



## Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education

**Andy Beshear**  
Governor

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**Aaron Thompson, Ph.D.**  
President

August 19, 2025

Representative Scott Lewis, Co-Chair, Interim Joint Committee on Education  
Representative James Tipton, Co-Chair, Interim Joint Committee on Education  
Representative Steve West, Co-Chair, Interim Joint Committee on Education  
Attorney General Russell Coleman

RE: The Council on Postsecondary Education's Compliance with House Bill 4 (2025)

Dear Interim Joint Committee on Education and the Attorney General,

This letter serves as my certification that the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) has complied with each provision of House Bill 4 from the 2025 General Session of the Kentucky General Assembly. CPE has implemented safeguards to ensure continued compliance and has taken all necessary actions to align its policies, programs, and operations with the requirements of the Act.

### **Elimination of DEI Initiatives**

CPE has eliminated all diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives as of June 30, 2025. The Council took formal action to remove all DEI initiatives at its regular meeting on April 17, 2025, and at a special-called meeting on June 30, 2025. The agendas (Exhibits A, C) and draft minutes (Exhibits B, D) from these meetings are enclosed. The actions taken include:

- A. Revision of the Endowment Match Program Guidelines (Exhibit E, F)
- B. Revision of Kentucky's Statewide Strategic Agenda for Postsecondary Education (Exhibit G, H)
- C. Revision of the New Academic Program Approval Policy (Exhibit I, J)
- D. Revision of the Statewide Academic Program Review Policy (Exhibit K, L)
- E. Revision of the name and charge of the Committee on Equal Opportunities (Exhibit M)
- F. Removal of the Cultural Competency Credential Certification Process (Exhibit N)

The Council has also complied with HB 4, which eliminated KRS 164.020(19) by removing 13 KAR 2:060, a regulation requiring institutions to meet equal opportunity goals for degree program approval. On June 26, 2025, CPE's General Counsel submitted a formal request to the regulations compiler to remove this regulation per HB 4 (Exhibit O).

To ensure ongoing compliance, CPE conducted mandatory HB 4 compliance training for all staff on May 7, 2025 (Exhibit P), delivered by the General Counsel. Staff received an informational presentation (Exhibit Q) and the opportunity to ask questions. Additionally, CPE will implement a new initiative launch protocol requiring all future initiatives to be reviewed and approved by the executive leadership team, including the General Counsel, to ensure alignment with the Statewide Strategic Agenda and to prevent inclusion of any prohibited DEI elements.

### **Elimination of DEI Trainings**

The Council confirms it has discontinued all DEI trainings. By removing the Cultural Competency Credential Certification process (Exhibit N), which included a Credential Curriculum Framework for Cultural Competence, the Council removed the

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KENTUCKY

requirement for institutions to demonstrate the state's commitment to DEI and any training associated with understanding the framework to earn the certification. CPE executive staff, consisting of the CPE General Counsel, will ensure future compliance with the provision to discontinue and prohibit any future trainings, as no future DEI trainings will be approved, held, or attended by the Council or CPE staff.

### **DEI Offices and Officer Roles**

CPE affirms that it does not maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) office as defined in 2025 HB 4. Per the requirements of the Act, CPE further certifies that it does not intend to create or operate a DEI office in the future. The Council remains committed to full compliance with state law and will continue to ensure that its structure, operations, and use of resources align with the statutory prohibitions outlined in HB 4.

Additionally, any positions titled or purposed as DEI officer roles have been eliminated. In May 2025, CPE discontinued the Executive Director for Access, Engagement, and Belonging position. The staff member previously in this role was reassigned under the new title Executive Director for Student Access (Exhibit R), with all job duties revised to focus solely on student access for all students (Exhibit S). CPE will not create or maintain any position functioning as a DEI officer role in the future.

### **Free Exchange of Ideas**

CPE champions an educational ecosystem rooted in the free exchange of ideas, consistent with First Amendment principles. A key element of this work is the Kentucky Graduate Profile (Exhibit T). This statewide learning framework identifies ten essential skills, including "Engage in civic life to improve society," as foundational for every graduate.

To implement this framework, CPE launched the Graduate Profile Academy, engaging faculty, staff, and administrators from each public institution in a multi-year collaborative process to embed these skills into curricula, campus culture, and co-curricular programming. This initiative promotes intellectual diversity and supports environments where ideas can be openly discussed, debated, and developed. An overview of the Graduate Profile and the Graduate Profile Academy can be found on CPE's website at [cpe.ky.gov/ourwork/kygradprofile](https://cpe.ky.gov/ourwork/kygradprofile).

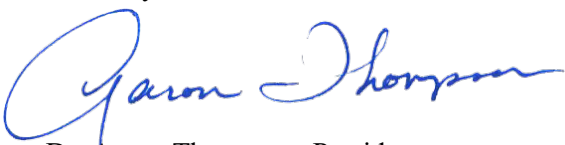
### **Hiring Practices**

CPE does not oversee or participate in institutional hiring practices. However, the inclusion of the Graduate Profile in the program curriculum and institutional viewpoint neutrality requirements per HB 4 should assist in attracting and retaining faculty with a variety of backgrounds and perspectives. CPE also applies these ten essential skills when recruiting for its positions, seeking candidates whose experiences and perspectives enhance civic engagement, collaboration, and problem-solving. CPE values the inclusion of diverse perspectives within its workforce and fosters a culture where all viewpoints are respected, in accordance with its statutory responsibilities and the requirements of HB 4.

### **Closing Certification Statement**

The Council on Postsecondary Education affirms its compliance with all provisions of HB 4. Having met its current obligations, the Council will continue to work to ensure Kentucky's postsecondary system remains open, accessible, and supportive of academic success for all students.

