
2010
Tuition, Fees and
Financial Aid
Report
Executive Summary

Approved by the Commission August 5, 2010



“Nebraska’s people will value and support higher education institutions that are vital, vigorous and visionary. Each higher education institution will fulfill its role and mission with distinction by being responsive to changing academic, workforce, societal, economic, and community development needs. Together, Nebraska’s institutions will provide access to educational opportunities that meet the diverse needs of students and citizens while exercising careful and creative stewardship of available resources.”

Comprehensive Statewide Plan
Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, 2006

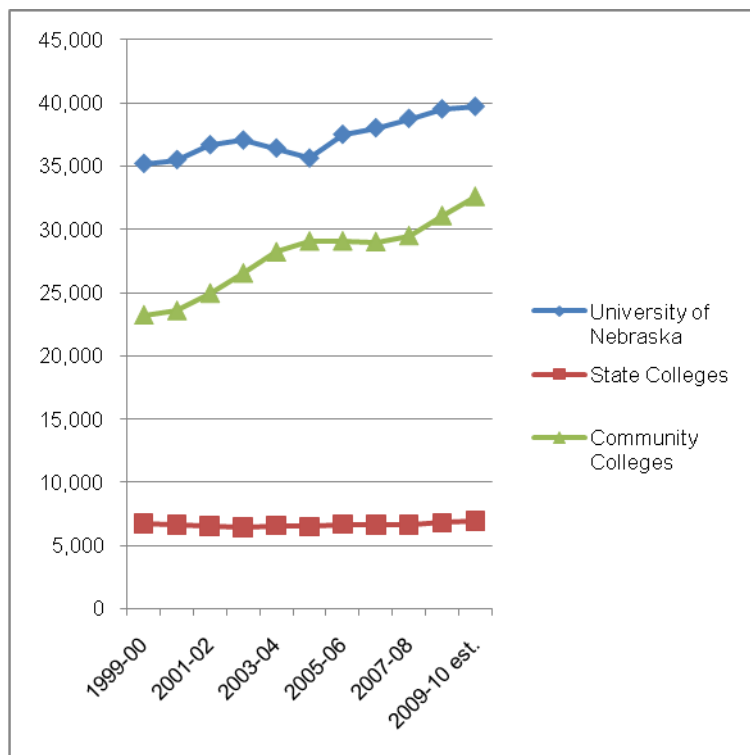
The State of Nebraska statutes require the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) to prepare biennially a *Tuition, Fees and Financial Aid Report*. The purpose of this report is to analyze the public policy issues relating to tuition, fees, and financial aid for students in Nebraska and to study how Nebraska’s public postsecondary educational institutions compare with their peer institutions in other states. This

report offers meaningful information on important issues facing Nebraska’s students and families, institutions of higher education, and constituencies of the state. Nebraskans benefit from affordable, accessible and high-quality education. This report will assist institutions as they continue to provide accessible, high-quality postsecondary education in Nebraska.

Although higher education is becoming less affordable (see following information), Nebraskans continue to show they value postsecondary education.

Total enrollment at Nebraska’s Public Postsecondary Institutions has increased by more than 14,000 FTE over the past 10 years.

- The largest increase (40%) has occurred in the community college sector, the sector that offers the lowest tuition.
- The University of Nebraska has seen a 13% increase, while the state colleges have seen a 3% increase.



Enrollment increases have occurred despite the fact that higher education is becoming less affordable for Nebraska students and their families.

