

MEETING MINUTES

Approved by the Committee on September 9, 2026

Who: Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Meeting Type: Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee
Date: June 8, 2026
Time: 10:00 a.m. ET
Location: Virtual Meeting via ZOOM Webinar

CALL TO ORDER

The Academic & Strategic Initiatives Committee met Monday, June 8, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., ET. The meeting occurred virtually via ZOOM webinar. Committee Chair Karyn Hoover presided.

ROLL CALL

There was a quorum of 6 voting Council members in attendance.

- Jai Bokey - attended
- Dr. Kellie Ellis – attended
- Dr. Meredith Figg – attended
- Sean Garber – did not attend
- Karyn Hoover – attended
- Dennis Repenning – attended
- LaDonna Rogers - did not attend
- Kevin Weaver – attended
- Michael Wheeler – did not attend

CPE President Aaron Thompson served as secretary of the board, per the CPE bylaws. Heather Faesy, CPE program manager, served as recorder of the meeting minutes.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the March 30, 2026, committee meeting were approved as presented.

PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Ms. Brothers introduced three 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 degrees, certificates, or diploma programs in the Kentucky public postsecondary education institutions.

Council staff reviewed the proposed programs and recommended approval.

University of Kentucky – B.A. Music Industry (CIP 50.1003)

Presented by: Dr. Rachel Shane, Chair, Department of Arts Administration

- The 120-credit-hour program will equip students with the analytical, managerial, and creative skills necessary for successful employment in the constantly evolving music industry, including careers in music production, performance support, management, marketing, and entrepreneurship. The program will emphasize music industry ecosystems, business operations, and creative enterprise rather than performance. To ensure broad accessibility, the program will omit audition and performance requirements.

MOTION: Mr. Bokey moved the Committee endorse for final Council approval the proposed program from the University of Kentucky. Dr. Ellis seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed. Dr. Figg abstained.

University of Kentucky – B.A. Applied Psychology (CIP 42.2813)

Presented by: Dr. Christia Brown, Associate Dean for Student Engagement and Success and Professor of Developmental, Social, and Health Psychology

- The 120-credit-hour program is fully online and focuses on practical psychological applications for the workforce. The curriculum targets key competencies in communication, project management, ethical decision-making, and evidence-based problem-solving. It aligns with current employer demand for skills in collaboration, managing diverse environments, and complex decision-making. Graduates will be prepared for roles in human resources, marketing, health services, and education.

MOTION: Dr. Ellis moved the Committee endorse for final Council approval the proposed program from the University of Kentucky. Mr. Weaver seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed. Dr. Figg abstained.

Eastern Kentucky University – A.A.S. Air Traffic Management (CIP 49.0105)

Presented by: Tim Holt, Chair, ECU School of Aviation and Jennifer Wies, Associate Provost and Professor of Anthropology

- The 60-credit-hour program will combine traditional air traffic controller training with emerging airspace management technologies and interdisciplinary learning. The program will utilize a “cross-domain” approach, connecting classical Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) tower and enroute operations with next-generation concepts such as advanced air mobility (AAM) integration, data-driven traffic flow management, and intermodal safety systems. This two-pronged design aligns with the FAA’s “NextGen” modernization initiative, as well as with industry needs for a workforce skilled in both legacy and emerging airspace realms.

MOTION: Mr. Bokey moved the Committee endorse for final Council approval the proposed program from Eastern Kentucky University. Mr. Repenning seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed. Dr. Ellis abstained.

CPE PRESIDENT UPDATE

Dr. Aaron Thompson, CPE President, provided a brief update to the Committee on the Council's current priorities, including preparations to convene the Postsecondary Education Working Group on Performance Funding, the implementation status of 2026 legislative session outcomes, and recent higher education speeches and presentations across Kentucky.

KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY RESPONSE TO SB 185 (2026)

Mr. Travis Powell, Executive Vice President and General Counsel, provided an overview of the staff request to approve the proposed six areas of study for Kentucky State University (KSU) as well as the proposed list of academic programs to continue and close. Dr. Michael Dailey, Provost at Kentucky State University, provided insight into how those programs were identified and final proposal decisions were made. Other presenters from Kentucky State University included Dr. Heather Bigard, Vice President of Finance and Administration/CFO and Dr. Tianna Freeman-Taylor, Assistant Vice Provost.

Ultimately, KSU's Board of Regents took the following actions at their May 28 meeting, and recommended that the Council accept the following with no amendments:

1. Approved the following six areas of study as: Applied Sciences, Engineering, Health Sciences, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Technology.
2. Approved the following 28 academic programs to continue. KSU's rationale is that these programs combine workforce demand, scalable delivery, and strong or improving financial contribution. They also serve as enrollment engines supporting KSU's areas of study and overall academic portfolio.
 - Agriculture, Food, and Environment (baccalaureate)
 - Aquaculture (baccalaureate and master's)
 - Biological and Agricultural Engineering (bachelor's and master's)
 - Biology (baccalaureate)
 - Business Administration (baccalaureate and master's)
 - Criminal Justice (baccalaureate)
 - Chemistry (baccalaureate)
 - Computer Science – Cybersecurity (baccalaureate)
 - Elementary Education (baccalaureate)
 - Environmental Science and Technology (master's)
 - Exercise Science (baccalaureate)
 - Interdisciplinary Studies (associate's and baccalaureate)
 - Manufacturing and Agricultural Engineering (baccalaureate)
 - Mathematics (baccalaureate)
 - Music and Industry (baccalaureate)

- Mass Communication (associate's)
 - Nursing (associate's and baccalaureate)
 - Nursing Practice (doctoral)
 - Psychology (baccalaureate and master's)
 - Social Work (baccalaureate and master's)
 - Special Education (master's)
3. Approved the following four academic programs to close. KSU's rationale for closing these programs is that they exhibit limited enrollment scalability and market differentiation.
- Bachelor of Music Education (1 student enrolled)
 - Bachelor of Music Performance (1 student enrolled)
 - Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (13 students enrolled)
 - Bachelor of Arts in Child Development and Family Studies (17 students enrolled)

Upon final approval by the Council, CPE staff will report the actions taken to KSU leadership, who will then submit the necessary documentation to SACSCOC by July 1, 2026.

Council members asked questions of clarification regarding the recommendation and requested updates on the pending legal matters.

MOTION: Dr. Ellis moved the Committee endorse for Council approval the proposed six areas of study for Kentucky State University as well as the proposed list of 28 academic programs to continue and 4 academic programs to close. Mr. Bokey seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

KCTCS PROGRAMS APPROVED BETWEEN APRIL-MAY 2026

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 new programs reviewed and approved by Council staff between April and May 2026. No action was required by the Committee.

- Ashland Community and Technical College
 - Associate of Applied Science, Automotive Technology (47.0604)
 - Associate of Applied Science, Diesel Technology (47.0605)
- Maysville Community and Technical College – Associate of Applied Science, Air Conditioning Technology (47.0201)
- Owensboro Community and Technical College – Associate of Applied Science, Physical Therapy Assistant (51.0806)

ADJOURNMENT

The Academic & Strategic Initiatives Committee adjourned at 11:40 a.m., ET.