Sincerely,



Dr. Aaron Thompson, President  
Council on Postsecondary Education

Encl.

# EXHIBIT A

## KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING



April 17, 2025 – 1:30 p.m. ET

Northern Kentucky University, Vortuba Student Union, room 104

Virtual Livestream Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89129396618>

*\*consent action item*

<b>I. Call to Order and Roll Call</b>	
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**VII. Executive Committee – Report**

- A. 2025 Council Retreat planning
- B. Update on Kentucky State University Management Improvement Plan Implementation
- C. Committee Appointments

**VIII. Data Spotlight & Staff Update**

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**X. Other Business**

**XI. Adjournment**

*Next meetings @ Shaker Village, Harrodsburg*

- June 12, 2025 – Council Board Retreat
- June 13, 2025 – Council Work Session and Board Meeting

# EXHIBIT B

## MEETING MINUTES

Approved by the Council on June 13, 2025

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Who:	Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Meeting Type:	Business Meeting
Date:	April 17, 2025
Time:	1:30 p.m. ET
Location:	Northern Kentucky University, Vortuba Student Union Rm 104, Highland Heights, KY

### WELCOME REMARKS

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The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education held a business meeting on Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. ET. The meeting occurred at Northern Kentucky University in Highland Heights, Kentucky. Chair Madison Silvert presided.

### ATTENDANCE

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The following Council members attended the meeting in person: CB Akins, Jacob Brown, Lindsey Case, Jennifer Collins, Kellie Ellis, Meredith Figg, Karyn Hoover, Madison Silvert, Macy Waddle and Elaine Walker, Kevin Weaver. Council members who attended virtually were LaDonna Rogers and Commissioner Robbie Fletcher.

Council members who did not attend were Muhammad Babar and Sean Garber.

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

### APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

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The minutes of the January 30, 2025, meetings were approved as presented.

### COUNCIL RESOLUTION

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The Council approved a resolution for Council member Faith Kemper, who served on the board from June 2022 through March 2025.

### KY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (KDE) COMMISSIONER REPORT

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KDE Commissioner Robbie Fletcher provided a report featuring a number of highlights including the Persistence to Graduation Summit taking place in June, the Go Teach KY campaign, and Skills USA students at a statewide conference.

## **UPDATE FROM THE STUDENT COUNCIL MEMBER**

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Ms. Waddle provided a brief report that focused on the upcoming transition of student body presidents on each of the campuses as well as their plans to gather in May at a leadership meeting.

## **CPE PRESIDENT REPORT**

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President Aaron Thompson's written report was included in the board materials. He provided additional comments about the opioid abatement grant awarded to CPE to work with postsecondary institutions to provide trauma-informed recovery support services to adult learners impacted by opioid use disorder and co-occurring mental health challenges as well as statistics and early feedback on the new Futuriti website that focuses on college and career exploration. Mr. Travis Powell, Sr. Vice President and General Counsel, and Ms. Regan Satterwhite, Director of Legislative Relations, provided an update on the bills passed during the 2025 legislative session and how they impact postsecondary education and Kentucky's institutions.

## **ACADEMIC AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES COMMITTEE – REPORT & ACTION ITEMS**

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Committee Chair Karyn Hoover presented the report and recommendations made by the Academic and Strategic Initiatives (ASI) Committee, which met on April 14, 2025. She announced that Committee members:

- Received a report of the KCTCS programs approved between January-April 2025.
- Received a briefing on the update on the work of the Commonwealth Education Continuum.
- Reviewed and endorsed for Council approval eight proposed new academic programs:
  - Kentucky State University – Master of Science, Biological and Agricultural Engineering (CIP 14.0301)
  - Kentucky State University – Master of Science, Criminal Justice (CIP 43.0104)
  - Kentucky State University – Master of Social Work, Social Work (CIP 44.0701)
  - Morehead State University – Doctor of Engineering, Systems Engineering (CIP 14.2701)
  - Murray State University – Associate of Science, Dental Hygiene (CIP 51.0602)
  - University of Kentucky – Master of Accounting, Accountancy and Analytics (CIP 30.7104)
  - University of Kentucky – Doctor of Audiology, Audiology (CIP 51.0202)

- Western Kentucky University – Bachelor of Science, User Experience (CIP 11.0105)

MOTION: The ASI Committee's recommendation to approve the endorsed action items served as the motion. A second was not needed.

VOTE: The motion passed. Meredith Figg abstained.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE – REPORT AND ACTION ITEMS**

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Committee Chair Jacob Brown presented the report and recommendations made by the Finance Committee, which met on April 14, 2025. Committee members:

- Reviewed and endorsed for Council approval revisions to the Endowment Match Program Guidelines.
- Reviewed and endorsed for Council approval two interim capital projects
  - Murray State University - Curris Center Roof Replacement, \$1.5 million
  - Northern Kentucky University - Reconstruct Outdoor Tennis Complex, \$3 million.
- Reviewed and endorsed for Council approval the tuition and mandatory fees recommendations for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 academic years as follows:
  - For the research universities – UK and UofL – a maximum base rate increase of no more than \$675.00 over two years, and a maximum increase of no more than \$450.00 in any one year.
  - For the comprehensive universities – ECU, KSU, Morehead, Murray, NKU, and WKU – a maximum base rate increase of no more than \$630.00 over two years, and a maximum increase of no more than \$420.00 in any one year.
  - For KCTCS institutions – a maximum base rate increase of no more than \$9.00 per credit hour over two years, and a maximum increase of no more than \$6.00 per credit hour in any one year.
  - In addition to proposing resident undergraduate rate ceilings for the next two years, staff recommended that the public institutions be allowed to submit for Council review and approval:
    - Nonresident undergraduate tuition and fee rates that comply with the Council's Tuition and Mandatory Fees Policy, or otherwise adhere to provisions of an existing Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and an institution.
    - Market competitive tuition and fee rates for graduate and online courses, as approved by their respective governing boards.