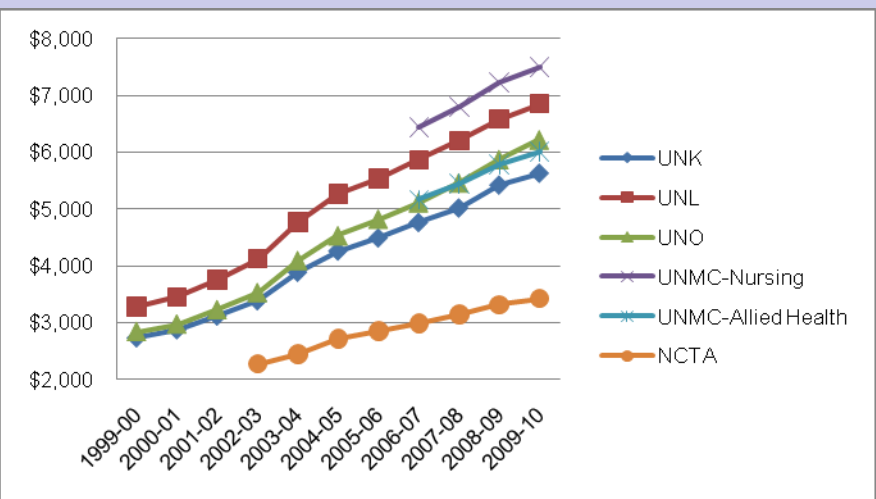
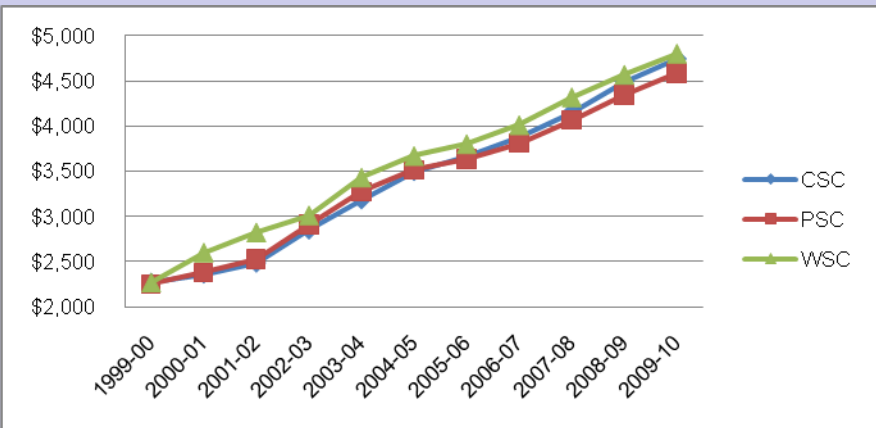
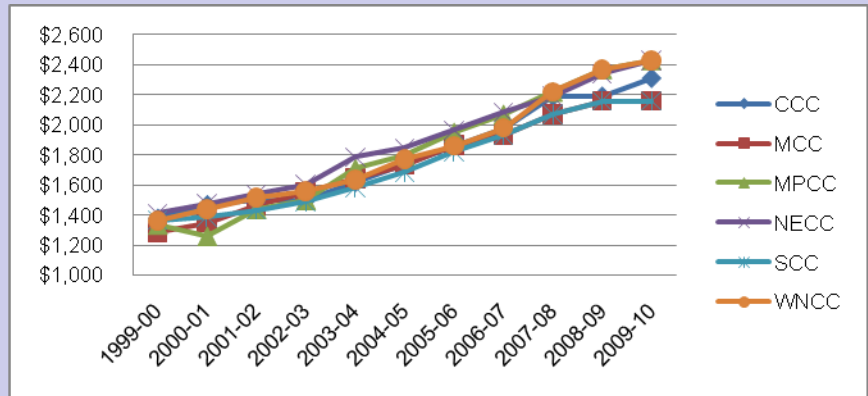
Tuition and Fees

- Over the past 10 years, tuition and mandatory fees have increased from 58% to 119% for a full-time, undergraduate, resident student at Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions.
- These increases in tuition and fees are higher than the 28% increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the 42% increase in the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) over the same time period.
- In comparison, the median family income of Nebraskans increased 52% from 1999 to 2008 (the latest year for which data are available).

Family Income

The percentage of family income needed to support undergraduate, resident tuition and mandatory fees at Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions is increasing, especially for students from families whose income is considered median-, low- or very low-income.

