

# North Dakota Highlights

2015-2016

## North Dakota Key to Shaping the Compact's Initiatives

1. North Dakota passed authorizing legislation in 1999 to join the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), which was created in 1991.
2. A product of Midwestern legislators, MHEC was created through actions of the Midwestern Legislative Conference of The Council of State Governments.
3. Tim Flakoll, provost for Tri-College University and former state senator, was elected MHEC vice chair in 2016.
4. William Goetz, former chancellor of the North Dakota University System, served as MHEC chair from 2008-2009.
5. Current MHEC President Larry Isaak was chancellor of the North Dakota University System from 1994-2003.
6. Over 15 individuals from North Dakota provide significant direction for MHEC programs and services as commissioners, commissioner alternates, and members of program committees.

## North Dakota Benefits from Participation in MHEC Programs and Services

1. Entities in MHEC member states have saved over \$516 million since the Compact was founded in 1991, by using MHEC purchasing contracts and the MHEC property insurance program.
2. North Dakota higher education institutions (including public and private not-for-profit), school districts, state and local governments, and students have achieved cost savings of over \$6 million since 1999, by using MHEC's cost savings and student exchange programs. In FY16, they achieved savings of over \$750,000.
3. North Dakota received a 7-fold return on its MHEC investment for FY16 when comparing total savings to the state's annual commitment (dues).
4. **Student Insurance Solutions:** MHECare, the student health collaborative, provides member institutions with sustainable student health insurance solutions and helps institutions support the student learning experience by providing protection from unexpected medical expenses. The North Dakota University System participates in the collaborative.
5. **Technology Initiatives:** In FY16, North Dakota entities realized over \$287,000 in cost savings by purchasing over \$2 million in technology hardware, software, and services. Cumulatively, they have saved over \$2 million. Serving on the Technologies Committee that determines which hardware, software, and services MHEC will pursue are: Jody French, North Dakota Educational Technology Council; Dirk Huggett, Darin King, and Jerry Rostad, all with the North Dakota University System.

## Commissioners



Kyle Davison  
State Senator  
ND Legislature Assembly



Tim Flakoll  
Provost  
Tri-College University  
Former State Senator  
ND Legislature Assembly



Mark Hagerott  
Chancellor  
ND University System



Dennis Johnson  
State Representative  
ND Legislature Assembly



Don Morton  
 Fargo Site Leader  
Microsoft (retired)  
Vice Chair, State Board  
of Higher Education



James L. Davis  
President  
Turtle Mountain  
Community College



Robert Lauf  
Policy Advisor, Office of  
Governor State of ND  
(Alternate)



## Midwestern Higher Education Compact

105 Fifth Avenue South, Suite 450, Minneapolis, MN 55401

Phone: 612-677-2777 Fax: 612-767-3353 E-mail: [mhec@mhec.org](mailto:mhec@mhec.org)

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## North Dakota Benefits from Participation in MHEC Programs and Services (continued)

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6. **Midwest Student Exchange Program:** North Dakota students and families have saved nearly \$3.5 million in tuition through the Midwest Student Exchange Program (MSEP) since joining the program. In FY16, there were 1,616 persons from other MHEC states who came to North Dakota through this program, and North Dakota residents saved over \$462,000 by using the program. Brenda Zastoupil, North Dakota University System, serves on the MSEP Council.
7. **State Authorization:** North Dakota became the second state to become a member of the Midwestern-State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (M-SARA), and the first state to have all public and private institutions participating in the initiative. Richard Rothaus, North Dakota University System, and Lane Huber, Bismarck State College, serve on the M-SARA Steering Committee. In 2014 NDUS estimated annual savings for their institutions to be \$135,000.
8. **Military Credit:** The Multi-State Collaborative on Military Credit has provided grant funds of \$30,000 to North Dakota to support their state efforts in translating competencies acquired through military training and experiences into milestones toward completing a college degree or earning a certificate or license. Lisa Johnson, North Dakota University System, serves on the MCMC Steering Committee. Additional North Dakotans serve on work groups.

