

Section 1 Increasing Postsecondary Enrollment

Priority 1. Increasing the number of students who enter postsecondary education in Nebraska.

The first priority recommended by the 2003 LR 174 Task Force is to increase the number of students who enter postsecondary education in Nebraska. To generally monitor progress toward achieving this goal, this section compares the latest available total student unduplicated headcounts and enrollments of first-time freshmen to fall 2003 baselines within the context of 10-year trends.

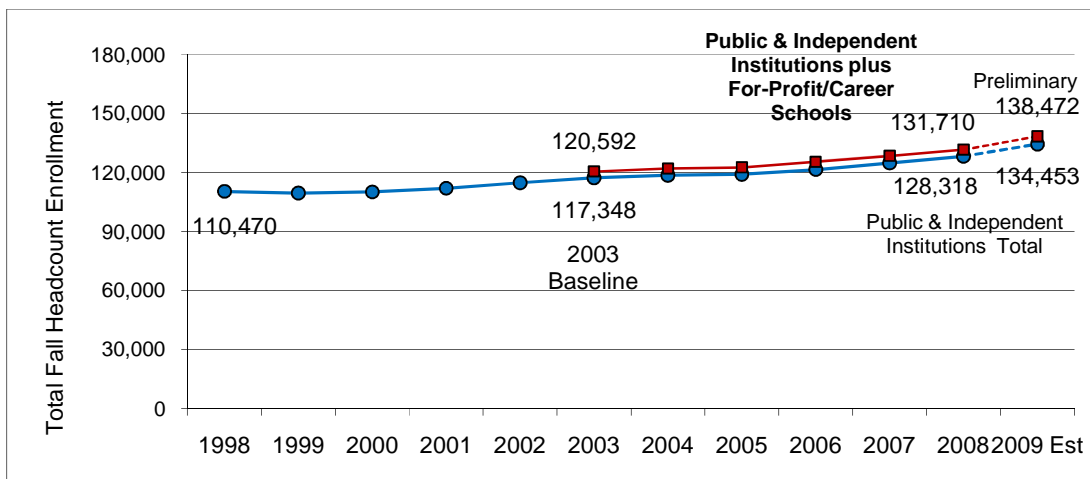
The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education is the official source of the enrollment data summarized for fall 1998 through fall 2008. Enrollments for fall 2009 are preliminary, based on estimates that institutions reported to the NCES through the fall 2009 IPEDS Institutional Characteristics Survey and actual counts reported directly to the Coordinating Commission. Total enrollments for the sector consisting of for-profit schools are not reported for the years prior to 2003 due to insufficient, incomparable or unverified data for some schools in the sector.

Nebraska Total Fall Headcount Enrollment¹

- Total headcount enrollment at Nebraska’s public, independent and for-profit postsecondary institutions increased 9.2%, from 120,592 in fall 2003, which is the baseline for this report, to 131,710 in fall 2008, an average of 1.8% per year.
- Total headcount enrollment increased to 138,472 in fall 2009, based on reported estimates. This increase is a 5.1% increase from fall 2008, and a 14.8% increase from the fall 2003 baseline of 120,592 full-time and part-time students.

Figure 1.1

**Total Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions
Fall 1998–Fall 2009¹**



¹Data source for 1998–2008 is the National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Totals for fall 2009 are preliminary. Statewide official enrollments for 2009 will not be available from IPEDS until May 2010. The for-profit/career school sector includes three non-profit career schools of radiologic technology. See [Table A1.1](#) and [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

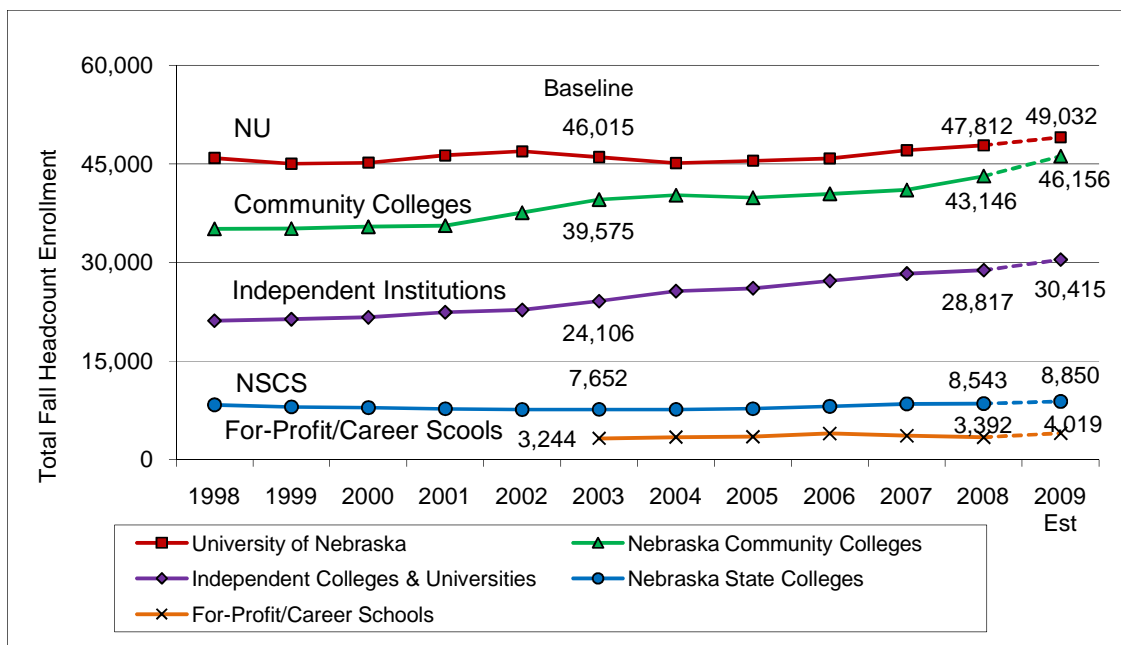
¹Total headcount is the count of all students taking courses for credit.

Nebraska Total Fall Headcount Enrollment by Sector

- The total headcount enrollment at the institutions constituting the University of Nebraska increased 3.9% between fall 2003 and fall 2008. A 1.9% enrollment decline between 2003 and 2004 was more than offset by enrollment increases of 0.8% in fall 2005, 0.8% in fall 2006, 2.7% in fall 2007, and 1.6% in fall 2008. Based on information obtained directly from the University of Nebraska Central Administration, enrollment is continuing to increase, as evidenced by a 2.6% increase in the university's total headcount between fall 2008 and fall 2009.
- Nebraska's state colleges, community colleges, independent (not-for-profit) institutions and for-profit/career schools also contributed positively to the 5.1% estimated increase in total enrollment at the state's postsecondary institutions between fall 2008 and fall 2009.
- Based on preliminary total headcounts for fall 2009, Nebraska's community colleges had a one-year enrollment increase of 7.0% from fall 2008, enrollment at the state colleges increased 3.6%, and enrollment at the state's independent colleges and universities rose 5.5%. Enrollments at the degree-granting for-profit/career schools increased 27.7% between fall 2008 and fall 2009, while one-year growth at the non-degree-granting for-profit career schools was 1.8%. As a result, the combined one-year growth for the degree-granting and non-degree granting schools within the for-profit sector was 18.5%.
- See [Table A1.1](#) and [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

Figure 1.2

Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska Postsecondary Institutions by Sector Fall 1998–Fall 2009¹



¹Data source for 1998–2008 is the National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Data for fall 2009 for the University of Nebraska and Nebraska State College System are from the system offices. Data for fall 2009 for the Nebraska community colleges were obtained directly from each college or from IPEDS and confirmed by the college. Other totals for 2009 are preliminary. Official enrollments for 2009 will not be available from IPEDS until May 2010. The for-profit sector includes three non-profit career schools of radiologic technology. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