**Resident Tuition and Mandatory Fees at Nebraska's Public Colleges and Universities
1999-00 through 2009-10¹**



¹Based on 30 semester or 45 quarter hours

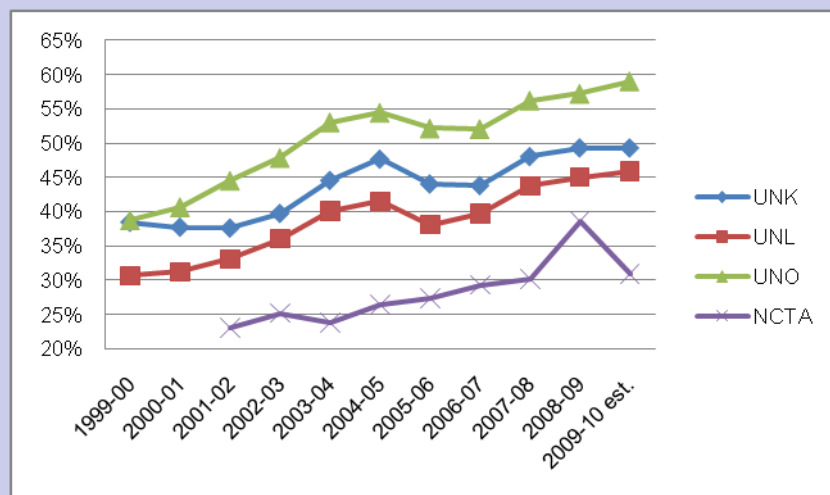
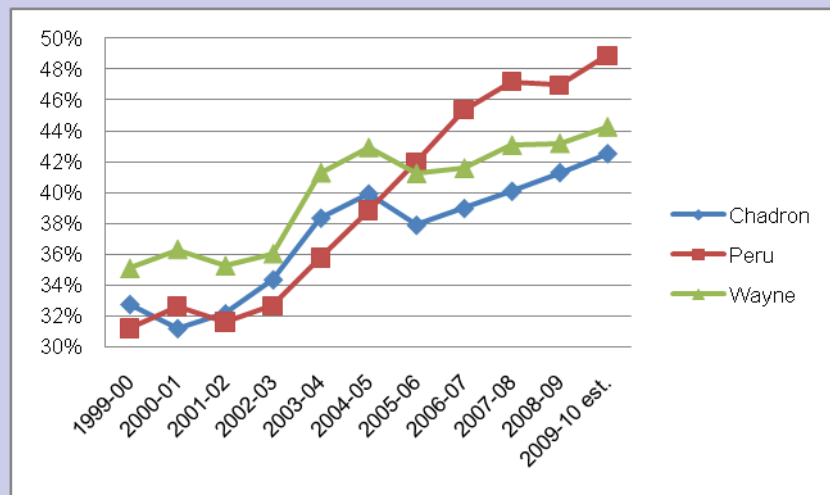
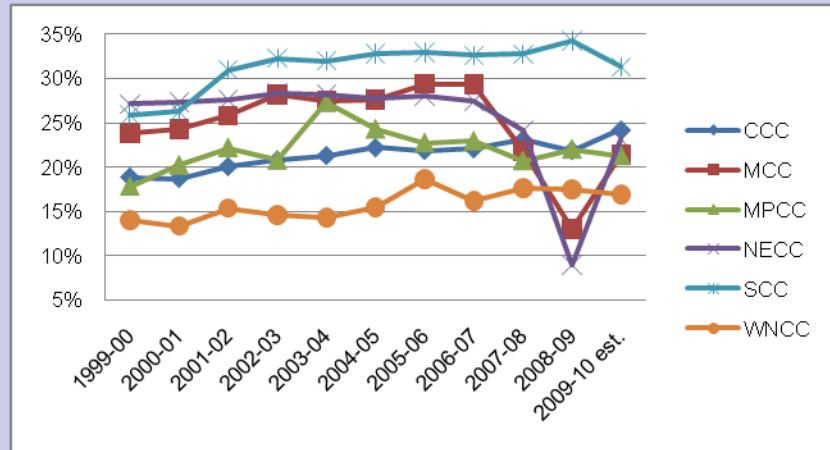
Student Payment Share

Overall, the State of Nebraska and its taxpayers continue to pay the largest share of the costs to educate public postsecondary students. Students pay a percentage of total costs through tuition and fees assessed at each institution. The percentage of costs paid by students (student payment share) is increasing. In other words, student payments are covering an increasing percentage of costs, with percentages of state and local cost coverage in decline. This trend applies to all of Nebraska's public institutions.

