

MINUTES

Council on Postsecondary Education

Type: Executive Committee
Date: February 4, 2021
Time: 9:00 a.m. ET
Location: Virtual Meeting - Committee members by ZOOM, Public viewing hosted on CPE YouTube Page.

CALL TO ORDER

The Executive Committee met Thursday, February 4, 2021, at 9:00 a.m., ET. Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-243 and a memorandum issued by the Finance and Administration Cabinet dated March 16, 2020, and in an effort to prevent the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Committee met utilizing a video teleconference. Members of the public were invited to view the meeting virtually on the CPE YouTube page. Chair Ben Brandstetter presided.

ATTENDANCE

Members in attendance: Ben Brandstetter, Ron Beal, Kim Halbauer, Kristi Nelson, and Robert Staat. Council members Lori Harper and Lucas Mentzer also attended the meeting as guests.

CPE President Aaron Thompson attended the meeting and served as Secretary of the board, per the CPE Bylaws. Heather Faesy, CPE's senior associate for Board Relations, served as recorder of the meeting minutes.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee approved the minutes of the January 7, 2021 Executive Committee meeting.

FOLLOW-UP ON ANNUAL DATA STATEWIDE AND CAMPUS BRIEFINGS

On January 28 and 29, 2021, the Council received the annual statewide data briefing from CPE staff and the campus data briefings from the four-year university presidents and KCTCS's president. Despite a spring semester marred by COVID-19, graduation and retention rates continued to climb at Kentucky's public universities last year, and

the net cost of attending college held mostly steady across the state; however the continued trend regarding declining enrollment was a shared concern among the campus presidents and Council members.

At the January 29, 2021 Council business meeting, Mr. Mentzer proposed language for a resolution regarding the declining enrollment and college going rates. The discussion that followed included several suggestions for additions and clarifications. In order to give members time to consider the suggestions, the Council moved to delegate the finalization and adoption of the resolution to the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee considered all suggestions, made a few minor changes, and proposed the final resolution language:

WHEREAS, overall undergraduate enrollment at Kentucky's public universities has steadily declined since 2015; and

WHEREAS, the number of high school graduates and the percent going on to college has been decreasing over the past five years; and

WHEREAS, enrollment at KCTCS declined over 10% from the Fall 2019 and Fall 2020; and

WHEREAS, there is evidence that these enrollment declines are exacerbated by impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, there has been a 20% drop-off in Kentucky FAFSA applications compared with this time in 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Council on Postsecondary Education is very concerned about the effect further enrollment declines will have on the ability to meet 2030 Strategic Agenda Goals, and improve educational and economic opportunity for Kentucky citizens;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Council on Postsecondary Education recognizes the urgency and the need to reverse these trends and calls on President Thompson to work closely with campus leaders, K-12 partners, the Commonwealth Education Continuum, and other stakeholders to implement bold actions and strategies to mitigate the near term enrollment impacts of COVID-19. Further, the Council calls on the President of the Council on Postsecondary Education to provide regular reports on this matter at upcoming Council meetings.

MOTION: Ms. Halbauer approved the resolution agreed upon by the Executive Committee. Dr. Staat seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

UPDATE ON NEXT STATEWIDE STRATEGIC AGENDA DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee serves as the steering committee in the development of the next statewide strategic agenda and it met on February 1, 2021 to kick off its work. Committee Chair Lori Harper presented a recap of the meeting, in which the members discussed the overall challenges and opportunities for progress to Kentucky's education attainment goal as well as questions the committee needs to consider to guide the agenda's development. Committee members also engaged in a conversation facilitated by Stefanie Ashley from the ECU Facilitation Center in which they also discussed how the 60x30 education goal fits within the statewide strategic agenda, data points that are needed to make informed decisions, key individuals and groups that need to be consulted and the types of information needed from them, and the timeline for completion of work.

MONTHLY DISCUSSION TOPIC: INNOVATION

Chair Ben Brandstetter led a discussion on potential ways the state can promote, implement, and model ways campuses can be innovative. President Thompson discussed the changes campuses have made in the last year during the pandemic and areas that still need work. Committee members asked that President Thompson provide regular reports on additional innovation methods being addressed on the campuses and within the agency.

ADJOURNMENT

The Executive Committee adjourned at 9:45 a.m., ET.

MINUTES REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE: March 4, 2021