Nebraska Public Colleges and Universities: Fall Enrollment by Institution

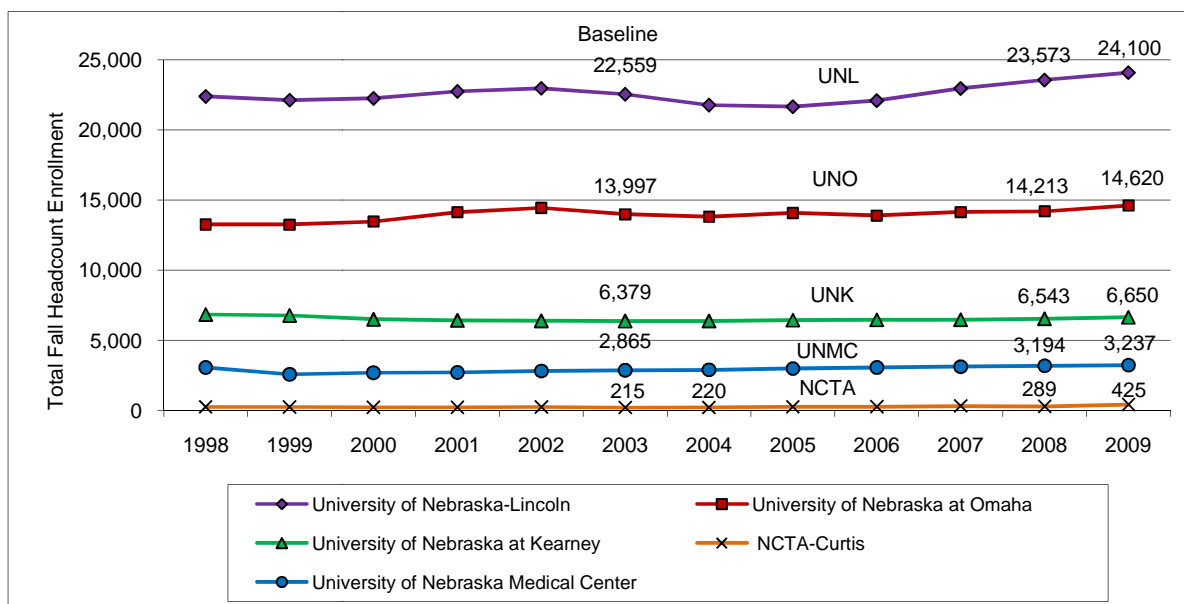
Within all sectors, changes in enrollment vary from one institution to another. The charts in this section show the 10-year enrollment trends of the institutions in each public sector. Within the context of these trends, fall 2003 baseline enrollments are shown in comparison to the latest available total headcount enrollments obtained from University of Nebraska Central Administration, the Nebraska State College System office, or in the case of the community colleges, directly from the college or from the National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and confirmed by the institution. (See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix](#) for supporting data.)

University of Nebraska

- Between fall 2003 and fall 2009, total headcount enrollment at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) increased 6.8%.
- Between fall 2003 and fall 2009, enrollment at the other institutions constituting the University of Nebraska increased as follows: the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) 4.5%, the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) 4.2%, the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) 13.0%, and the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA) 97.7% (from 215 students in fall 2003 to 425 in fall 2008).
- Between fall 2008 and fall 2009, total headcount enrollments increased as follows: UNL 2.2%, UNO 2.9%, UNK 1.6% and UNMC 1.3%. Enrollment at NCTA decreased 11.6% from 327 in fall 2007 to 289 in fall 2008, but increased 47.1% from 289 in fall 2008 to 425 in fall 2009.

Figure 1.3

**Fall Headcount Enrollment at the University of Nebraska by Institution
Fall 1998–Fall 2009¹**



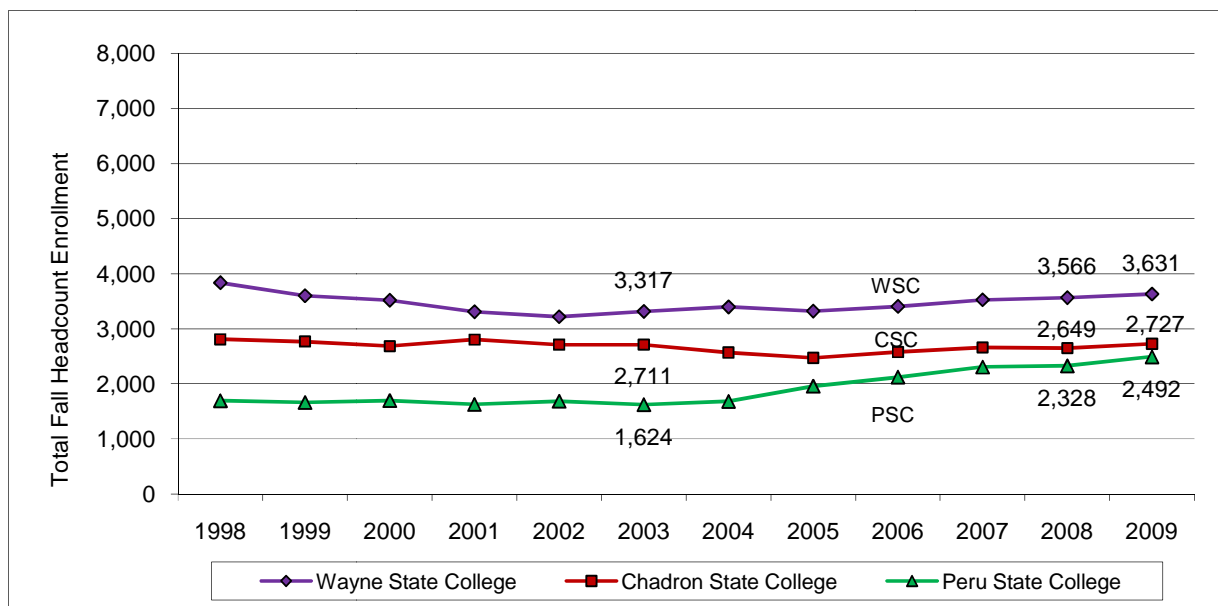
¹Data Source for 1998-2008: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). For 2009: University of Nebraska Central Administration. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

Nebraska State College System

- Total headcount enrollment at Wayne State College (WSC) increased 7.5% between fall 2003 and fall 2008. Between 2008 and 2009, enrollment at WSC increased 1.8%, resulting in a 9.5% increase over the six-year period between fall 2003 and fall 2009.
- Total headcount enrollment at Chadron State College (CSC) decreased 8.8% from fall 2003 to fall 2005 and decreased 0.4% in fall 2008. However, enrollment increased 4.2% in fall 2006, 3.2% in fall 2007, and 2.9% in fall 2009. As a result, enrollment at CSC was 0.6% higher in fall 2009 than it was in fall 2003.
- Primarily as a result of the expansion of online courses and graduate enrollment, total headcount enrollment at Peru State College (PSC) increased 42.1% or more than 10% a year between fall 2003 and fall 2007. Enrollment increased only 0.9% between fall 2007 and fall 2008, but total headcount increased 7.0% between fall 2008 and fall 2009, for a net six-year increase of 53.4%.

Figure 1.4

Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska State College System by Institution Fall 1998–Fall 2009¹



¹Data Source for 1998-2008: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). For 2009: Nebraska State College System office. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