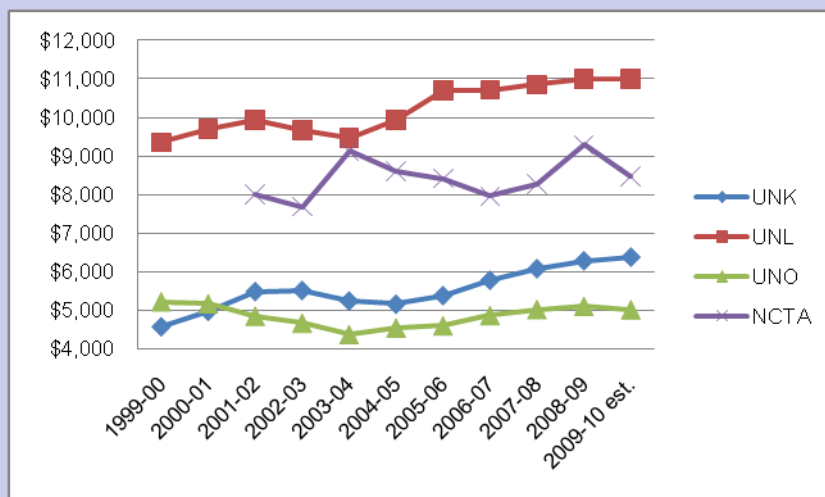
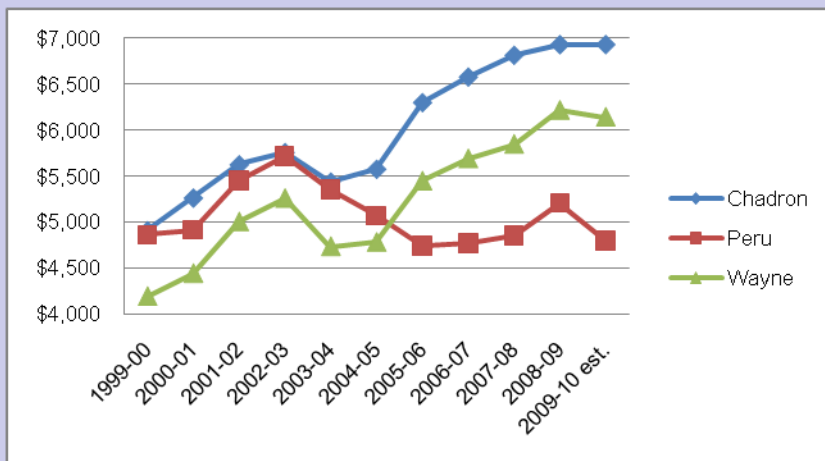
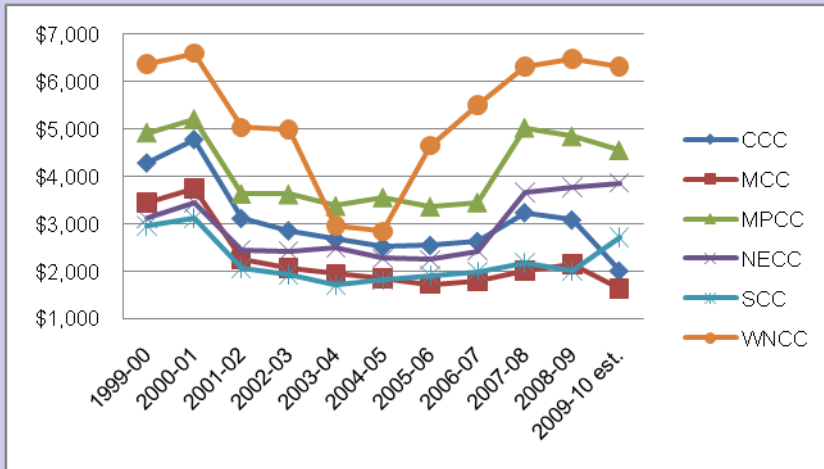
Higher education at Nebraska's public institutions is becoming less affordable, especially for students from low-income families.

- Students at the University of Nebraska at Omaha pay tuition rates that result in the highest student payment share; UNO students contribute more than 50% of the cost of their education.

**Student Payment Share at
Nebraska's Public Colleges and Universities
1999-00 through 2009-10**



State Appropriation per FTE at Nebraska's Public Colleges and Universities 1999-00 through 2009-10



Appropriations per full-time student have increased.

State appropriations per full-time equivalent (FTE) student at Nebraska's public post-secondary institutions have increased over the past 10 years. However, a majority of the total increase occurred in the first five years of this 10 year period. State funding is increasingly being moderated by other state obligations, such as Medicaid, corrections, K-12 and other social services.

- Metropolitan Community College and Central Community College receive less state appropriation per FTE than the other community colleges.¹
- Over the past 10 years, every community college except Northeast Community College has seen a decrease in their state appropriation per FTE.²

¹State funding to community colleges is determined by a formula that incorporates numerous factors, including local tax contributions, enrollment, tuition, etc.