## Potential Savings or Benefits of Program Participation for North Dakota

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1. Since the membership is a state membership, not only can higher education institutions use MHEC's purchasing contracts, but school districts, state and local governments, and not-for-profit entities can also use most of the MHEC purchasing contracts.
2. MHEC is a statutorily created entity in each member state. The Compact conducts competitive sourcing events and negotiates contract terms and conditions, thereby allowing flexibility for state and local entities to tailor MHEC contracts to their needs without having to incur the cost of rebidding for the products or services covered in MHEC contracts.
3. **Property Insurance:** MHEC's Master Property Program insures over 160 campuses nationwide with property values exceeding \$92 billion dollars, saving participating MHEC member states over \$5 million in FY16. North Dakota does not participate since it has a State Fire and Tornado Fund for property insurance on its public entities.

## Policy Research Keeps North Dakotans Informed

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1. MHEC provides reliable and objective evaluations of the PK-16 system in North Dakota.
  - » **Higher Education in Focus: Selected Performance Indicators.** This biennial report provides key performance indicators for North Dakota relevant to the goal of increasing educational attainment. Performance indicators are categorized within six dimensions: Preparation, Participation, Affordability, Completion, Equity, and Finance.
  - » **The Effectiveness and Efficiency of Postsecondary Institutions in the United States: 2010-2012 Baseline Results.** This brief evaluates the extent to which postsecondary institutions in North Dakota are effective and efficient. Institutions are deemed effective if their graduation rates exceed what would be expected given the types of students served and other attributes. Institutional efficiency is estimated as the difference between actual educational expenditures and the expenditures that would be predicted from degree production levels, faculty attributes, and location. The report helps policymakers in North Dakota identify highly effective institutions that make efficient use of taxpayer dollars and promote closer examination of the policies and practices that constitute their highly effective campuses.
2. MHEC informs policymaking on college readiness in North Dakota.
  - » **Faculty Qualification Policies and Strategies Relevant to Dual Enrollment Programs: An Analysis of States and Regional Accreditation Agencies.** This report examines state and regional accreditation policies relevant to faculty qualifications for dual enrollment programs. The report informs policymaking in North Dakota by identifying the key attributes of policies across the nation and describing some of the state strategies for increasing the number of in-service teachers qualified to teach dual enrollment courses.
  - » **Blueprint for College Readiness.** This report helps K-12 and higher education leaders in North Dakota determine which policies should be adopted to promote college readiness. Policy recommendations

## Policy Research Keeps North Dakotans Informed (continued)

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are made in relation to college and career readiness definitions, college readiness standards and assessments, graduation requirements, accountability, admissions standards, statewide remedial and placement policies, transfer, and a data pipeline and process for reporting.