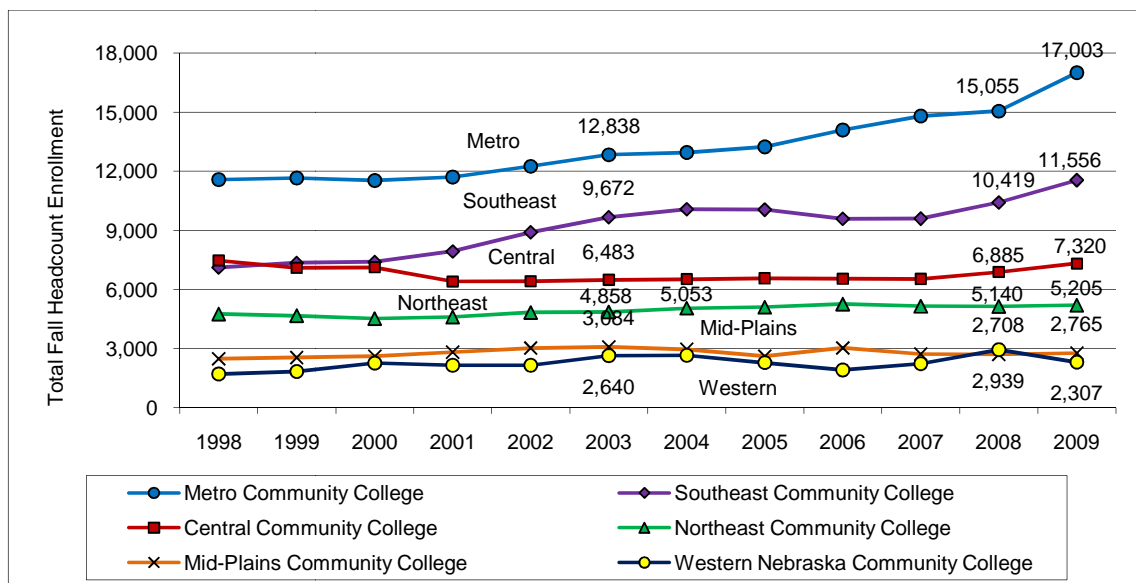
Nebraska Community Colleges

- Overall, total community college enrollments increased 16.6% between fall 2003 and fall 2009. However, enrollment changes over the six years varied significantly from one institution to another.
- In summary, four of Nebraska's six community colleges reported net increases in total headcount enrollment between fall 2003 and fall 2009, while enrollments decreased at two of the colleges.
- Enrollment changes between fall 2008 and fall 2009 were in the same directions as the six-year changes reported above except in one case: enrollment at Mid-Plains Community College decreased 10.3% between fall 2003 and fall 2009, but there was a 2.1% increase in enrollment between fall 2008 and fall 2009.
- Due primarily to fluctuating demand for industry training classes, the total headcount enrollment at Western Nebraska Community College increased 16.4% in fall 2007 and 31.6% in fall 2008. However, these increases were more than offset by annual decreases of 14.1%, 16.0% and 21.5% in fall 2005, 2006, and 2009, respectively.

	<u>Six-Year Change</u>	<u>One-Year Change</u>
- Central Community College	12.9%	6.3%
- Metropolitan Community College	32.4%	12.9%
- Mid-Plains Community College	- 10.3%	2.1%
- Northeast Community College	7.1%	1.3%
- Southeast Community College	19.5%	10.9%
- Western Nebraska Community College	-12.6%	-21.5%

Figure 1.5

**Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska Community Colleges by Institution
Fall 1998–Fall 2009¹**



¹Data Source for 1998-2008: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). For 2009: Data obtained directly from the institution or from IPEDS and confirmed by the institution. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities

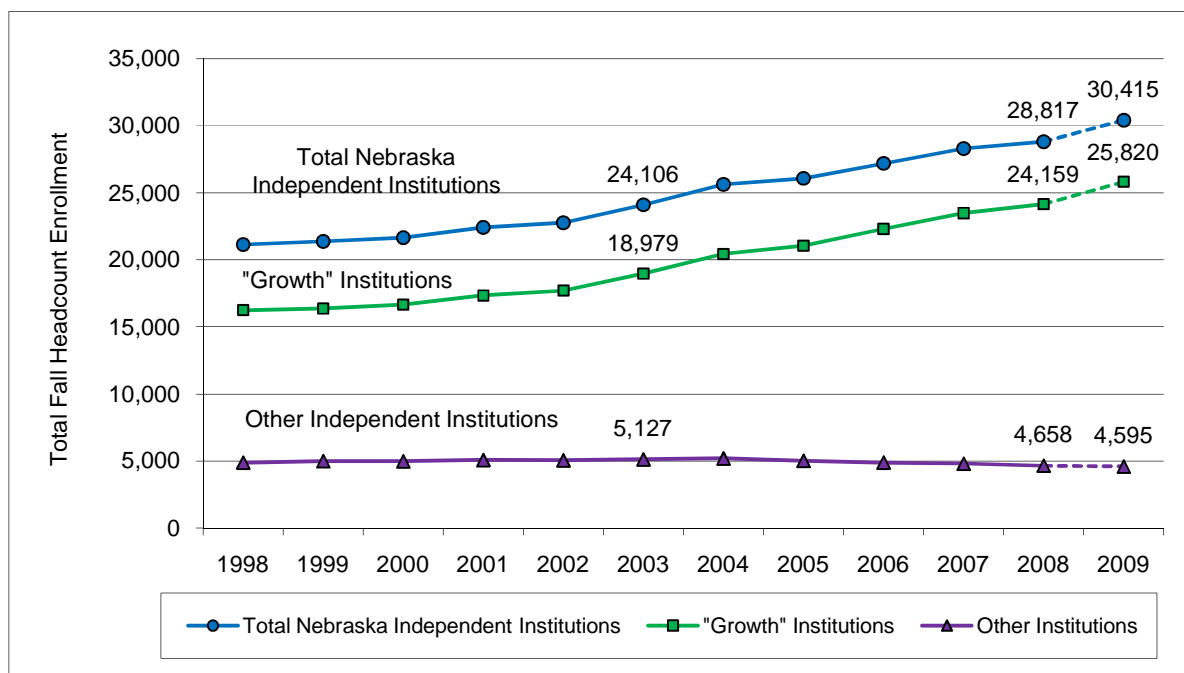
- Total fall headcount enrollment at Nebraska’s 19 independent colleges and universities increased 19.5% between fall 2003 and fall 2008, and by another estimated 5.5% in fall 2009, for an estimated total six-year increase of 26.2%.
- As illustrated in [Figure 1.6](#) below, the following nine institutions accounted for nearly all of the sector’s growth between fall 2003 and fall 2009:

Bellevue University
 Creighton University
 Concordia University
 Clarkson College
 Nebraska Wesleyan University

Doane College¹
 BryanLGH College of Health Sciences
 Nebraska Methodist College
 College of St. Mary

The combined enrollment of these “growth” institutions increased 36.0% between 2003 and 2009, while the total enrollment of the remaining 10 schools decreased 10.4% over the same period.²

Figure 1.6
Fall Headcount Enrollment at Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities
Fall 1998–Fall 2009¹



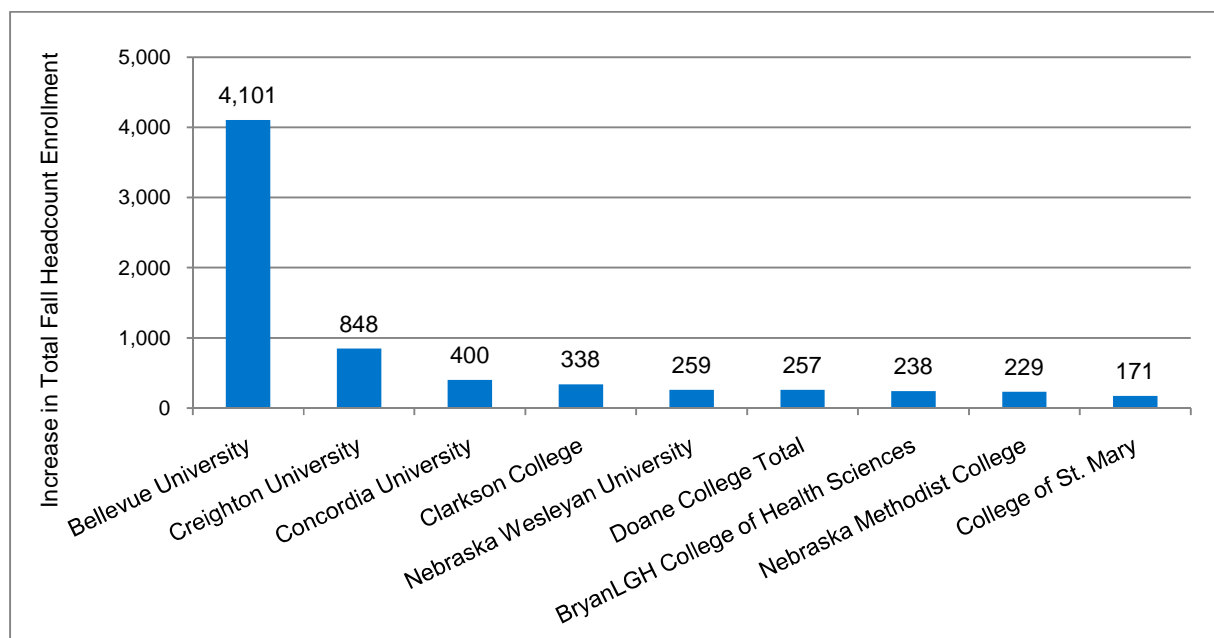
¹Data Source for 1998-2008: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). For 2009: Estimates reported to IPEDS on the fall 2009 institutional characteristics survey. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

¹Beginning in 2006, Doane College-Lincoln became a reporting institution, separate from Doane College. For the purposes of this report, the two campuses are considered to be a single institution.