²State appropriation increased less than the increase in enrollment, resulting in less appropriated dollars per student.

As tuition and mandatory fees continue to rise, financial aid becomes a necessity for many students.

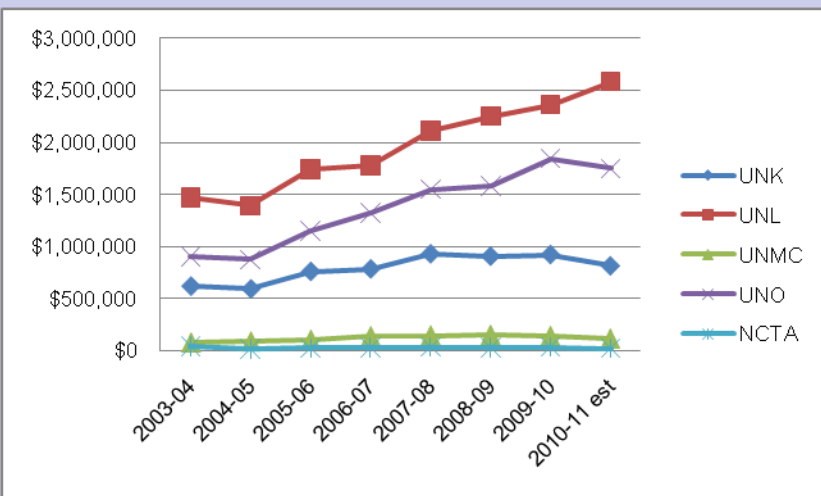
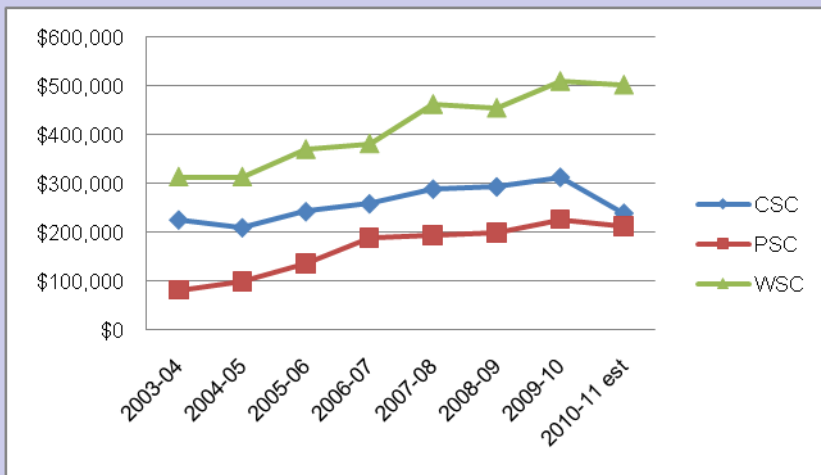
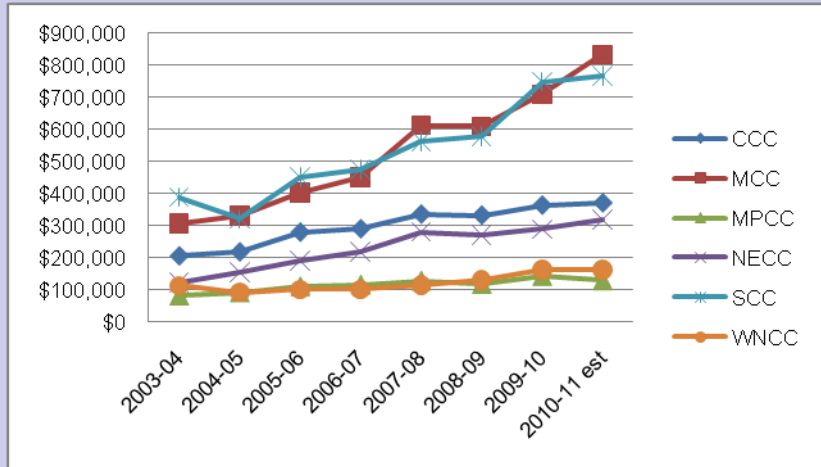
Nebraska Opportunity Grant

Nebraska Opportunity Grants have been awarded to students who are residents of Nebraska, who are attending an eligible Nebraska college or university, and who are eligible for the Federal Pell Grant¹. That last point ensures that Nebraska State Grants are awarded to students who demonstrate the highest need for financial assistance. In 2003-04, \$8,776,652 was awarded in the state grant programs to students attending public and private institutions in the state. By 2008-09, \$12,709,925 was awarded, an increase of almost 45 percent. Those funds supported 14,106 students at an average of \$894 per grant. The Commission estimates that an additional 15,175 students qualified for the state grant; sufficient funds were not available to meet all needs.