MOTION: The Finance Committee's recommendation to approve the endorsed action items served as the motion. A second was not needed.

VOTE: The motion passed.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – REPORT**

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Chair Silvert presented the report of the Executive Committee, which met the morning of April 17, 2025. Committee members:

- Discussed the Council's board retreat scheduled for June 12-13, 2025.
- Received an update on operations at Kentucky State University in relation to their Management Improvement Plan.
- Received an update from President Thompson on post legislative discussions and implementation plans of passed legislation.

Chair Silvert appointed the following to the Healthcare Workforce Investment Fund for two-year terms ending April 30, 2027:

- LaDonna Rogers, Council representative and Committee Chair
- Dr. Cliff Maesaka, CEOc Chairman's Circle/Board Chair of the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky
- J.P. Hamm, Kentucky Hospital Association
- Dr. Michael Muscarella, Baptist Health, Paducah
- Dr. Michael Yoder, Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet
- Dr. Vestena Robbins, Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities
- Beth Shafer, KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department of Public Health
- Tim Gaillard, University of Kentucky Healthcare
- Donovan Layne, Kentucky Community and Technical College
- Mason Dyer, Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities

## **UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT DEBT LEVELS IN KENTUCKY**

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Dr. Chris Ledford, Director of Data and Advanced Analytics, and Travis Muncie, Chief Information Officer, presented an overview of a study completed on undergraduate student debt levels at graduation from Kentucky's public institutions. The study investigated debt trends over the past five academic years among undergraduate completers at Kentucky's public institutions, and it showed that average debt levels for undergraduate completers in Kentucky continue to decline across sectors and credential levels.

- Average debt for all public undergraduates (including those graduating with and without debt) dropped 32.8 percent between 2018-19 and 2023-24. The proportion of graduates with debt declined from 54.8 percent to 40.9 percent over the same period.
- At KCTCS, average debt of graduates declined by 38.6 percent between 2018-19 and 2023-24. The proportion of graduates with debt declined from 42.7 percent to 28.0 percent over the same period.

- At four-year public universities, average debt of graduates declined by 15.5 percent between 2018-19 and 2023-24. The proportion of graduates with debt declined from 61.6 percent to 54.9 percent.
- Declining debt trends generally hold across demographic and academic subgroups and higher education sectors.

## **KENTUCKY VIRTUAL LIBRARY AND AFFORDABLE LEARNING KENTUCKY**

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Ms. Ilona Burdette, Executive Director of Kentucky Virtual Library (KYVL) and Dr. Leah Halliday, Associate Director of Affordable Learning Kentucky (ALKY), provided an update on the initiatives they oversee. One of CPE's key duties is managing the KYVL, which is a collaboration of over 350 Kentucky libraries and institutions, including colleges and universities, public libraries, K-12 schools, hospitals and the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives. KYVL's shared services and collaborative purchasing result in annual savings of approximately \$10 million for Kentucky's postsecondary institutions. Through the ALKY initiative, Dr. Halliday detailed how students directly benefit through open educational resources and free textbooks.

## **CAMPUS GOOD NEWS REPORTS**

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Reports from the institutions were provided in the agenda materials. Chair Silvert provided highlights from University of Louisville, Murray State University, Western Kentucky University and the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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The Council adjourned the business meeting at 3:50 p.m. ET.

# EXHIBIT C

## KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SPECIAL-CALLED BUSINESS MEETING



June 30, 2025 @ 2:00 p.m. ET

Virtual Meeting - livestreamed at <https://www.youtube.com/@KentuckyCPE>

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### **I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

### **II. Proposed Action Items**

- A. Revision to Kentucky's Statewide Strategic Agenda for Postsecondary Education
- B. Revision to New Academic Program Approval Policy
- C. Revision to Statewide Academic Program Review Policy
- D. Revision of name and charge of the Committee on Equal Opportunities
- E. Removal of Cultural Competency Credential Certification Process

### **III. Closed session pursuant to KRS 61.810(1)(c) to discuss pending litigation related to the agency**

### **IV. Adjournment**

# EXHIBIT D

## MEETING MINUTES

*Draft for approval by the Council on September 13, 2025*

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Who:	Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Meeting Type:	Special-called Business Meeting
Date:	June 30, 2025
Time:	2:00 p.m. ET
Location:	Virtual meeting via ZOOM

### WELCOME REMARKS

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The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education held a special-called business meeting on Monday, June 30, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. ET. The meeting occurred virtually by ZOOM and livestreamed on the CPE's YouTube page. Chair Madison Silvert presided.

### ATTENDANCE

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The following Council members attended: CB Akins, Jacob Brown, Lindsey Case, Jennifer Collins, Kellie Ellis, Meredith Figg, Sean Garber, Karyn Hoover, LaDonna Rogers, Madison Silvert, Macy Waddle and Elaine Walker, Kevin Weaver, and Commissioner Robbie Fletcher.

Council members who did not attend were Muhammad Babar.

Ms. Heather Faesy, CPE program manager, served as recorder of the meeting minutes.

### REVISION TO KENTUCKY'S STATEWIDE STRATEGIC AGENDA FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

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Mr. Travis Powell, CPE Executive Vice President and General Counsel, presented the proposed revisions to the statewide strategic agenda. The substantive revisions included the removal of equity as a cross-cutting priority and the removal of specific references to historically underrepresented minority students. The full list of proposed revisions were provided in the materials.