²Bellevue University, Creighton University, Concordia University, Clarkson College, Nebraska Wesleyan University, Doane College, BryanLGH College of Health Sciences, Nebraska Methodist College, and College of St. Mary are categorized by the Commission as “growth” institutions because these institutions had higher six-year increases in total fall headcount enrollment and higher six-year growth rates between 2003 and 2009 than other institutions in the independent sector. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

- As shown in [Figure 1.7](#) below, Bellevue University alone accounted for 4,101 or 65% of the net increase of 6,309 students in the independent sector between fall 2003 and fall 2009.¹
- Creighton University's enrollment increased by 848 students over the six-year period, accounting for 13% of the sector's growth.
- Fall enrollment at Concordia University, Clarkson College, Nebraska Wesleyan University, Doane College, Bryan LGH College of Health Sciences, Nebraska Methodist College, and College of St. Mary each increased 171 to 400 students between fall 2003 and fall 2009.
- As of fall 2009, the nine "growth" institutions enrolled 85% of the students who attended Nebraska's independent colleges and universities, up from about 79% six years earlier.

Figure 1.7
The Highest Six-Year Increases in Fall Headcount Enrollment
at Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities
Fall 2003–Fall 2009¹



¹Data Source for 1998-2008: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). For 2009: Estimates reported to IPEDS on the fall 2009 institutional characteristics survey. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

- Of the remaining 10 institutions, two reported significantly smaller increases in fall enrollment between fall 2003 and fall 2009: Hastings College (41, 3.7%) and Dana College (14, 2.4%).
- The other eight institutions in the independent sector experienced small to significant declines in total enrollment over the six-year period: Summit Christian College (-13, -27.1%), Little Priest Tribal College (-23, -17.7%), York College (-31, -6.7%), Nebraska Christian College (-36, -22.6%), Union College (-49, -5.4%), Nebraska Indian Community College (-80, -42.1%), Grace University (-112, -18.7%), and Midland Lutheran College (-243, -25.7%)

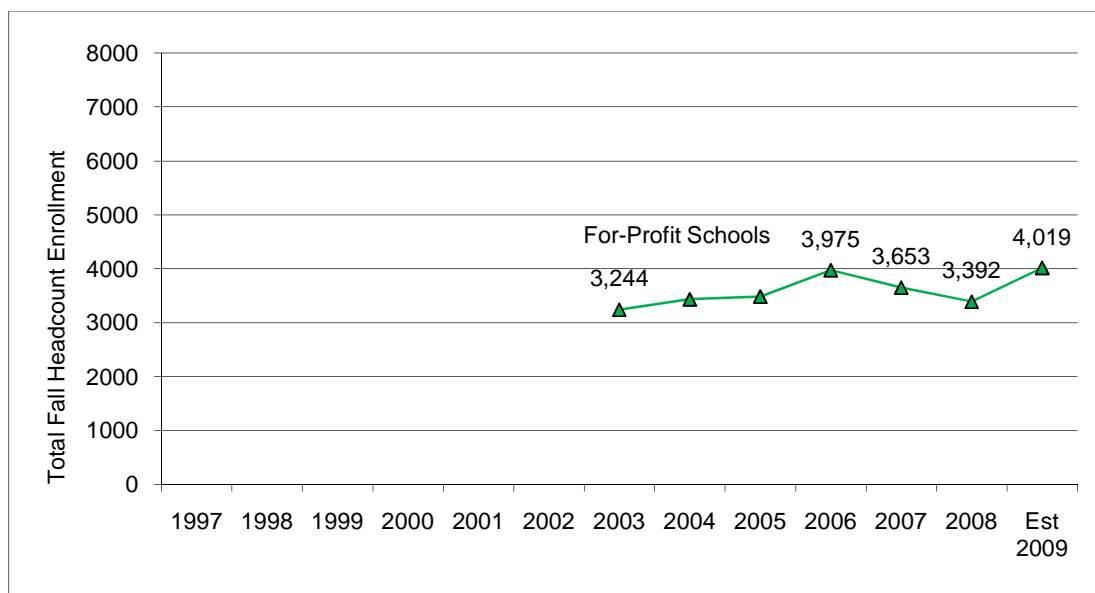
The For-Profit/Career School Sector

All of the institutions in the “for-profit/career school sector” are operated for profit except for three schools of radiologic technology, which are operated by not-for-profit hospitals or medical centers. This category previously has been referred to as the “private career schools.” While this sector still includes a variety of career schools, some of the institutions in this category have broadened their missions to include the offering of bachelor’s or more advanced degrees.

- As illustrated in [Figure 1.8](#), total headcount enrollment within the for-profit sector decreased 8.1% between fall 2006 and fall 2007 and decreased 7.1% between fall 2007 and fall 2008. However, enrollment increased 18.5% in fall 2009, based on preliminary figures.
- Based on estimated fall 2009 enrollments, total enrollment in the for-profit sector increased 23.9% over the past six years.
- See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for a list of the schools in the for-profit sector and their total headcount enrollments from fall 2003 to fall 2009.

Figure 1.8

**Total Fall Headcount Enrollment within the Nebraska For-Profit/Career School Sector
Fall 2003–Fall 2009¹**



¹Data Source for 2003-2008: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). For 2009: Estimates reported to IPEDS on the fall 2009 institutional characteristics survey or reported by the colleges to the Coordinating Commission. See [Table A1.2](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

Nebraska Fall Headcount Enrollment Summary by Sector

- Including the enrollments at for-profit schools, Nebraska’s total postsecondary headcount enrollment increased 14.8%, from 120,592 in fall 2003 to 138,472 in fall 2009, based on preliminary counts.
- As shown in [Table 1.1](#), the net effect of the changes in enrollment that occurred between the fall 2003 baseline and fall 2009 is that the enrollments at the independent colleges and universities and the for-profit schools accounted for slightly higher percentages of Nebraska’s total postsecondary enrollment in 2009. The combined enrollment of the public institutions accounted for a slightly lower percentage of the state’s total enrollment.

Table 1.1 Nebraska Total Fall Headcount Enrollment by Sector: 2003 and 2009¹				
Enrollment Sector	Fall 2003		Estimated Fall 2009	
	Enrollment	% of Enrollment	Enrollment	% of Enrollment
University of Nebraska	46,015	38.2%	49,032	35.4%
Nebraska State Colleges	7,652	6.3%	8,850	6.4%
Nebraska Community Colleges	39,575	32.8%	46,156	33.3%
Total Nebraska Public Colleges and Universities	93,242	77.3%	104,038	75.1%
Nebraska Independent Colleges and Universities	24,106	20.0%	30,415	22.0%
For-Profit Schools*	3,244	2.7%	4,019	2.9%
Total Nebraska Postsecondary Headcount Enrollment	120,592	100.0%	138,472	100.0%
<p>*Note: All institutions in this category are operated for profit <u>except</u> for the three schools of radiologic technology, which are operated by not-for-profit hospitals or medical centers.</p>				
<p>¹See Table A.1 in Appendix 1 for data references.</p>				

12-Month Unduplicated Headcounts at Nebraska's Public Institutions Compared to Fall Headcount Enrollment

Fall headcount enrollment is the best available indicator of enrollment trends across all of the sectors of postsecondary education in Nebraska. However, fall enrollment totals provide only a "snapshot" of the number of students at an institution on a specific date during the fall of the academic year. As a result, fall enrollment totals do not include students who were enrolled in college only during the spring or summer of the academic year.