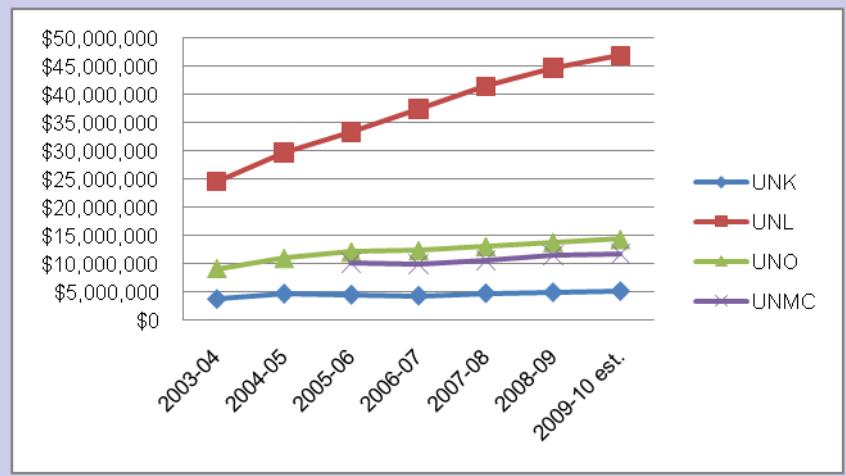
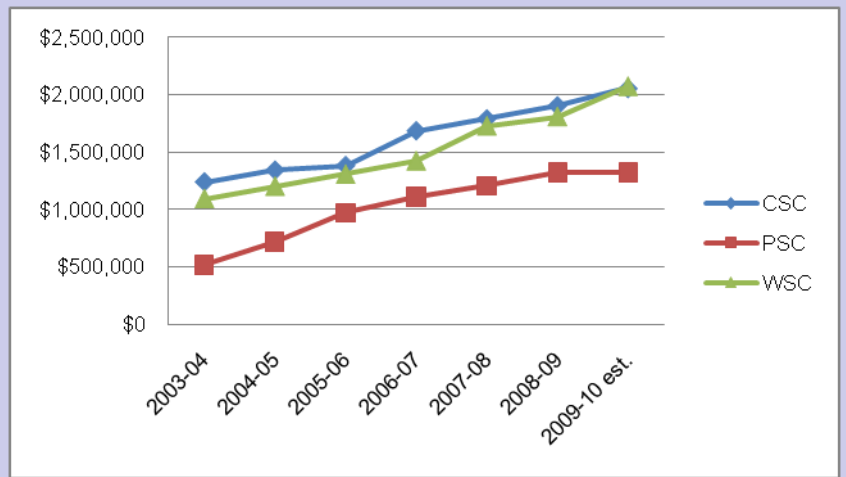
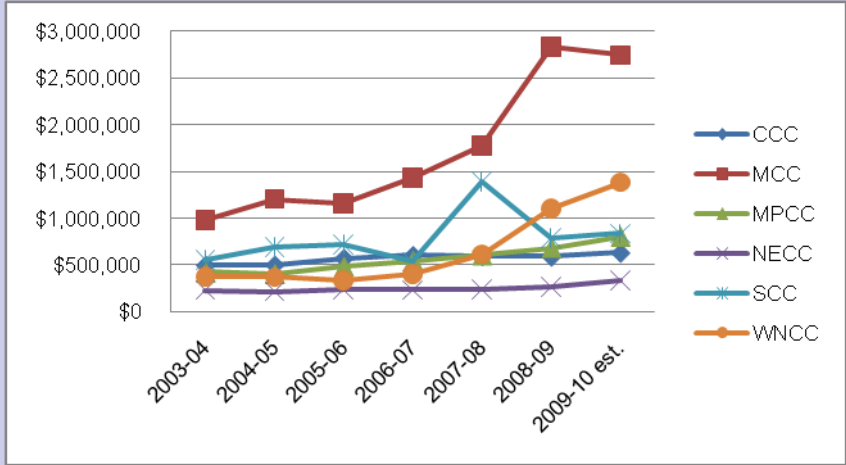
In 2007-08, Nebraska ranked 41st among the states in need-based student aid grant dollars per full-time equivalency undergraduate enrollment.