MOTION: Ms. Walker moved the Council approve the proposed revisions to the statewide strategic agenda to comply with the passage of House Bill 4 (2025). Mr. Brown seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

## **REVISION TO NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM APPROVAL POLICY**

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Mr. Powell presented the proposed revisions to the New Academic Program Approval Policy to comply with House Bill 4 (2025). There were minor revisions to ensure the applicable legislative language was reflected as well as the addition/deletion of relevant legislation and definitions.

MOTION: Rev Akins moved the Council approve the proposed revisions to the New Academic Program Approval policy. Ms. Walker seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

## **REVISION TO STATEWIDE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW POLICY**

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Mr. Powell presented the proposed revisions to the Statewide Academic Program Review policy to comply with House Bill 4 (2025). The main revision was to add a paragraph describing KRS 164.020(16) that includes the Council's authorization to eliminate any program that includes a requirement for a course or training of which the primary purpose is to indoctrinate participants with a discriminatory concept.

MOTION: Mr. Brown moved the Council approve the proposed revisions to the Statewide Academic Program Review policy. Ms. Collins seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

## **REVISION OF NAME AND CHARGE OF THE COMMITTEE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

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Mr. Powell presented the proposed name and charge revision to the current Committee of Equal Opportunities. The proposal was backed by the current members of the committee and was as follows:

- Rename the committee to the "Committee on Educational Opportunities"
- Establish the committee's main objectives as to:
  - Monitor and encourage institutional practices and supports for all students, especially those from low-income households, students with disabilities, adult learners and first-generation students.
  - Monitor educational attainment trends for those populations and provide recommendations to the Council that support advancement of the statewide strategic agenda for postsecondary education.

MOTION: Ms. Walker moved the Council approve the proposed name and charge revisions to the current Committee on Equal Opportunities. Rev. Akins seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

#### **REMOVAL OF CULTURAL COMPETENCY CREDENTIAL CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

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Mr. Powell presented the staff proposal to discontinue the Cultural Competency Credential Certification Process to comply with provisions of HB 4 (2025). The voluntary process incorporated the Council's diversity, equity, and inclusion policy by reference. Since that policy has been eliminated and there is a potential that the process could violate provisions of HB 4, staff recommended discontinuing the program.

MOTION: Ms. Rogers moved the Council discontinue the Cultural Competency Credential Certification process. Rev. Akins seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

#### **CLOSED SESSION PER KRS 61.810(1)(c)**

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MOTION: Mr. Brown moved the Council go into closed session pursuant to KRS 61.810(1)(c) to discuss pending litigation related to the agency. Ms. Walker seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

The committee remained in Executive Session for forty (40) minutes.

MOTION: Mr. Silvert moved the Council go into open session. Ms. Rogers seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

Chair Silvert confirmed that no action took place during the closed session and that only matters identified in the motion were discussed.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

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The Council adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m. ET.

# EXHIBIT E

## KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

### ACTION ITEM

April 17, 2025

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<b>TITLE:</b>	Revisions to 2022-24 Endowment Match Program Guidelines
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	The Finance Committee recommends the Council approve revisions to the <i>2022-24 Endowment Match Program Guidelines</i> as shown in the attachment.
<b>STAFF CONTACTS:</b>	Adam Blevins, Associate Director of Finance Policy and Programs Bill Payne, Vice President of Finance Policy and Programs

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### COMMITTEE REVIEW & APPROVAL

The Finance Committee reviewed and endorsed for final approval the proposed revisions to the *2022-24 Endowment Match Program Guidelines* at its April 14, 2025, meeting.

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Bucks for Brains program, also referred to as the Endowment Match Program (EMP), matches public dollars with private donations on at least a dollar-for-dollar basis to encourage research at the University of Kentucky (UK) and the University of Louisville (UofL) and to strengthen key programs at Kentucky's comprehensive universities. All funds, both public and private, must be endowed, with investment proceeds used to provide a perpetual source of funding for research-related activities.

In the 2022-2024 Budget of the Commonwealth (22 RS, HB 1), the General Assembly authorized \$40.0 million in state bond funds for Bucks for Brains, with \$30.0 million of that amount appropriated to the Research Challenge Trust Fund (RCTF) to support UK and UofL and \$10.0 million allocated to the Comprehensive University Excellence Trust Fund (CUETF) to support the comprehensive universities.

The Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) has statutory authority to determine the criteria and process by which public universities apply for access to appropriations to the RCTF (KRS 164.7917) and CUETF (KRS 164.7919). At its June 14, 2022, meeting, the Finance Committee approved the 2022-24 Endowment Match Program (EMP) Guidelines. In March 2024, staff brought proposed revisions to the Council to clarify language and reduce confusion for the institutions. The proposed revisions also included updated language permitting Kentucky State University to use up to 20 percent of funds awarded under Title III of the Higher Education Act to be endowed so long as the dollar-for-dollar matching requirement is maintained. The Council approved both the proposed revisions and the updated language at the March 2024 meeting.

During the 2025 Regular Session, the General Assembly passed legislation that prohibits initiatives related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) for postsecondary institutions and agencies across the Commonwealth (HB 4). The bill specifies that neither the Council on Postsecondary Education nor any public postsecondary institution shall “expend any resources to establish or maintain a diversity, equity and inclusion initiative.” A “diversity, equity and inclusion initiative” is defined as a policy, practice or procedure designed or implemented to promote or provide differential treatment or benefits to individuals on the basis of religion, race, sex, color or national origin in such practices including, but not limited to, employee recruitment and hiring and student financial assistance and scholarship awards.

