

Nebraska Highlights 2016-2017

Nebraska Key to Shaping the Compact's Direction

1. As one of the first states to pass authorizing legislation, Nebraska is a founding member state of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC), which was created in 1991.
2. Nebraska legislators, who were members of the Midwestern Legislative Conference of The Council of State Governments, were instrumental in the formation of the compact.
3. Dr. Randolph Ferlic, former regent for the University of Nebraska System, is the longest serving commissioner having served as a commissioner or commissioner alternate since MHEC's founding. He served as commission chair from 2012-2013, and vice chair from 2011-2012. He also served as the compact treasurer from 1996-2001, and 2010-2011. Dr. Ferlic was recognized by the commission for his service to the compact by receiving MHEC's highest award, the 2013 Phillip A. Sirotkin Award in honor of MHEC's founding father.
4. Sandra Scofield, University of Nebraska, served as the second MHEC chair from 1994-1996.
5. Over 20 individuals from Nebraska provide significant direction for MHEC programs and services as commissioners, commissioner alternates, and members of program committees.

Nebraska Benefits from Participation in MHEC Programs and Contracts

1. Through use of MHEC's contracts and programs, Nebraska higher education institutions (including public and private not-for-profit), school districts, state and local governments, and students have achieved cost savings of over \$80.3 million since 1991. In FY17, they achieved savings of over \$7.6 million.
2. Nebraska received a 67-fold return on its MHEC investment for FY17 when comparing total savings to the state's annual commitment (dues).
3. State Authorization: Nebraska became the third state to become a member of the Midwestern-State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (M-SARA). Kathleen Fimple, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, and Mary Niemic, University of Nebraska, serve on the M-SARA Steering Committee. MHEC has estimated Nebraska's FY17 M-SARA savings to be \$664,000.
4. Midwest Student Exchange Program: Nebraska students and families have saved over \$60.7 million in tuition through the Midwest Student Exchange Program (MSEP) since joining the program. In FY17, there were 710 persons from other MHEC states who came to Nebraska through this program, and Nebraska residents saved over \$5.7 million by using the program. Kadi Lukesh, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, serves on the MSEP Council.

Commissioners



Sue Crawford
Senator
Nebraska Legislature



Randolph M. Ferlic
Former Regent
University of Nebraska



Deborah A. Frison
Vice Chair
Coordinating Commission for
Postsecondary Education



Susan M. Fritz
Executive VP and Provost
and Dean of the Graduate
College, University of
Nebraska



Rick Kolowski
Senator
Nebraska Legislature



Michael Baumgartner
Executive Director
Coordinating Commission
for Postsecondary Education
(alternate)

Nebraska Benefits from Participation in MHEC Programs and Contracts (continued)

5. Technology Contracts: In FY17, Nebraska entities realized over \$583,000 in cost savings by purchasing over \$5.5 million in technology hardware, software, and services. Cumulatively, they have saved over \$6 million. Serving on the Technologies Committee that determines which hardware, software, and services MHEC will pursue are: Bret Blackman, University of Nebraska at Omaha; Andrew Buker, University of Nebraska at Omaha; John Dunning, Wayne State College; Wayne Sager, Northeast Community College; Walter Weir, University of Nebraska; and Neil Wineman, University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Mr. Dunning serves as the chair of the Technologies Executive Committee.
6. Property Insurance: MHEC's Master Property Program (MPP) insures over 170 campuses nationwide with property values exceeding \$94.8 billion dollars, saving participating MHEC member states over \$7.7 million in FY17. The MHEC property insurance program insures the University of Nebraska campuses and the entire Nebraska State College System. Their total property values are over \$8.9 billion, collectively saving over \$10.7 million since 1994 and over \$650,000 in FY17. Kevin Harford, University of Nebraska, serves on the MPP Leadership Committee.
7. 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 over 33,000 students protection from unexpected medical expenses. The four campuses of the University of Nebraska System participate in the collaborative, covering 6,253 students.

Potential Savings or Benefits of Program and Contract Participation for Nebraska

1. Entities in MHEC member states have saved over \$984 million since the Compact was founded in 1991, by using MHEC contracts and programs.
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. Since the membership is a state membership, not only can higher education institutions use MHEC's technology contracts, but school districts, state and local governments, and not-for-profit entities can also use most of the MHEC technology contracts.

Research Keeps Nebraskans Informed

1. MHEC provides reliable and objective evaluations of the PK-16 system in Nebraska.
 - » **Higher Education in Focus: Selected Performance Indicators.** This biennial report provides key performance indicators for Nebraska 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 Nebraska 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 Nebraska 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 and teacher preparation in Nebraska.
 - » **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 Nebraska 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 Nebraska determine which policies should be adopted to promote college readiness. Policy recommendations 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.

Research Keeps Nebraskans Informed (continued)

- » ***The Impact of Graduate Education on Teacher Effectiveness: Does a Master's Degree Matter?*** This brief examines the prevalence of graduate degrees among teachers in the United States and summarizes research on the relationship between teacher educational attainment and student achievement.
- 3. MHEC helps policymakers in Nebraska evaluate options for improving college affordability.
 - » ***State Higher Education Financing Models.*** This brief addresses four areas in which state policy makers can learn from practices in other states and from principles of sound public policy design to strengthen their higher education financing systems. The year-to-year stability of funding, the balance between appropriations for institutions and student aid, the growing interest in tuition-free community colleges, and the allocation of funds across public colleges and universities are all areas in which states take a variety of approaches, with quite different implications for educational opportunity.
 - » ***A Review of College Promise Programs: Evidence from the Midwest.*** College promise or tuition-free college programs are becoming increasingly popular, and there is evidence that these programs can be effective under the right conditions. In this brief, the body of research is detailed on the effects of three well-known college promise programs in the Midwest before discussing some of the key questions that policymakers and funders must consider when designing promise programs.
 - » ***Tuition Control Policies: A Challenging Approach to College Affordability.*** This brief details how often tuition and fee controls are used and the body of research on whether they are effective in achieving their ultimate goal. Case examples are provided for three Midwestern states' tuition and fee policies before offering recommendations for policymakers to consider when adopting tuition controls.
- 4. MHEC provides summaries of the latest research for institutional leaders and analysts in Nebraska to identify best practices in improving student success.
 - » ***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.
- 5. MHEC informs policy and practice 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 Nebraska 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.
 - » ***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.

Opportunity to Discuss the Issues in Nebraska and Convene with Peers

1. **Military Credit:** The Multi-State Collaborative on Military Credit (MCMC) is a forum for states to exchange information and best practices around translating competencies acquired through military training and experiences into milestones toward completing a college degree or earning a certificate or license. The MCMC has provided grant funds of \$20,000 to Nebraska to support their state efforts in these areas. A survey was sent to determine data collected on military connected students by each institution and what format it is collected. Kathleen Fimple, Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, serves on the MCMC Steering Committee. Additional Nebraskans participate in knowledge communities.
2. 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 MHEC 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.
3. MHEC convenes institutional leaders and policymakers to discuss critical issues confronting Nebraska, 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.
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. 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 annual commission meeting and policy summit in Omaha in November 2013. MHEC held its Executive Committee meeting in Omaha in June 2005.
6. All travel and lodging expenses for commissioners who attend Compact meetings are paid by the Midwestern Higher Education Compact.

Connect with us!



@mhec12



bit.ly/LinkedInMHEC



facebook.com/mhec12



youtube.com/user/mhec12