¹Effective with the 2010-11 academic year, students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and have an Expected Family Contribution of \$6,000 may be considered for the Nebraska Opportunity Grant.

**Nebraska Opportunity Grant Allocations at Nebraska's Public Colleges and Universities
2003-04 through 2010-11**



**Tuition Waivers (Graduate and Undergraduate) at
Nebraska's Public Colleges and Universities
2003-04 through 2009-10**



Tuition Waivers

Many institutions routinely waive or discount a portion or all of student's tuition charges as a form of financial assistance. Tuition waivers can be awarded for a number of different reasons, such as working as a campus ambassador, demonstrating financial need, being a nonresident student, serving as a graduate assistant or declaring a certain major. Waivers are used often as part of the recruitment and retention policies of the campus.

- The percent of tuition discounted in the form of tuition waivers has increased over the past five years.
- University of Nebraska and state college tuition waivers reflect awards made to all students, including graduate and professional students.

Student Loans

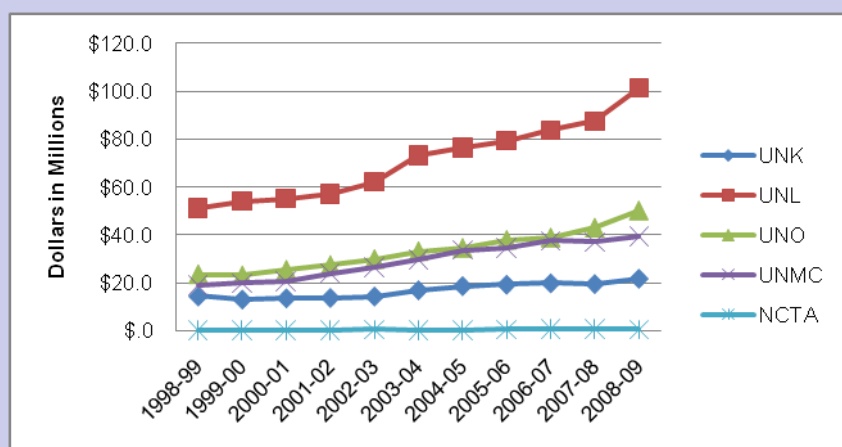
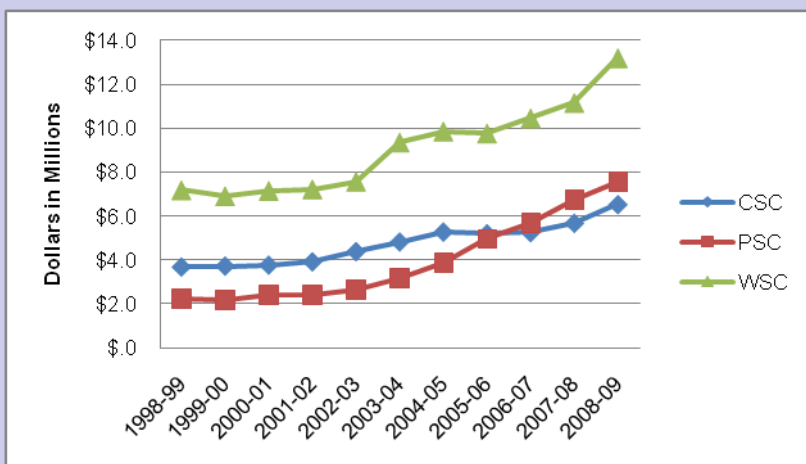
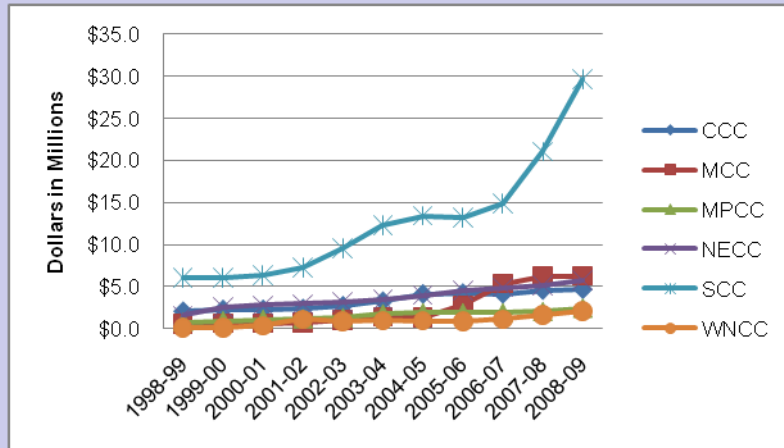
Student loans taken out to finance a student's education continue to increase at a rapid and troubling rate. Nationally, according to the Project on Student Debt, college students graduating from a Nebraska college or university with undergraduate degrees had an average student loan debt of \$20,920.