- » ***The Traditional Approach to Developmental Education.*** This report provides a primer on developmental education and summarizes recent research on the effects of remedial assignment, enrollment, and completion. Among the policy implications, the report finds that the disparities in remedial enrollment by ethnicity and income mirror the achievement gaps observed in the PK-12 sector. This suggests that the problem of high enrollment in remedial education during college must be partly addressed in the PK-12 sector. Two promising interventions for promoting PK-16 alignment are dual enrollment and early skills assessment.
3. MHEC helps institutional leaders and policymakers in North Dakota identify best practices for improving educational quality and degree completion rates.
- » ***Transparent Pathways, Clear Outcomes: Using Disciplinary Tuning to Improve Teaching, Learning, and Student Success.*** “Tuning” is a process through which faculty members create shared understandings of the knowledge and transferable skills students in specific academic disciplines and professional fields must demonstrate upon completion of their degrees. The process helps to clarify to students, parents, and policymakers what degree holders know, understand, and are able to do.
  - » ***Determinants of Student Success: An Integrative Perspective to Orient Policy and Practice*** elaborates on three social-psychological factors that influence student success during college: goal commitment, academic engagement, and social identification.
  - » ***Effective Pedagogy*** examines cooperative or collaborative learning involving small groups of students, problem-based learning, service learning, mastery learning, and computer-based instruction.
  - » ***Financial Aid*** summarizes key findings from research to inform institutional policy regarding institutional grant aid and work-study programs.
  - » ***Faculty Policy*** examines key issues that confront institutional leaders in creating faculty policies conducive to student success, including employment status, faculty roles and reward systems, and faculty development.
  - » ***Developmental Education*** provides a summary of research on policy and program reforms that may improve developmental education and the outcomes of underprepared students, including establishing appropriate program requirements, refining the student placement process, improving the quality of developmental curricula, and incorporating support services.
  - » ***Software Solutions*** provides an overview of student success software and summarizes findings from the nascent body of student outcomes research. Three types of software solutions are examined: academic planning systems, task engagement systems, and early alert systems. Several campus practices are then identified that may facilitate software adoption.
  - » ***Counseling Services*** provides an overview of mental health issues and counseling services on college campuses. Common prevention and treatment programs are described with particular attention to innovative campus-wide programs. The brief concludes with a set of recommended practices to improve the effectiveness of counseling services on campus.
4. MHEC informs policy on the preparation of college graduates for gainful employment.
- » ***The Occupational Relevance of a College Education: An Examination of Education-Job Match among Bachelor’s Degree Recipients.*** This research brief provides a national account of whether recent college alumni attain employment congruent with their academic major, reasons for working outside of one’s major field, and possible consequences for job satisfaction. The brief encourages policymakers in North Dakota and elsewhere to develop indicators of education-job match that reflect the relevance of a college education for formal employment; implement “Tuning” programs when necessary; raise admissions standards for majors with projected market saturation; and increase student intentionality in the major selection process.
5. MHEC provides new legislators and board members in North Dakota with background information on higher education.
- » ***State Constitutional Provisions and Higher Education Governance.*** This report provides an overview of state constitutional provisions for higher education and state approaches to higher education governance across the nation.

## Opportunity to Discuss the Issues in North Dakota

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1. Based on the many ideas that MHEC Commissioners and Commissioner Alternates submitted in late August of 2015, a survey was created with potential policy topics for our research, program initiatives, and professional development. Survey respondents evaluated the need for additional knowledge on various topics, identified the top three topics of interest, and selected the most helpful resource formats. The collective results were used to determine which policy topics MHEC should prioritize. Commissioners at the MHEC annual commission meeting voted to focus on affordability initiatives during the next fiscal year.
2. MHEC convenes institutional leaders and policymakers to discuss critical issues confronting North Dakota, the region, and the nation.
  - » MHEC Commissioners were active in discussions in 2015 about the new Higher Learning Commission (HLC) faculty qualifications revised policy which was to take effect in July 2016. This policy especially impacted smaller and rural school districts. Considering MHEC's efforts, the HLC allowed for institutions with dual credit programs to apply for an extension to implement the new policy by 2022.
3. MHEC provides reliable and objective evaluations of the PK-16 system in North Dakota.
4. During the legislative session MHEC convenes a group of state leaders including MHEC commissioners, legislative leaders, higher education leaders, K-12 representatives, and executive branch officials to discuss MHEC programs and also to receive input about MHEC services and state issues.
5. Since 2004 Larry Isaak, MHEC president, has appeared before several higher education committees and the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) to discuss North Dakota trends and policy information. In October 2015 he presented to the Interim Higher Education Committee, providing a history of the SBHE and the North Dakota University System and Principles for Good Governance.
6. The locations of MHEC commission meetings rotate among the member states, showcasing each state's education initiatives to an audience comprised of Midwestern legislators and education leaders. MHEC held its November 2009 Annual Policy Summit and Commission Meeting in Fargo and the June 2003 Executive Committee meeting in Bismarck. MHEC's annual commission meeting in November 2018 will be held in North Dakota.
7. All travel and lodging expenses for commissioners who attend Compact meetings are paid by the Midwestern Higher Education Compact.

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