To comply with the legislative requirements of HB 4, CPE staff is proposing revisions to the Endowment Match Program Guidelines to remove DEI-related planning and reporting requirements from the program. On page five (5) of Attachment A, staff has identified the section that needs to be removed using red font and strikethrough.

## **Council on Postsecondary Education 2022-24 Endowment Match Program Guidelines**

### **Introduction**

Kentucky recognizes the importance of research to the economic well-being of its citizens. The Endowment Match Program encourages private investment in public higher education research activities to stimulate business development, generate increases in externally sponsored research, create better jobs and a higher standard of living, and facilitate Kentucky's transition to a knowledge-based economy. The program matches public money with private gifts to fund chairs, professorships, research scholars, staffs and infrastructure, fellowships and scholarships, and mission support at the public universities. This collaborative approach is critical to advancing Kentucky's research presence into national prominence.

### **Program Funding**

State funding for the Endowment Match Program is appropriated to the Research Challenge Trust Fund (RCTF) for the research universities and to the Comprehensive University Excellence Trust Fund (CUETF) for the comprehensive institutions. Both trust funds were created with passage of the Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997 (HB 1).

Prior to 2022, there were four rounds of funding for the Endowment Match Program. In fiscal year 1998-99, the program received surplus General Fund appropriations of \$110 million (i.e., \$100 for the research universities and \$10 million for comprehensive institutions). In 2000-01, the General Assembly authorized \$120 million for the program (i.e., \$100 million for the RCTF and \$20 million for the CUETF). The legislature debt financed another \$120 million for the program in 2003-04 (i.e., \$100 million for the RCTF and \$20 million for the CUETF). Finally, the General Assembly authorized \$60 million in state supported bond funds for the program in 2008-09, with \$50 million appropriated to the research universities and \$10 million appropriated to the comprehensive universities.

For the upcoming 2022-2024 biennium, the General Assembly authorized \$40 million in bond funds for the Bucks for Brains program, with \$30 million appropriated to the Research Challenge Trust Fund and \$10 million appropriated to the Comprehensive University Excellence Trust Fund (22 RS, HB 1).

### **Program Administration**

The Council on Postsecondary Education oversees and administers the Endowment Match Program. The Council establishes areas of concentration within which program funds are used, develops guidelines for the distribution of program funds, and reviews reports from the institutions on uses of program funds and results achieved.

The boards of trustees and boards of regents of the Commonwealth's public universities are responsible for the Endowment Match Program on their respective campuses. The governing boards are required by Council guidelines to review and approve all donations, gifts, and pledges that will be matched with state funds and used to establish new endowments or expand existing endowments under the Bucks for Brains program. Furthermore, the boards

are charged with ensuring that the purposes of each endowment and sources of matching funds comply with Council guidelines and serve the public good.

Documentation of board approval must be submitted with each endowment request. In addition, the governing boards are required to review and approve Endowment Match Program reports that are submitted annually to the Council.

### **Allocation of Program Funds**

In the 2022-2024 Budget of the Commonwealth (22 RS, HB 1), the General Assembly authorized \$30 million in General Fund supported bond funds in fiscal year 2022-23 for the Research Challenge Trust Fund (RCTF) to support efforts to grow endowments for initiatives in fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and health (i.e., STEM+H fields) at Kentucky public research universities. In accordance with KRS 164.7917, funding appropriated to the RCTF will be allocated two-thirds (2/3) to the University of Kentucky and one-third (1/3) to the University of Louisville, as shown in the table below. These funds will remain in the trust fund until matched and distributed.

University of Kentucky	\$20,000,000
University of Louisville	<u>10,000,000</u>
Total RCTF	\$30,000,000

In that same budget, the General Assembly also authorized \$10 million in state-supported bond funds in 2022-23 for the Comprehensive University Excellence Trust Fund (CUETF) to support endowment growth in STEM+H fields at Kentucky comprehensive universities. In keeping with KRS 164.7919, these funds will be apportioned among the comprehensive universities based on each institution's share of sector total General Fund appropriations, excluding debt service and specialized, noninstructional appropriations (i.e., mandated programs). The resulting allocations are shown below. These funds will remain in the trust fund until matched and distributed.

Eastern Kentucky University	\$2,227,800
Kentucky State University	667,800
Morehead State University	1,279,000
Murray State University	1,484,900
Northern Kentucky University	1,864,600
Western Kentucky University	<u>2,475,900</u>
Total CUETF	\$10,000,000

### **Matching Requirements**

The Endowment Match Program was conceived as a way to bring new money from external sources into the Commonwealth's system of postsecondary education. In order to receive state funds, the universities must provide dollar-for-dollar matching funds that satisfy the following requirements:

- Gifts and pledges must be newly generated to be eligible for state match. Newly generated contributions are those received by the university after November 15, 2021 (i.e., the date of the Council's 2022-2024 biennial budget submission).