Although fall enrollment is currently the most reliable measure to track higher education enrollment trends across all of the sectors of higher education, Nebraska's postsecondary institutions also report 12-month unduplicated headcounts to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Also referred to as "12-month enrollment," a 12-month unduplicated headcount is the total number of students who were enrolled at an institution at any time during the academic year. For this measure, each student is counted only once per academic year. If a student was enrolled in the fall and spring semester, for example, the student is counted only once for the entire year. The advantage of this count is that it captures not only the students who were enrolled in the fall, but also students who were enrolled in the spring or summer but not in the fall. In this way, 12-month enrollment captures the total number of students an institution serves during the course of an academic year.

For some institutions, fall enrollment is about the same or only slightly lower than the school's 12-month unduplicated headcount. However, for other institutions, fall enrollment is significantly lower than the total number of students the school serves over the course of an academic year. This is particularly true for Nebraska's community colleges, where the number of students enrolled in the fall is about half of the number of students served over the course of an academic year.

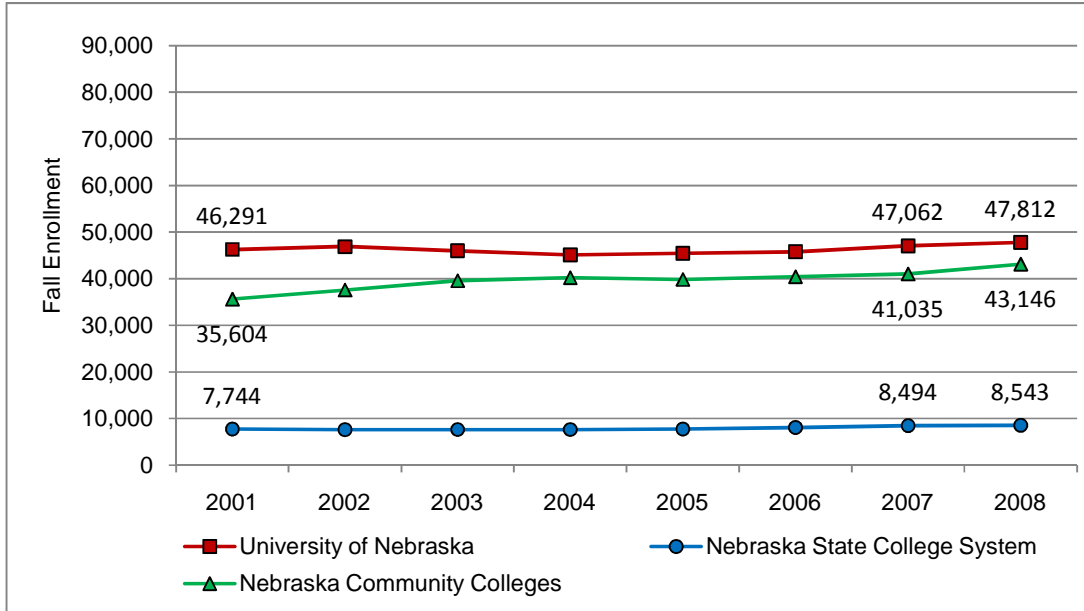
The following analysis compares fall and 12-month unduplicated headcounts for Nebraska's three public sectors of higher education: the University of Nebraska, the Nebraska State College System and Nebraska's six community colleges.¹ For comparisons of the fall and 12-month enrollments of each the institutions within these sectors, see Section A.7 of the *2008-2009 Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska*, which is available on the Commission's Web site, www.ccpe.state.ne.us.

Figure 1.9 on the next page shows the total fall enrollments for the three public sectors from fall 2001 through fall 2008, the latest period for which official data are available from the NCES. Figure 1.10 shows the comparable 12-month enrollments reported to the NCES for the 2001–2002 academic year through the 2007–2008 academic year. Official 12-month enrollment data for the 2008–2009 academic year, which are comparable to fall 2008 enrollments, are not yet available from the NCES. As a result, direct comparisons of fall and 12-month enrollments in this discussion are limited to 2001–2002 through 2007–2008.

The fall and 12-month enrollments shown in Figure 1.9 and Figure 1.10 are both valid measures for determining whether sector enrollments are generally increasing, decreasing or staying about the same. However, the two headcounts provide different information about sector enrollments.

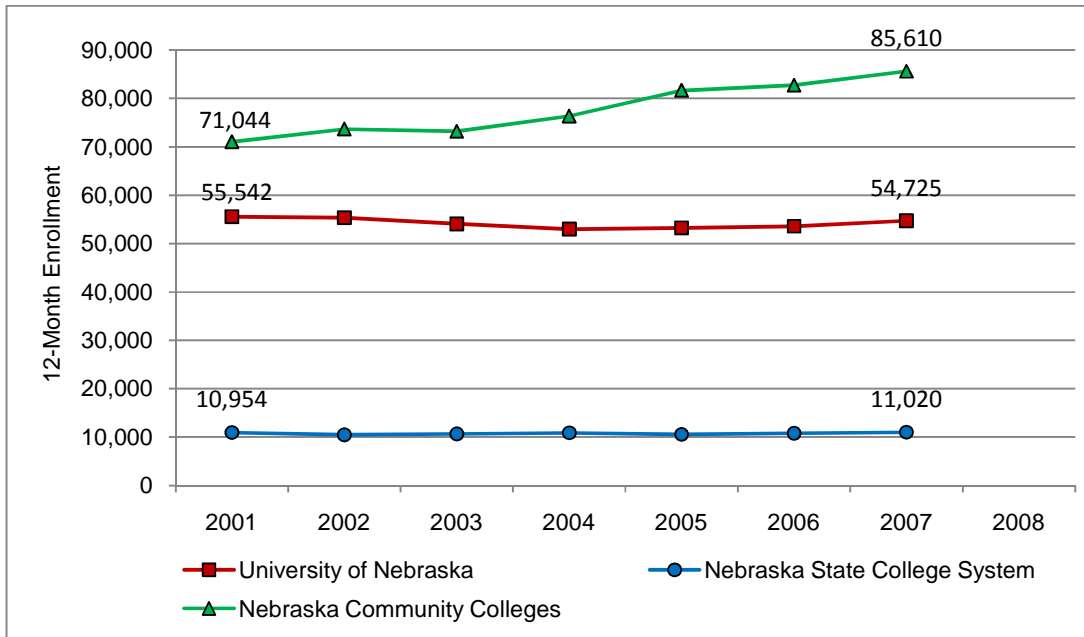
¹This analysis is limited to the sectors with reported 12-month unduplicated headcounts that have been verified by the Coordinating Commission's research staff. The 12-month unduplicated headcounts reported by Nebraska's independent (not-for-profit) and for-profit institutions will be included in future analyses when they have been checked for consistency and verified with the institutions.

Figure 1.9
Fall Headcount Enrollment
at Nebraska Public Postsecondary Institutions by Sector
Fall 2001–Fall 2008¹



¹Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). See [Table A1.1](#) and in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

Figure 1.10
12-Month Unduplicated Headcount
at Nebraska Public Postsecondary Institutions by Sector
2001–2002 Academic Year through 2007–2008 Academic Year¹



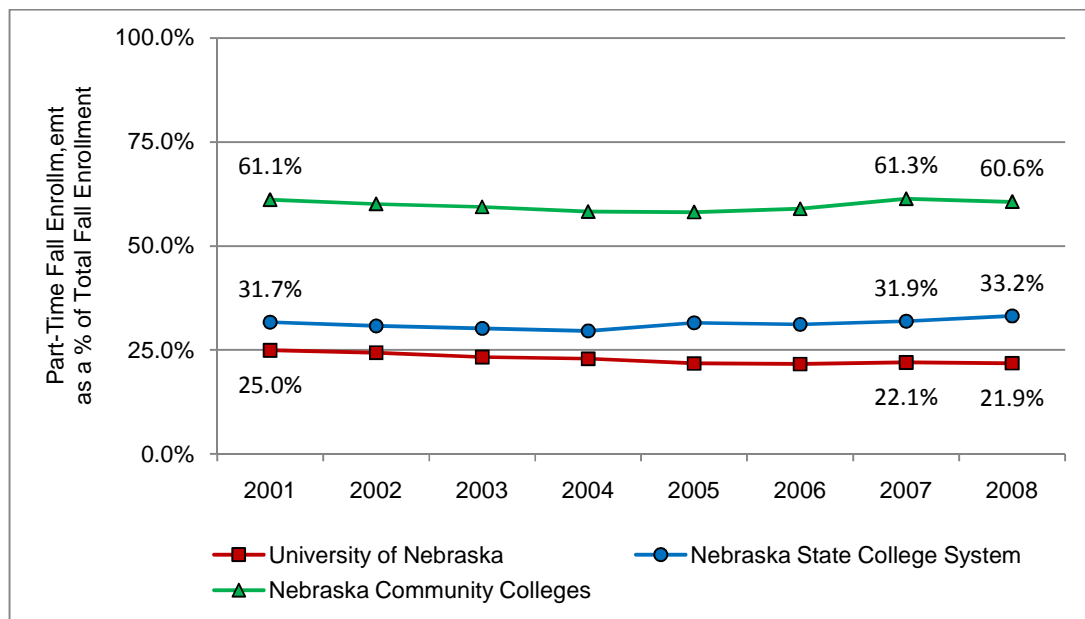
¹Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). See [Table A1.3](#) and in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