Nation-wide, from 1998-99 through 2008-09, the amount students borrowed through the Perkins, Stafford and PLUS loans increased 99%, with the bulk of this increase occurring in the PLUS program, which increased 194%. In addition, the number of borrowers increased by 81% over the same time period.

The amount borrowed to attend Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions increased 122% from 1999-00 through 2009-10.

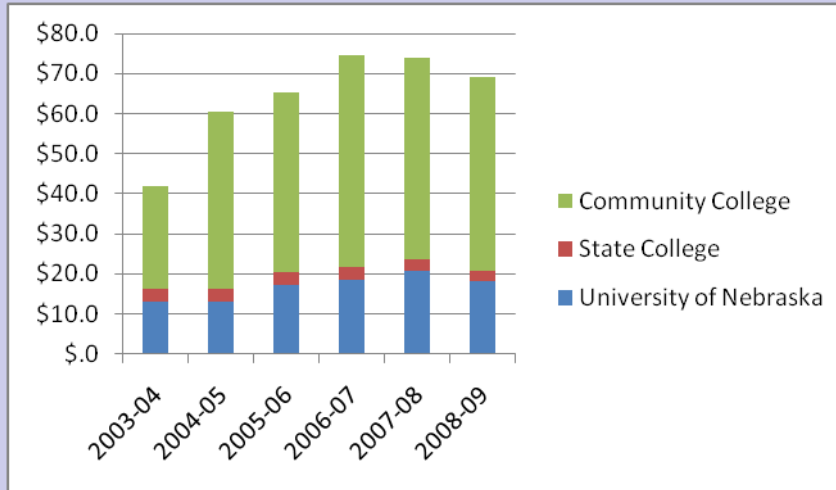
- University of Nebraska and state college loan dollars reflect borrowing by all students, including graduate and professional students.

**Student Loans¹ at
Nebraska's Public Colleges and Universities
1998-99 through 2008-09**



¹Includes Perkins, Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford, GRAD Plus and PLUS loans.

**Unmet Financial Need at
Nebraska's Public Colleges and Universities
2003-04 through 2008-09**



Unmet Financial Need

Unmet financial need, as defined by the Commission, is the cost of a Nebraska-resident, Pell Grant-eligible student's tuition and mandatory fees plus room and board, plus books and supplies, minus all financial aid received excluding work study or PLUS. If a student has unmet financial need then it is likely the student has not been awarded the financial resources needed to help pay his or her education expenses.

Summary

Tuition and mandatory fees at Nebraska's public postsecondary institutions continue to increase at rates higher than increases in the Consumer Price Index and the Higher Education Price Index. That condition is common throughout the country. Despite those increases, enrollments continue to grow at Nebraska's public institutions.

Increased costs are being covered by students and families in several ways. Because funding for most financial aid grant programs has remained stable, or in some cases decreased, students are borrowing more. In some cases, they are enrolling part-time and, therefore, taking longer to graduate – if they do graduate. (Part-time students have much lower graduation rates than full-time students.) Additionally, public postsecondary institutions in Nebraska continue to waive a significant portion of their potential tuition income in order to recruit students. That helps students, but it challenges institutions.

By several comparative measures, Nebraska provides greater financial support for its public higher education institutions than do many states. That support has recently come under increasing pressure due to the downturn in the economy and stiff competition for limited state resources. As a consequence, students and families are paying a higher percentage share of educational costs. This burden is particularly great on Nebraska's poorest students and families.



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