

MEETING MINUTES

Approved by the Committee on September 8, 2025

Who: Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Meeting Type: Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee
Date: June 9, 2025
Time: 10:00 a.m. ET
Location: Virtual Meeting via ZOOM Webinar

CALL TO ORDER

The Academic & Strategic Initiatives Committee met Monday, June 9, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., ET. The meeting occurred virtually via ZOOM webinar. Committee Chair Karyn Hoover presided.

ROLL CALL

Committee members who attended the meeting: Dr. Kellie Ellis, Dr. Meredith Figg, Sean Garber, Karyn Hoover, and LaDonna Rogers. Macy Waddle and Kevin Weaver did not attend.

CPE Program Manager, Heather Faesy, served as recorder of the meeting minutes.

CPE PRESIDENT UPDATE

Dr. Aaron Thompson, CPE President, provided a brief update to the Committee that included comments regarding the Council's commitment to ensuring all students have access to a quality postsecondary experience. He also updated the committee on the status of federal Pell grant and GEAR UP funding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the April 14, 2025, committee meeting were approved as presented.

REVISION TO THE DUAL CREDIT POLICY

Dr. Amanda Ellis, Ed.D, Vice President, Student Access & Success, and Robin Hebert, Senior Fellow, K-12 Policies and Programs, presented for approval the proposed revisions to the Dual Credit Policy for Kentucky Public and Participating Postsecondary Institutions and Secondary Schools. The policy was last revised in March 2024, and in order to align the requirements of 2025 Kentucky House Bills 4 and 193, staff identified several sections for revision. General edits and reference updates were also made.

MOTION: Dr. Ellis moved the Committee endorse for final Council approval the proposed revisions to the Dual Credit Policy. Ms. Rogers seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Ms. Sheila Brothers, CPE's Senior Director of Academic Excellence, introduced two new academic programs for review and approval. KRS 164.020 (15) empowers the Council on Postsecondary Education to define and approve the offering of all postsecondary education technical, associate, baccalaureate, graduate and professional degree, certificate or diploma programs in the public postsecondary education institutions.

Council staff reviewed the proposed programs and recommended approval.

1. University of Kentucky – Bachelor of Science, Surgical First Assistant (51.0999)
Presented by: Dr. Sheila Melander, Vice Dean, and William & Elizabeth Morgan Professor for Professional Nursing Practice, College of Nursing; Karrie F. Adkins, Senior Project Manager, College of Nursing
 - The 120-credit hour program will provide graduates with advanced technical skills that will be applicable across various surgical specialties, including neurosurgery, orthopedics and cardiac surgery. Models at the national level require a bachelor's degree in a healthcare field prior to enrolling in a multi-semester certificate program. The proposed program will contain all the skills and competencies for Surgical First Assistants in the degree itself, thereby reducing the pathway complexity for this profession.

MOTION: Ms. Rogers moved the Committee endorse for final Council approval the proposed program from the University of Kentucky. Dr. Ellis seconded the motion. Dr. Figg abstained from the vote.

VOTE: The motion passed.

2. Murray State University – Master of Science, Nonprofit Leadership Studies (52.0206)
Presented by: Dr. Elise Kieffer, Assistant Professor and Program Director of Nonprofit Leadership Studies
 - The 30-credit hour program will prepare individuals for leadership roles and functions in nonprofit sector organizations dedicated to improving the quality of life at the local, regional, national and global levels. Students will be able to complete the degree fully online or in a hybrid format, but not all courses will be available in both formats.

MOTION: Dr. Ellis moved the Committee endorse for final Council approval the proposed program from Murray State University. Dr. Figg seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

KCTCS PROGRAMS APPROVED BETWEEN APRIL-JUNE 2025

KRS 164.020 (15) mandates that the Council expedite the approval of requests from KCTCS for new programs of a vocational-technical and occupational nature. Ms. Brothers presented the four new programs reviewed and approved by the Council between April and June 2025. No action was required from the Committee.

- Bluegrass Community and Technical College - Associate of Applied Science, Additive Technology (15.0699)
- Elizabethtown Community and Technical College - Associate of Applied Science, Automation, Industrial and Robotics Technology (15.0403)
- Gateway Community and Technical College - Associate of Applied Science, Computer Engineering Technology (15.1201)
- Hazard Community and Technical College - Associate of Applied Science, Culinary Arts (12.0503)

UPDATE ON ACADEMIC PROGRAM APPROVAL POLICY

Ms. Brothers provided an overview of the work being done to update the state's program approval policy. In response to the SJR 170 (2024) study and SB 77 (2025), the Council has been working with campus representatives to revise the Academic Program Approval Policy. Guiding Principles were developed to define the types of information that will be included. In addition to developing standards and new forms, the approval processes for certificates, associate, bachelor's and master's degrees are also being updated. This work will be completed over the summer, and staff expect to present the updated policy for Council approval at the next meeting.

DCBS TRAINING PROVIDER NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION

Dr. Leslie Sizemore, Associate Vice President for Workforce & Economic Development, provided an update on the launch and coordination of the regional training provider network for the Department for Community-Based Services (DCBS). The transition of DCBS workforce training from a single-provider model at Eastern Kentucky University to a multi-institutional consortium, including Morehead State University, Northern Kentucky University, and Brescia University, ensures the consistent delivery of high-quality, competency-aligned training across all 120 Kentucky counties for DCBS personnel, including staff in Family Support and Protection & Permanency (P&P), as well as foster and kinship caregivers. Over 400 unique training courses are being evaluated for alignment with Continuing Education Unit (CEU) standards to support professional development and licensure requirements. CPE

provides oversight and technical assistance to ensure quality, consistency and fiscal accountability. Quarterly performance and financial reporting structures track program impact and operational progress. CPE has also initiated work toward a unified CEU framework to recognize coursework completed across institutions.

This collaboration supports Kentucky's broader workforce and public service goals by professionalizing DCBS training, reducing regional gaps in service access and increasing workforce preparedness in high-need social service domains. It also positions Kentucky as a national model for cross-agency collaboration in human services training and workforce development.

FIRST-TIME ADULT LEARNER PROFILE

Dr. Chris Ledford, Director of Data and Advanced Analytics, and Tracy Teater, Associate Director, Adult Attainment, Kentucky Student Success Collaborative, provided an update on the characteristics of first-time adult learners who have successfully enrolled in postsecondary programs and how the Council is supporting those adult learners.

To date, there are over one million working-age Kentuckians with no college experience or credential. To combat this issue, CPE launched a statewide policy to address systemic barriers that disproportionately affect adult learners. The policy aims to support skill development by helping these learners enroll in programs that lead to valuable credentials. The data dashboard focusing on this work can be found at:

<https://reports.ky.gov/t/CPE/views/First-TimeAdultDashboard-LatoFonts/First-TimeAdultStudentProfile>.

ADJOURNMENT

The Academic & Strategic Initiatives Committee adjourned at 11:15 a.m., ET.