Based on the fall enrollments charted in [Figure 1.9](#) on the previous page, the University of Nebraska enrolls a higher number of students than Nebraska's six community colleges. In fall 2007, for example, the University of Nebraska enrolled 47,062 students compared to an enrollment of 41,035 students at the community colleges.

The 12-month enrollments summarized in [Figure 1.10](#), on the other hand, show that Nebraska's community colleges serve a significantly greater number of students than the University of Nebraska over the course of an academic year. As also illustrated in the chart, the difference between the 12-month enrollments of these two sectors has increased since the 2001–2002 academic year. As a result, in 2007–2008, the community colleges served a total of 85,610 students over the course of the academic year, while the University of Nebraska served 54,725 students. This is not surprising, given the differences in the institutional missions and programs offered by these two sectors.

The significantly higher 12-month headcount of the community colleges reflects the fact that these colleges serve many students who take courses only one semester or quarter of the academic year. Furthermore, the community colleges enroll significantly more part-time students than the university or state colleges. As shown in [Figure 1.11](#) below, part-time students account for about 60% of total fall enrollment at the community colleges. In comparison, part-time students account for less than 25% of the university's fall enrollment and about one-third of the total fall enrollment at the state colleges.¹

Figure 1.11
Part-Time Fall Enrollment as a Percentage of Total Fall Headcount Enrollment
at Nebraska Public Postsecondary Institutions by Sector
Fall 2001–Fall 2008¹



¹Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). For supporting data, see the Excel workbook titled, Section A: Enrollment, for the 2008-2009 *Factual Look at Higher Education in Nebraska* on the Commission's Web site at: <http://www.ccpe.state.ne.us/publicdoc/ccpe/Reports/FactLook/default.asp>

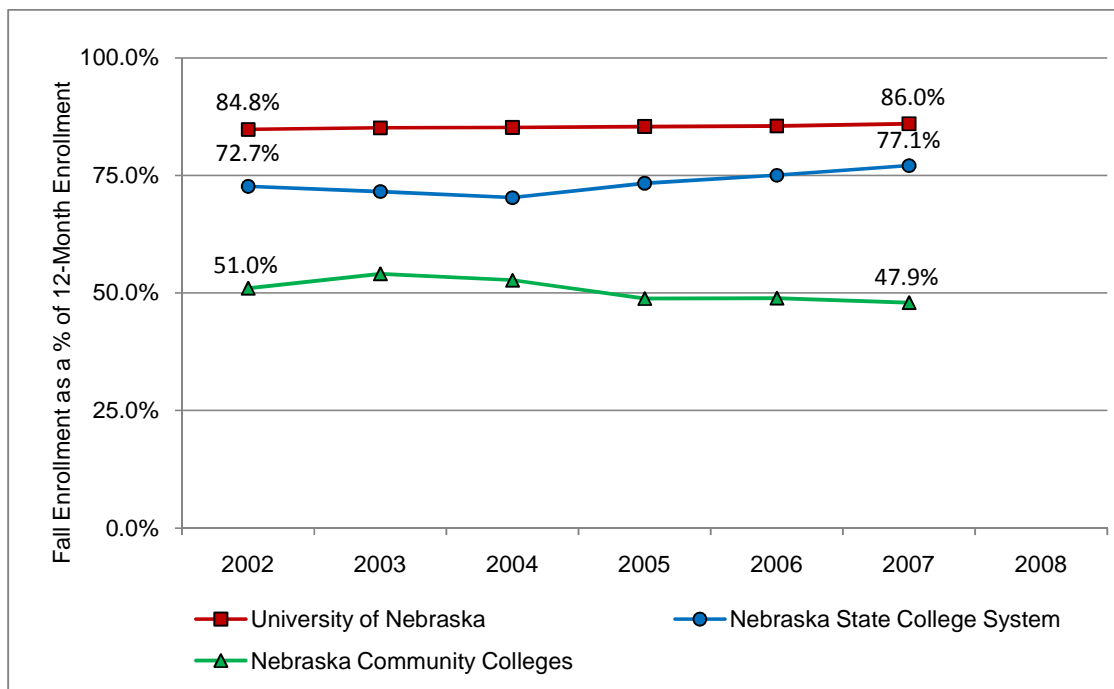
¹The NCES does not ask institutions to report 12-month unduplicated headcounts by full-time/part-time enrollment status. Consequently, the numbers and percentages of students who attend any institution on a part-time basis are available only for fall headcount enrollments.

Figure 1.12 below shows fall enrollment as a percentage of 12-month enrollment as a means of directly comparing these two headcounts. As shown in this chart, fall enrollment in fall 2007 accounted for 86% and 77% of 12-month enrollment during the 2007-2008 academic year at the University of Nebraska and the Nebraska State College System, respectively. In contrast, fall enrollments account for 48% of the students served annually by the state's six community colleges.

The Commission will continue to use fall unduplicated headcounts as the primary measure of the number of students enrolled at colleges and universities in Nebraska. However, fall headcount enrollments should be interpreted with the understanding that there are many more students who are served by Nebraska's postsecondary education system over the course of any given academic year, and this is especially true in the case of the state's community colleges.

Figure 1.12

Fall Headcount Enrollment as a Percentage of 12-Month Unduplicated Headcount at Nebraska Public Postsecondary Institutions by Sector 2001–2002 Academic Year through 2007–2008 Academic Year¹



¹Data source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). See [Table A1.1](#) and [Table A1.3](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

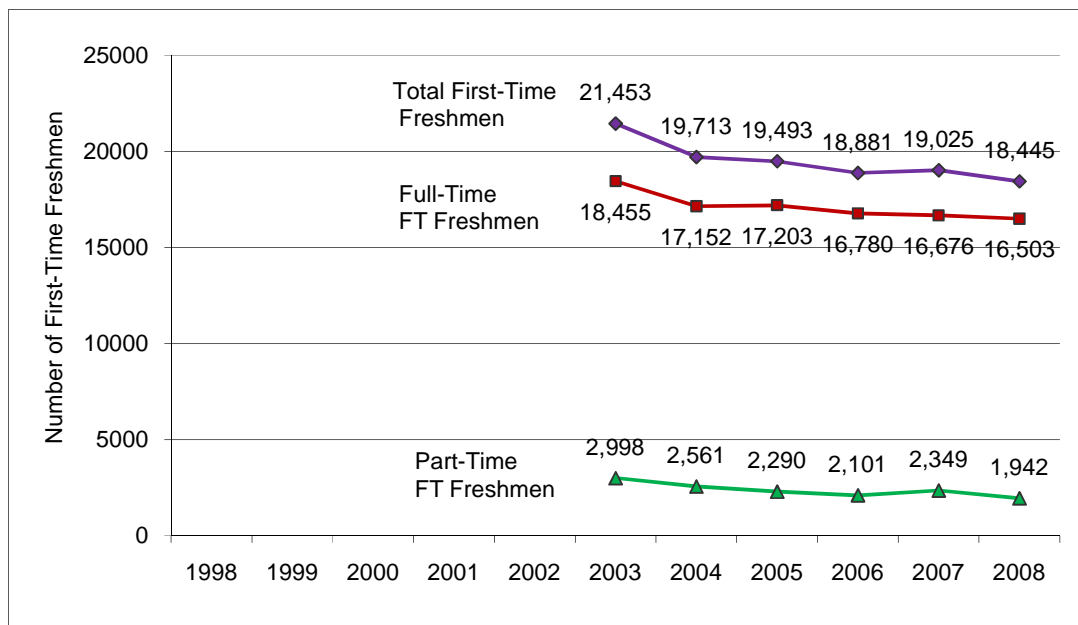
Nebraska First-Time Freshmen Enrollments

First-time freshmen enrollments are indicators of the general direction that undergraduate enrollments are headed as well as general measures of the numbers of high school graduates who go on to college in Nebraska. Consequently, this section compares 2003 baseline enrollments of first-time freshmen to freshmen enrollments in fall 2008. First-time freshmen enrollments for fall 2009 will be available in May 2010 and reported in the *2011 Nebraska Higher Education Progress Report*.

