

Council on Postsecondary Education Tuition and Mandatory Fee Policy

The Council on Postsecondary Education is vested with authority under KRS 164.020 to determine tuition at public postsecondary education institutions in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Kentucky's goals of increasing educational attainment, promoting research, assuring academic quality, and engaging in regional stewardship must be balanced in the context of current needs, effective use of resources, and economic conditions. For the purposes of this policy, mandatory fees are included in the definition of tuition. During periods of relative austerity, the proper alignment of the state's limited financial resources requires increased attention to the goals of the *Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997* (HB 1) and the Strategic Agenda for Kentucky Postsecondary and Adult Education.

Fundamental Objectives

- Funding Adequacy

HB 1 states that Kentucky shall have a seamless, integrated system of postsecondary education, strategically planned and adequately funded to enhance economic development and quality of life. In discharging its responsibility to determine tuition, the Council, in collaboration with the institutions, seeks to balance the affordability of postsecondary education for Kentucky's citizens with the institutional funding necessary to accomplish the goals of HB 1 and the Strategic Agenda.

- Shared Benefits and Responsibility

Postsecondary education attainment benefits the public at large in the form of a strong economy and an informed citizenry, and it benefits individuals through elevated quality of life, broadened career opportunities, and increased lifetime earnings. The Council and the institutions believe that funding postsecondary education is a shared responsibility of the state and federal government, students and families, and postsecondary education institutions.

- Affordability and Access

Since broad educational attainment is essential to a vibrant state economy and to intellectual, cultural, and political vitality, the Commonwealth of Kentucky seeks to ensure that postsecondary education is broadly accessible to its citizens. The Council and the institutions are committed to ensuring that college is affordable and accessible to all academically qualified Kentuckians with particular emphasis on adult learners, part-time students, minority students, and students from low and moderate income backgrounds. The Council believes that no citizen of the Commonwealth who has the drive and ability to succeed should be denied access to postsecondary education in Kentucky because of inability to pay. Access should be provided through a reasonable combination of savings, family contributions, work, and financial aid, including grants and loans.

In developing a tuition and mandatory fees recommendation, the Council and the institutions shall work collaboratively and pay careful attention to balancing the cost of attendance, including tuition and mandatory fees, room and board, books, and other direct and indirect costs, with students' ability to pay by taking into account (1) students' family and individual income; (2) federal, state, and institutional scholarships and grants; (3) students' and parents' reliance on loans; (4) access to all postsecondary education alternatives; and (5) the need to enroll and graduate more students.

- Attracting and Importing Talent to Kentucky

It is unlikely that Kentucky can reach its 2020 postsecondary education attainment goals by focusing on Kentucky residents alone. Tuition reciprocity agreements, which provide low-cost access to out-of-state institutions for Kentucky students that live near the borders of other states, also serve to attract students from surrounding states to Kentucky's colleges and universities. In fact, according to the Council's 2007 Brain Gain report, four out of every ten (37 percent) out-of-state graduates were still in Kentucky five years after receiving their degrees.

The Council and the institutions are committed to making Kentucky's institutions financially attractive to nonresident students while recognizing that nonresident undergraduate students should pay a significantly larger proportion of the full cost of their education. Any proposed policy on nonresident tuition and mandatory fees should also be evaluated based on its potential impact on attracting and retaining students which directly enhance diversity and Kentucky's ability to compete in a global economy.

- Effective Use of Resources

Kentucky's postsecondary education system is committed to using the financial resources invested in it as effectively and productively as possible to advance the goals of HB 1 and the Strategic Agenda, including undergraduate and graduate education, engagement and outreach, research, and economic development initiatives. The colleges and universities seek to ensure that every dollar available to them is invested in areas that maximize results and outcomes most beneficial to the Commonwealth and its regions. The Council's performance metrics shall be used to monitor both statewide and institutional performance toward HB 1 and Strategic Agenda goals.

The institutions also recognize their responsibility to demonstrate that they are good stewards of limited public resources by providing annual reports to their governing boards and the Council on their efforts to contain costs, improve efficiencies and productivity, and reallocate existing resources to high priority activities.