor and evaluate progress toward achieving three key priorities for Nebraska's postsecondary education system. These priorities are:

- Increase the number of students who enter postsecondary education;
- Increase the proportion of students who enroll and successfully persist through degree program completion; and
- Reduce, eliminate and then reverse the net out-migration of Nebraskans with high levels of educational attainment.

2012 Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska *(August 2012)*

This report uses data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) surveys to provide comparative data for Nebraska's higher education institutions.

Did you know?

In terms of enrollment, women in Nebraska continue to outnumber men at the undergraduate and graduate levels across all racial/ethnic groups, except foreign students.

From the "2012 Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska" report.

What does the Commission do?

**Considers and approves or disapproves proposals from
new or out-of-state institutions to operate in Nebraska**

New or out-of-state institutions

Any out-of-state institution seeking to offer programs in Nebraska or any entity wishing to establish a new private institution in the state must receive approval from the Commission. These procedures were described in Title 281, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapters 1 and 2.

In 2010 the Commission examined the statutes that govern out-of-state institutions as well as new private institutions. The Commission worked with its constituents and State Legislative staff to craft LB 637, a new act to replace the existing statutes. The reasons for updating the statutes were numerous, but the primary reasons were that the existing statutes were outdated and challenging to apply in many situations. Most of these statutes dated back to the 1960s and '70s. Higher education has changed significantly since then, influenced by the role of for-profit institutions, as well as the ability afforded by technology to provide courses outside a physical classroom. These new statutes are

influencing several national initiatives focused on these issues.

LB 637 clarified the role of the Commission as defined in state statute, made clear the procedures required of institutions, and repealed the earlier statutes. It was signed by the Governor in May 2011. The first 21 sections of LB 637 have been identified as the Postsecondary Institution Act. Title 281, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 7, currently awaiting final State approval, will provide the rules and regulations for implementing the Postsecondary Institution Act and will replace Chapters 1 and 2.

Following procedures established in Chapter 2 prior to its repeal, the Commission reviewed five annual reports from previously approved institutions and authorized one institution to offer two additional associate and two additional baccalaureate degrees; one institution to offer four additional baccalaureate degrees; and one institution to award a doctor of nurse anesthesia practice.

Following the enactment of LB 637, all previously approved new private or out-of-state institutions were required to renew their authorization to operate. The Commission reviewed applications from 20 institutions, granting recurrent authorization to 19 and authorization to operate on a continuing basis to one. Approximately 26 institutions approved by the Commission during the past several decades did not submit renewal applications and are no longer authorized to operate in the state.

**Out-of-state institutions
authorized in the 2012 biennium:**

National American University (Rapid City, S.D.)

In January 2011, approved to offer five associate of applied science degrees and five bachelor of science degrees.

Sioux Falls Seminary (Sioux Falls, S.D.)

In July 2011, approved to offer a master of divinity and a doctor of ministry.

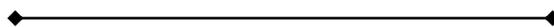
Wright Career College (Overland Park, Kan.)

In September 2011, approved to offer eight diploma programs, nine associate of applied science degrees, and two bachelor of science degrees.

Kansas State University (Manhattan, Kan.)

In April 2012, approved for veterinary clinical rotations at MidWest Veterinary Specialty Hospital in Omaha.

What does the Commission do?



**Reviews the institutions' budget proposals and makes
Recommendations on those requests to the Governor and Legislature**



Budget Review and Recommendations

The Commission has constitutional responsibility to review and modify the biennial budget requests of Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions and make recommendations on those requests to the Governor and Legislature. Through this review, the Commission can promote consistency with the *Comprehensive Plan* and effective use of state funds in support of public postsecondary education in Nebraska. The Commission reviews budgets and makes its recommendations in October of every even-numbered year.

In fall 2012, the Commission reviewed 43 requests for additional state funding from the University of Nebraska System, the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis, the Nebraska State College System and the community colleges.

Of those 43 requests, 15 were expanded requests, and the Commission:

- Strongly recommended new general funds for two of the requests;
- Recommended new general funds for six of the requests;
- Recommended some new general funds for three requests;

- Recommended no general funds for three requests;
- Recommended funding be appropriated to an already established program for one request; and
- Recommended funding from other sources of revenue for one request.

Furthermore, of the 43 requests, there were 12 requests that were part of the continuation budget recommendation, and 12 requests that were for new building operating and maintenance funds. The total dollars for institutional new and expanded requests for the biennium was \$42,664,510.

The 2013-2015 report and recommendations are located on the Commission's website, www.ccpe.state.ne.us, under the "Data Collection, Reports, and Presentations" link.

Nebraska's Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education



**Promoting high quality, ready access and efficient use of
resources in Nebraska higher education**



Operational Projects and Accomplishments

Introduction

The past two years have been a period of exceptional growth in helping Nebraska's lawmakers and citizens become more aware of the progress and challenges for Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions. The following narratives provide a summary of the CCPE's activities and accomplishments during the last two years.

Ongoing Initiatives

College Access Challenge Grant

The Governor has designed the CCPE as the State's administrator of the federal College Access Challenge Grant Program (CACG). The CACG is a five-year formula grant program designed to increase the number of underrepresented students who enter and remain in postsecondary education. In 2010, the CCPE received \$1.5 million in grant funds from the CACG. This was a significant increase in funding compared to this program's 2008 allocation of \$330,000. The Commission has already used these funds to support many Nebraska groups and initiatives, including: the Access

College Early grant program; the ACE Plus scholarship program; Central Plains Center for Services, in western Nebraska; Omaha Public Schools; EducationQuest Foundation, based in Lincoln; Ho-Chunk Community Development Corp., which is affiliated with the Winnebago Tribe; Mid-Plains Community College; Nebraska Methodist College; Grace University; and the Bright Futures Foundation, in Omaha.

Improving Teacher Quality: State Grants Program Administration

The Commission continues to award Improving Teacher Quality (ITQ) state grants to Nebraska's innovative leaders in education. The grants are funded under the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, also known as the No Child Left Behind Act (Title IIA). Grants are not awarded to individuals, but to partnerships formed by local, high-need educational agencies and a Nebraska college or university. These partnerships design and produce professional development activities to improve the skills of K-12 teachers, paraprofessionals and principals.

The total amount of funds available to Nebraska for awards in 2010-11 was \$425,689. The total amount recommended for the five projects that received funding was \$336,154. The remaining funds were available for projects that may have more participant applications than slots funded or other unexpected costs; any additional remaining funds were carried forward for use in the 2011-12 competition. For 2011-12, a review panel recommended and the Commission awarded \$351,567 for five projects: one each in geography, science and math, and two in literacy.

The ITQ program continues to focus on professional development activities for in-service teachers, especially those teaching in shortage areas and those who don't hold an endorsement in the subject area in which they are teaching. In some instances, ITQ funds are awarded for activities that address one or both challenges. Projects that address the needs of low-performing schools or model the use of technology are given priority. For more information about the ITQ program, visit www.ccpe.state.ne.us and click on the "Improving Teacher Quality Grants" link on the left-hand side of the homepage.

New Initiatives

ACE, ACE Plus Automation

Because the ACE and ACE Plus Scholarship Programs have grown significantly during the past few years, the Legislature funded and the Commission implemented the electronic automation of the process for both programs. This automation makes it easier for students to apply and for the Commission to review and process the applications. It is significantly more efficient and will save numerous hours of manual processing.

New Employee

Helen Pope started in February 2012 as a part-time executive assistant for the Commission.