Nebraska Total Enrollment of Full- and Part-Time, First-Time Freshmen

- As shown in [Figure 1.13](#), total enrollment of first-time freshmen at all of Nebraska’s colleges and universities, including for-profit/career schools, decreased by 3,008 or 14.0% from a baseline enrollment of 21,453 in fall 2003 to 18,445 in fall 2008. As a result, first-time freshmen enrollment in fall 2008 was only slightly higher than it was in fall 1998. (See Part C of [Table A1.4](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.)
- Between 2003 and 2008, the enrollment of full-time, first-time freshmen decreased by 1,952 students, or 10.6%, from 18,455 to 16,503. Part-time freshmen enrollment decreased by 1,056 students, or 35.2%, from 2,998 to 1,942 during the same period.
- In fall 2008, full-time freshmen accounted for 89.5% of the first-time freshmen attending postsecondary institutions in Nebraska, up from 86.0% in fall 2003. Conversely, part-time, first-time freshmen decreased from 14.0% to 10.5% of total freshmen enrollment.

Figure 1.13
Nebraska Total First-Time, Freshmen Enrollment
by Full- and Part-Time Student Status
Fall 2003–Fall 2008¹



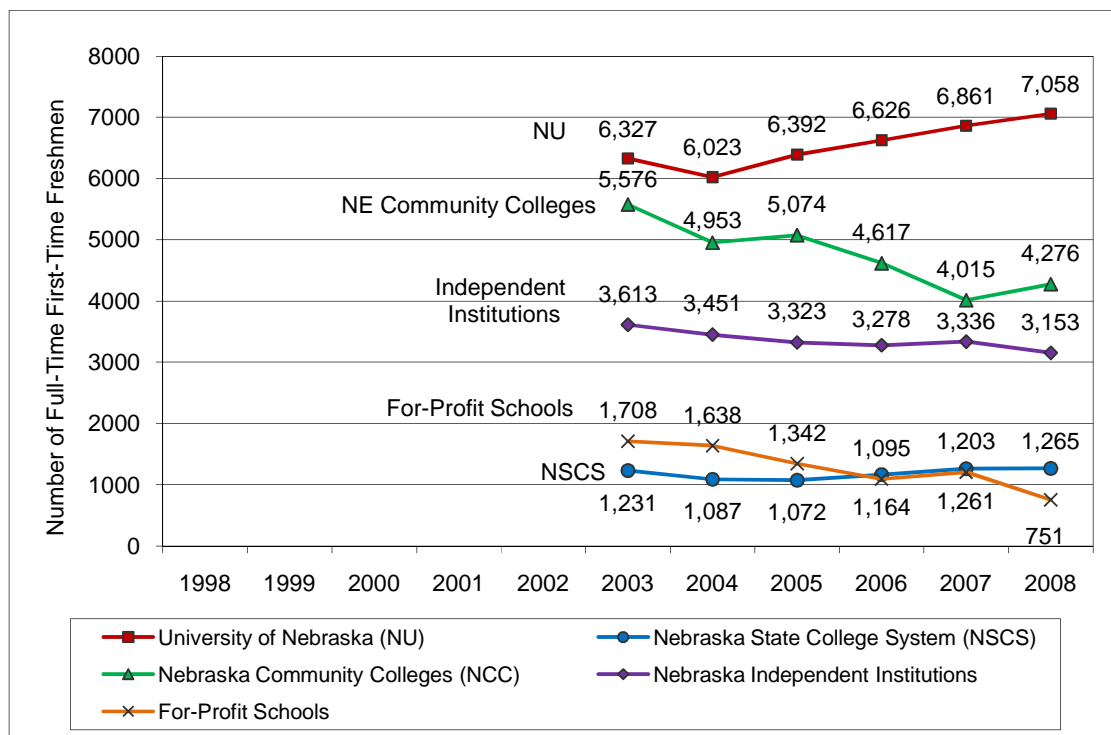
¹Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Includes degree-granting and non-degree-granting for-profit schools and three not-for-profit career schools of radiologic technology in addition to the enrollments at all public and independent colleges and universities. See [Table A1.4](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

Nebraska Enrollment of Full- and Part-Time, First-Time Freshmen by Sector

- The University of Nebraska and the Nebraska State College System were the only sectors that reported four-year net increases in the number of full-time, first-time freshmen enrolled between fall 2003 and fall 2008.
- As illustrated in [Figure 1.14](#), the University of Nebraska experienced a 4.8% decrease in the number of full-time, first time freshmen enrolled between fall 2003 and fall 2004. However, this decrease was offset by increases in fall 2005 through fall 2008, resulting in a five-year net gain of 11.6% in full-time, first-time freshmen enrollment between fall 2003 and fall 2008.
- Between 2004 and 2005, Nebraska’s community colleges experienced a 2.4% gain in the number of first-time freshmen enrolled full-time. The community colleges also experienced a 6.5% increase between 2007 and 2008. However, full-time, first-time freshmen enrollments decreased in fall 2004, fall 2006 and fall 2007. As a result, enrollment of full-time, first-time freshmen at Nebraska’s community colleges was 23.3% lower in fall 2008 than it was in fall 2003.
- The number of full-time, first-time freshmen enrolled at Nebraska’s independent colleges decreased 9.3% between fall 2003 and fall 2006, increased 1.8% in fall 2007, and decreased 5.5% in fall 2008. As a result, full-time, first-time freshmen enrollment at the independent institutions was 12.7% lower in fall 2008 than it was in fall 2003.

Figure 1.14

**Nebraska Total Full-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by Sector
Fall 2003–Fall 2008¹**

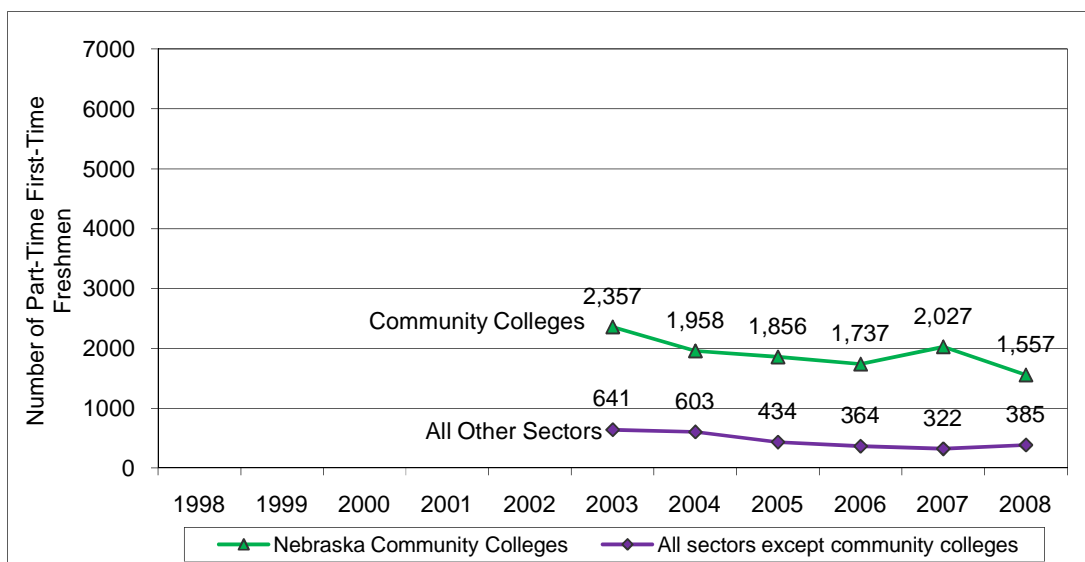


¹Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The for-profit sector includes three career schools of radiologic technology operated by non-profit hospitals or medical centers. See [Part A of Table A1.4](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