- Gifts and pledges must be from external sources to be eligible for state match. External source contributions are those that originate outside the university and its affiliated corporations. Eligible sources of funding include, but are not limited to, businesses, non-governmental foundations, hospitals, corporations, and alumni or other individuals. Funds received from federal, state, and local government sources are not eligible for state match. Federal funds awarded to Kentucky State University under Title III of the Higher Education Act (HEA) are an exception to this rule and are eligible for state match. Federal guidelines under the Strengthening HBCUs Program allow up to 20% of Title III grant awards to be endowed provided they are matched dollar-for-dollar.
- General Fund appropriations and student-derived revenues (e.g., tuition and fees revenue) are not eligible for state match.
- The minimum institutional request amount is \$50,000. A university may combine smaller donations from businesses, nongovernmental foundations, hospitals, corporations, and alumni or other individuals to meet the \$50,000 minimum.
- All funds, both state and private, must be endowed. “Endowed” means that state and donated funds will be held in perpetuity and invested to create income for the institution, with endowment proceeds eligible for expenditure, in accordance with donor restrictions, university endowment spending policies, and Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA) requirements.
- Requests for state funds must identify the matching funds that are cash and the matching funds that are pledges.
- Pledges, or promises of future payment, are eligible for state match provided they are based on a written contract or agreement and include a payment schedule, which does not exceed five years from the initial pledge date. Pledge payment schedules showing receipts to date and scheduled future payments are to be included in the audited financial statements of either the institution or the foundation.
- If pledged funds are not received within five years of the initial pledge date, the university must replace the portion of private funds not received with another eligible cash gift or the unmatched portion of the state funds plus an allowance for accrued interest will revert to the trust fund for reallocation. In such cases, a time frame for the replacement or return of state funds will be negotiated between Council staff and institutional representatives.
- University officials must notify the Council staff of unpaid pledges six months before the end of the five-year deadline, or immediately when a gift has been revoked.

### **Uses of Program Funds**

Proceeds from the endowments can be used to support various activities including endowed chairs and professorships, research scholars, research staff, graduate fellowships, undergraduate scholarships, research infrastructure, and mission support as described below.

#### *Category 1 Uses of Program Funds*

**Chairs:** New faculty positions, salary supplements to existing faculty positions, and associated expenses for those positions, including start-up costs, salaries, benefits, travel, and other professional expenses as permitted by university policy.

**Professorships:** New faculty positions, salary supplements to existing faculty positions, and associated expenses for those positions, including start-up costs, salaries, benefits, travel, and other professional expenses as permitted by university policy.

**Research Scholars:** Salaries, benefits, and other personnel related expenses associated with non-tenured, medical school faculty who exhibit the potential to assume a chair or professorship position once tenure has been awarded. Research scholars should have clearly defined research agendas that relate specifically to the fields of study envisioned for the ultimate occupants of the chairs or professorships. Funding for this purpose is time limited. Each research scholar may be supported with endowment proceeds for a maximum of six years. At the end of that time, if the research scholar has not been appointed to the identified chair or professorship, university officials should fill the position with an appropriately qualified, tenured faculty member.

**Research Staff:** Salaries, benefits, and other personnel related expenses associated with full- time or part-time staff assistants who directly support the research activities of an endowed chair or professor.

**Research Infrastructure:** Start-up and operating expenses that directly support the research activities of an endowed chair or professor, including equipment, materials and supplies, and other research related expenses as permitted by university policy.

### *Category 2 Uses of Program Funds*

**Graduate Fellowships:** Fellowship stipends for outstanding graduate or professional students, which may include travel and other expenses as permitted by university policy. Eligibility for fellowships will be determined by academic deans and/or campus financial aid officials consistent with donor intent as specified in endowment agreements.

**Undergraduate Scholarships:** At the comprehensive universities only, program funds can be used to support scholarships for outstanding undergraduate students, which may include travel and other expenses as permitted by university policy. Eligibility for scholarships will be determined by academic deans and/or campus financial aid officials consistent with donor intent as specified in endowment agreements.

**Mission Support:** Program funds can be used to support research and graduate missions at all institutions, and programs of distinction or applied research programs approved by the Council at the comprehensive institutions. Consideration will be given to mission support activities such as: (1) expenditures that enhance the research capability of university libraries (i.e., books, journals, research materials, media, and equipment); (2) start-up costs, equipment, and supplies that support faculty, graduate student, or undergraduate student research activities; (3) funding for visiting scholars, lecture series, and faculty exchange; and (4) expenditures for the dissemination of research findings (i.e., nationally prominent publications and presentations at conferences, symposiums, seminars, or workshops).

However, priority will be given to mission support expenditures that encourage the research related activities of faculty and students.

### **Use of Funds Requirements**

- At the research universities, at least 70 percent of program funds must be endowed for the purpose of supporting chairs, professorships, or research scholars, or research staff and infrastructure that directly support the research activities of an endowed chair, professor, or research scholar (i.e., Category 1 Uses). No more than 30 percent of program funds may be endowed for the purpose of supporting mission support activities or graduate fellowships (i.e., Category 2 Uses).
- At the comprehensive institutions, at least 50 percent of program funds must be endowed for the purpose of supporting chairs or professorships, or research staff and infrastructure that directly support the research activities of an endowed chair or professor (i.e., Category 1 Uses). No more than 50 percent of program funds may be endowed for the purpose of supporting mission support, graduate fellowships, or undergraduate scholarships (i.e., Category 2 Uses).

### **Areas of Concentration**

- At both research and comprehensive universities, 100 percent of program funds must be endowed to support initiatives in STEM+H fields (22 RS, HB 1). These areas are of strategic benefit to Kentucky and are core components of a knowledge-based economy. A copy of the Council's official STEM+H Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code list is available upon request.
- At the research universities, the Council expects state and external matching funds to be substantially directed toward supporting research that leads to the creation, preservation, or attraction of businesses that will increase the number of good jobs in Kentucky. For these purposes, "good jobs" are defined as jobs that yield income at or above the national per capita income.
- The Council recognizes that strong research programs are clustered around related academic disciplines and encourages campus officials to create a critical mass of scholars who can influence the nation's research and academic agendas.
- The Council recognizes that the boundaries of traditional disciplines are increasingly permeable and encourages the use of endowment funds for interdisciplinary, problem solving, or applied research activities.
- The Council recognizes the importance of cooperation between universities and corporations and encourages partnerships in the technologies, engineering, and applied sciences.
- Program funds cannot be used for positions that are primarily administrative. However, chairs, professors, or scholars with active research agendas who may have an appointment such as department chair, center director, or dean are eligible.

