

Council on Postsecondary Education

What is the Council on Postsecondary Education?

The CPE is Kentucky's statewide postsecondary and adult education coordinating agency. The Governor appoints the Council members, including 13 citizens, one faculty member, and one student member; the Commissioner of Education is an ex-officio member.

Forty-eight states in the nation have a statewide higher education coordinating or governing agency.

CPE is the primary state agency charged with enacting:

- The *Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997* (HB 1), which establishes six goals for raising Kentucky's standard of living and quality of life to at least the national average by year 2020.
- The *Kentucky Adult Education Act* (2000), which transferred administration and oversight of Kentucky's statewide basic adult education program, located in 120 counties, from Workforce Development to CPE.
- The *Kentucky Innovation Act* (2000), which directs Kentucky to move to a more entrepreneurial economy and charges the Council to implement funding programs that promote university research, innovation, and technology.
- College and Workforce Readiness Legislation (SB1, 2009), which directs the CPE to work closely with the Department of Education to increase college and career readiness and the success rates of students enrolled in postsecondary education.
- Transfer legislation (HB 160) that calls for associate-level coursework at KCTCS to be accepted and credited to related bachelor's degree programs at public universities.

Key duties of the CPE:

- Serves as the Commonwealth's **chief postsecondary education advocate and policy advisor** to the Governor and the General Assembly.
- **Builds consensus** around higher education policy proposals and **mediates discussions** among public and independent colleges and universities, the General Assembly, and other key constituencies.
- **Represents the public's interest** through the development and implementation of a strategic agenda that includes measures of educational attainment, effectiveness, and efficiency for postsecondary and adult education.
- Produces and submits a **biennial budget request** for adequate public funding on behalf of public postsecondary and adult education.
- **Monitors and approves tuition rates** and admission criteria at public institutions.
- **Approves academic programs** at public institutions
- **Connects eligibility** for new academic programs to campus performance in meeting diversity objectives.
- **Licenses** non-public postsecondary institutions.
- Administers Kentucky's statewide **adult education program and GED testing centers**.
- Collects, analyzes and reports **comprehensive data on postsecondary education performance**.
- Ensures the **coordination and connectivity of technology** among public postsecondary institutions.
- Administers **KY Virtual Campus, KY Virtual Library, Learning Depot and KY Regional Optical Network** to provide online resources and services to K-12, universities, state agencies and other organizations.
- **Procures and manages federal, foundation and state grants** to advance legislative mandates and student success initiatives.



Highlights of Current Work:

- **Improving the transferability of credits** among public 2-year and 4-year institutions by coordinating the implementation of statewide transfer legislation (HB 160) designed to eliminate unnecessary duplication of credits and shorten time-to-degree. A transfer website will be launched this year to help students and advisers successfully navigate the transfer process.
- **Administering a \$26.9 million federal GEAR UP grant** over six years to support college readiness initiatives for 10,000 students at 30 schools.
- Working with KDE to implement the “Unified Strategy for College and Career Readiness” called for by Senate Bill 1. The plan seeks to **reduce college remediation rates** of recent high school graduates by at least fifty percent by 2014 and **increase the college completion rates** of students enrolled in one or more remedial classes by three percent annually.
- Implementing the statewide strategic agenda, “**Stronger by Degrees,**” which focuses the system’s work on four key policy areas—college readiness, student success, research, economic and community development, and efficiency and innovation. The agenda includes **performance metrics that provide transparency and accountability.**
- Implementing a **statewide diversity policy** tied to the strategic agenda.
- Administering a **grant from the National Governors’ Association to improve postsecondary education’s responsiveness to workforce demands.** Funds will be used to convene state workforce, education, and economic development experts to further define higher education’s role in workforce development and strengthen the relationship between Kentucky’s economic and education-related goals.
- Representing Kentucky in the **Complete College America’s Alliance of States**, a group of 30 states committed to making college completion a top priority by setting completion goals through 2020, developing aggressive state- and campus-level action plans, and collecting and reporting common measures of progress.
- Working with campuses to recruit, retain and graduate former students with 80 credit hours or more through **Project Graduate.** As of spring 2011, 605 former students had earned their bachelor’s degrees through the program. Additionally, 651 adult learners were enrolled in fall 2011.
- With KCTCS and the Cabinet for Workforce Development, administering an **ABE to Credentials grant funded by Jobs for the Future** to ensure that more workers have the skills they need for today’s good jobs. This four-year multistate initiative seeks to change the way Adult Basic Education (ABE) is structured and delivered at state and institutional levels to increase the number of adults who can earn a GED and a credential and enter the workplace with competitive skills.

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