- As also illustrated in [Figure 1.14](#) on the preceding page, Nebraska’s for-profit/career schools enrolled 56% fewer full-time, first-time freshmen in fall 2008 than they did in 2003, which is the baseline for this report. These schools include the University of Phoenix, a variety of other for-profit schools, and three schools of radiologic therapy operated by non-profit hospitals or medical centers.
- The enrollment of full-time, first-time freshmen at Nebraska’s state colleges decreased 12.9% between fall 2003 and fall 2005. However, enrollments increased by more than 8% in fall 2006 and fall 2007 and by 0.3% in fall 2008. As a result, the number of full-time, first time freshmen enrolled at the state colleges was 2.8% higher in fall 2008 than it was in fall 2003. (See [Part A](#) of [Table A1.4](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.)
- As shown in [Figure 1.15](#) below, Nebraska’s community colleges account for the majority of first-time freshmen who attend school part time (78.6% of the state total in fall 2003, 86.3% in fall 2007, and 80.2% in 2008). Enrollment of part-time, first-time freshmen at Nebraska’s community colleges decreased 26.3% between fall 2003 and fall 2006, increased 16.7% in fall 2007, and then decreased 23.2% in fall 2008. With only one increase over the five-year period, part-time enrollment of first-time freshmen at the community colleges was 33.9% lower in fall 2008 than it was in fall 2003.
- The number of part-time freshmen enrolled in other types of institutions steadily decreased over the four-year period between 2003 and 2007. However, in fall 2008, enrollment increased due to Bellevue University changing semester formats. The change increased part-time, first-time freshmen enrollments at Bellevue, while decreasing the full-time enrollment of first-time freshmen at the school. As a result, from fall 2003 to fall 2008, total part-time enrollment of first-time freshmen at schools, not including the community colleges, decreased 40%. (See [Part B](#) of [Table A1.4](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.)

Figure 1.15

**Nebraska Total Part-Time, First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by Sector
Fall 2003–Fall 2008¹**

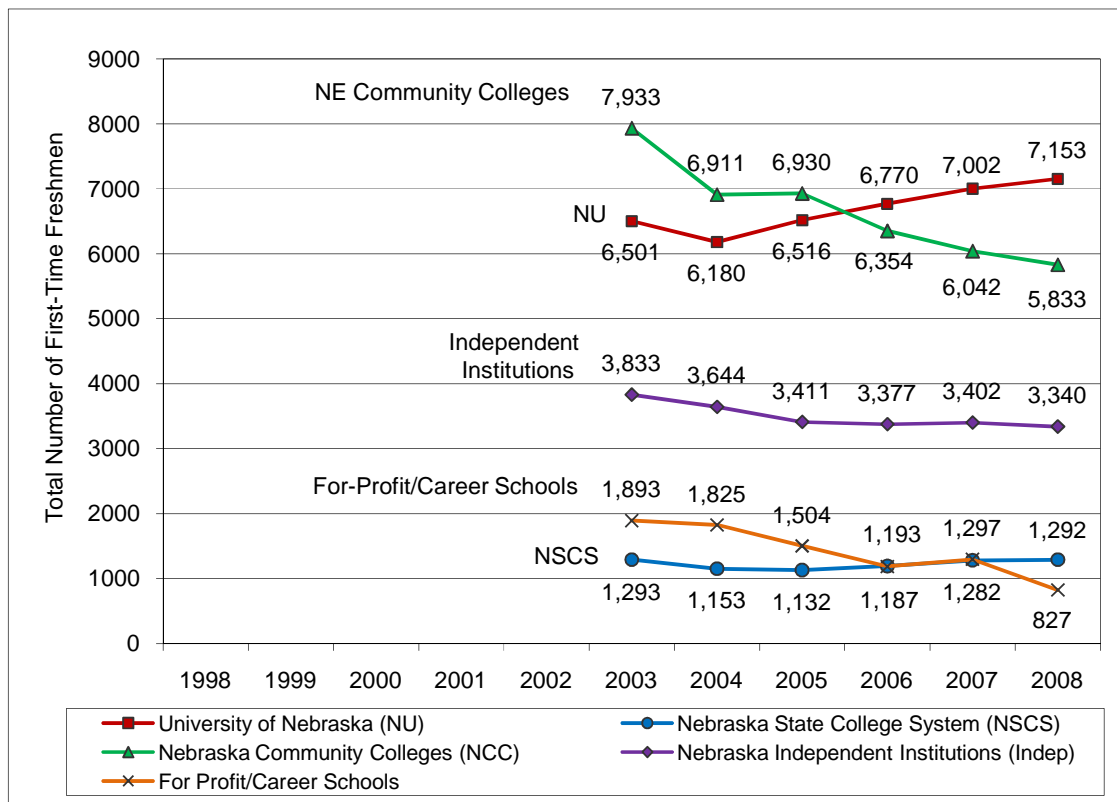


¹Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Includes degree-granting and non-degree-granting for-profit schools and three not-for-profit career schools of radiologic technology in addition to the enrollments at all public and independent colleges and universities. See [Part B](#) of [Table A1.4](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

Nebraska Total Enrollment of First-Time Freshmen by Sector

- When full-time and part-time enrollments of first-time freshmen are combined as shown in [Table 1.16](#) below, Nebraska’s community colleges enrolled more first-time freshmen than any other sector until fall 2006 when the number of first-time freshmen attending the institutions constituting the University of Nebraska exceeded the total enrolled at community colleges.
- The enrollment of first-time freshmen at the University of Nebraska increased 15.7% between fall 2004 and fall 2008 after a 4.9% decrease between fall 2003 and fall 2004. The net increase was 10.0% over the five-year period between 2003 and 2008.
- At the state colleges, a three-year increase in first-time freshmen enrollments followed a two-year decline, so that the number of first-time freshmen enrolled was almost exactly the same in fall 2008 as it was in fall 2003.
- The remaining three sectors reported lower first-time freshmen enrollment in fall 2008 than in fall 2003. Over the five years, total first-time freshmen enrollments decreased 26.5% at Nebraska’s community colleges, 12.9% at Nebraska’s independent colleges and universities and 56.3% at the state’s for-profit/career schools.

Figure 1.16
Nebraska Total First-Time Freshmen Enrollment by Sector
2003–2008¹



¹Data Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The for-profit sector includes three career schools radiologic technology operated by non-profit hospitals or medical centers. See [Part C of Table A1.4](#) in [Appendix 1](#) for supporting data.

Strategic Objectives to Increase Postsecondary Enrollment Recommended by the 2003 LR 174 Task Force

Given the first priority **to increase the number of students who enter postsecondary education in Nebraska**, the 2003 LR 174 Task Force recommended a series of strategic objectives to increase college enrollments. For the purposes of establishing baseline statistical indicators and monitoring progress toward achieving these objectives, they are stated as follows:

- 1.1 Increase the proportion of PK-12 students who graduate from high school, enroll in postsecondary education and are adequately prepared to proceed through postsecondary degree completion.**
- 1.2 Increase the proportion of Nebraska high school graduates who pursue their postsecondary education in Nebraska.**
- 1.3 Increase the number of non-Nebraska high school graduates who pursue postsecondary education in Nebraska.**
- 1.4 Increase the number and proportion of Nebraska postsecondary students who have been underrepresented in the state's higher education system.**
- 1.5 Increase need-based financial aid in order to improve access to higher education for Nebraskans with limited financial means.**

Following this outline, the remainder of this section focuses on the extent to which each of these measurable objectives is being achieved. Throughout this analysis, the latest available data are compared to the baseline statistics that were established and reported in the *2004 Baseline Report for the LR 174 Higher Education Task Force* or the *2005 Nebraska Higher Education Progress Report for the LR 75 Legislative Evaluation Task Force*.