### **Program Diversity**

~~The Council on Postsecondary Education and participating universities are committed to ensuring the gender and ethnic diversity of Endowment Match Program faculty, professional staff, and financial aid recipients. The universities shall develop and implement plans to achieve reasonable diversity in the recruitment and retention of women, African Americans, and other underrepresented minorities for positions funded by the Endowment Match Program, including scholarship and fellowship recipients. In addition, the universities will report by November 1 every odd numbered year to the Council the race and gender of program faculty, professional staff, and financial aid recipients.~~

## **Reporting**

Institutions will provide a report to the Council by November 1 every odd numbered year (i.e., coinciding with the Council's biennial budget submission), documenting how state and campus matching funds were used. These reports will include such items as the number of endowed chairs, professorships, and research scholars created or expanded using program funds, the gender and race of program faculty, research staff, and financial aid recipients, and the impact of the program in terms of job creation, increases in sponsored research attributable to the program, and generation and profitable use of intellectual property.

The institutions will also continue to provide FD-21 reports as part of their annual Comprehensive Database submissions to the Council. CPE staff will work with campus officials to identify any additional information that should be included in reports provided to the Council.

## KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

### ACTION ITEM

June 30, 2025

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<b>TITLE:</b>	Revision to Kentucky's Statewide Strategic Agenda for Postsecondary Education
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	Staff recommend the Council approve the proposed revisions to the statewide strategic agenda to comply with the passage of House Bill 4 (2025).
<b>STAFF CONTACTS:</b>	Travis Powell, Executive Vice President & General Counsel Melissa Young, Senior Fellow

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### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The statewide strategic agenda, developed in 2022 and revised in 2024, is the state's strategic plan for public postsecondary education until 2030. The agenda made several references to efforts to increase diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) at public institutions, including the annual DEI plan that determined eligibility for new academic programs.

### LIST OF PROPOSED 2025 REVISIONS

A list of proposed revisions follows. The most substantive change is the removal of equity as a cross-cutting priority. Unlike the other five priority areas (affordability, transitions, success, talent and value), equity had no related objectives, strategies or metrics, which meant only the narrative section was removed. Additionally, specific references to historically underrepresented minority students were removed throughout. The agenda now references underrepresented students, defined as first-generation, low-income and adult students, which mirrors categories in the performance funding distribution model. Graphics highlighting performance gaps between majority and minority populations (pages 8 and 17) were replaced.

- **Cover:** Removed Equity badge
- **Inside Cover:** added "for all" to the end of the vision statement to emphasize commitment to diversity ["...affordable, high-quality postsecondary programs **for all.**"]
- **Page 3, para. 3:** changed "invite ~~non-traditional and historically excluded individuals~~ onto our campuses" to "invite individuals **underrepresented** in higher education onto our campuses"
- **Page 3, para. 4:** changed "A critical focus of Higher Education Matters is creating ~~equitable higher education opportunities~~ for all Kentuckians" to "A critical focus of Higher Education Matters is **ensuring higher education is within the reach** of all Kentuckians."

- **Page 3, para. 5:** changed “Revisions in 2024” to “Revisions in 2024 and 2025;” added to the list of revisions “**changes to comply with the passage of House Bill 4 in 2025.**”
- **Page 3, final sentence:** changed “together we can navigate the path toward a more equitable and **educated**, prosperous Commonwealth.”
- **Page 4, para. 6:** changed “This agenda is Kentucky’s plan to create a more inclusive, innovative higher education system that serves students of all ages, backgrounds and beliefs” to “This agenda is Kentucky’s plan to create a more effective, innovative higher education system.”
- **Page 4, para. 7:** removed “this agenda identifies the strategic priorities that will focus our efforts over the next decade, ~~with equity as a cross-cutting priority.~~”
- **Page 4, para. 8:** added “This strategic agenda will be reviewed and revised every three years **or more often, if necessary.**”
- **Page 7, para. 3:** updated “At 55.1% in 2022” to “At 56.2% in 2023”
- **Page 7, para. 4:** updated to “The state’s current short-term credential attainment rate is 16.7%, of which 11.8% are certificates and 4.9% are industry certifications.”
- **Page 7, para. 8:** changed “There are significant disparities in educational attainment linked to race and ethnicity that must be addressed, especially since the state’s population is growing more diverse. The percentage of adults with an associate degree or higher in 2022 was 30.3% for Black Kentuckians and 29.8% for Hispanic Kentuckians, compared to 40.1% for White Kentuckians. These gaps must be closed.” to “**There are significant disparities in educational attainment among subpopulations that must be closed.**”
- **Page 8:** updated attainment line graph to include 2023 data
- **Page 8:** replaced graphic on attainment rate gaps with graphic showing educational attainment by credential level
- **Page 9:** removed equity badge
- **Pages 10 & 11:** Removed
- **Transitions Narrative, Para. 5, p. 15:** changed “CPE will work with campuses to increase recruitment of individuals ~~historically excluded or underrepresented in higher education~~, including working-age adults balancing careers and families” to “CPE will work with campuses to increase recruitment **of traditional-age students**, as well as working-age adults balancing careers and families.”
- **Transitions, Objective 4, Strategy 4a:** changed “Enhance college recruitment strategies through partnerships with postsecondary institutions and other stakeholders, with attention to ~~underrepresented~~, **first-generation**, adult and low-income students, as well as traditional students.” (mirroring performance funding categories)
- **Page 17:** removed rates for Hispanic and Black students from the immediate college-going rate graphic.

- **Page 18:** removed second paragraph [~~“However, while institutions are narrowing completion gaps at a historic pace, more progress is needed to close them. The six-year graduation rate of minority students currently stands at 45.9%, while the three-year minority graduation rate is 31.8%.”~~]
- **Objective 5, strategy 5c, p. 20:** revised to “Work with campuses and other state and national partners to close opportunity and success gaps for ~~historically underserved students~~ first-generation, adult and **low-income** students ~~from low-income backgrounds.~~”
- **Page 26, para. 5:** changed “Over a 30-year career, bachelor’s degree graduates in Kentucky make about ~~\$1 million~~ **\$1.2 million** more than high school graduates...”

EXHIBIT H



Affordability



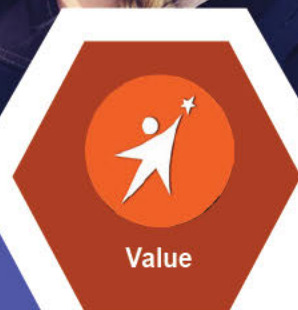
Talent



Success



Transitions



Value

# HIGHER EDUCATION *Matters*

A Statewide Strategic Agenda for  
Kentucky Postsecondary Education

**2022-2030**

Revised 2025



# **KENTUCKY'S PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY SYSTEM**

## **VISION**

**Kentucky will be a national leader in building a strong, sustainable and equitable economy through increased educational attainment and affordable, high-quality postsecondary programs for all.**

## **MISSION**

**Kentucky's postsecondary education system drives innovation, enhances public health and well-being, breaks cycles of generational poverty and improves quality of life by preparing students to be lifelong learners and excel in a diverse, knowledge-based economy.**

## **VALUES**

- **Access, engagement & belonging**
- **Transparency & accountability**
- **Comprehensive student support**
- **Institutional collaboration**
- **Quality & excellence**
- **Affordability & accessibility**
- **Innovation**
- **Business & community partnerships**



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Aaron Thompson, Ph.D.

In accordance with Kentucky Revised Statute 164.020, we are pleased to present “Higher Education Matters: A Statewide Strategic Agenda for Kentucky Postsecondary Education, 2022-2030.”

This agenda advances a bold vision for increased economic growth and vitality in the Commonwealth through improvements in the education and skill levels of our workforce. It establishes strategic priorities to drive higher education innovation and improvement, and key performance indicators to monitor progress toward an ambitious educational attainment goal - for 60% of working-age Kentuckians to have a high-quality postsecondary credential by the year 2030.

The previous iteration of this agenda, “Stronger by Degrees,” promoted high-impact practices that enabled us to reimagine developmental education and infuse workplace essential skills into select degree programs. “Higher Education Matters” will accelerate the adoption of high-impact practices that further improve teaching and learning, ensure the quality and relevancy of postsecondary credentials and invite individuals underrepresented in higher education onto our campuses in greater numbers.

A critical focus of “Higher Education Matters” is ensuring higher education is within the reach of all Kentuckians. We must ensure everyone has access to life-changing postsecondary credentials,

as well as the academic, social and emotional supports to succeed. Doing so is both an economic and moral imperative.

This strategic agenda provides a framework that is fixed enough to provide focus and stability, yet flexible enough to respond to changing conditions. Revisions in 2024 and 2025 include new key performance indicators to monitor college affordability and return on investment; adjustments to some objectives and strategies to better reflect statewide priorities; and changes to comply with the passage of House Bill 4 in 2025.

This plan was not created in a vacuum. It relies on the contributions of many constituencies and committees. I would be remiss if I did not thank the hundreds of individuals - including CPE board members, higher education leaders, faculty members, students, K-12 educators, legislators, employers and partners - who provided valuable insight and direction throughout the development and revision process.

This is not CPE’s strategic plan; this agenda belongs to each and every one of us. Kentucky will rise or fall based on our collective, united efforts to enable all residents to reach their highest potential. We have a lot of ground to cover, but together we can navigate the path toward a more educated, prosperous Commonwealth.



***Kentucky will rise or fall based on our collective, united efforts to enable all residents to reach their highest potential.***



# INTRODUCTION

## Higher Education Matters

### Restoring Higher Education's Value Proposition

This strategic agenda for Kentucky postsecondary education is built on a simple, enduring premise: higher education matters to our state and its people.

Higher education empowers individuals to reach their highest potential and achieve personal and professional fulfillment. It improves collective health and well-being, advances knowledge and discovery, ignites innovation and fuels our economy.

Research studies enumerate its benefits to individuals and society. On average, college graduates earn more money, have lower rates of unemployment, enjoy better health, live longer and are more active citizens and volunteers. States with high levels of educational attainment - like Massachusetts, Colorado and Washington - generate higher tax revenues, create more jobs, spend more money in local economies and devote fewer resources to disease, addiction and incarceration.

Despite these findings, the value of college has become a matter of debate. Media stories portray recent college graduates as underemployed and overburdened with debt. These voices have undermined the public's faith in higher education at a time when a college credential is more important than ever. By the year 2031, 72% of all U.S. jobs will require some postsecondary education or training, according to the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University. In Kentucky, that percentage is 63%.

We must restore the value proposition to higher education. Kentucky's future prosperity and quality of life depend on it.

### Developing the Agenda

This agenda is Kentucky's plan to create a more efficient, responsive and innovative higher education system. It reaffirms our goal for 60% of Kentucky adults to have a postsecondary credential by the year 2030, and builds on unprecedented gains in degree production over the last decade.

It responds to the suggestions and concerns of hundreds of Kentuckians - higher education faculty and administrators, K-12 educators, board members, legislators, employers and others - who worked with us on its development. Based on trend analysis, research and stakeholder feedback, this agenda identifies the strategic priorities that will focus our efforts over the next decade. They are: affordability, transitions, success, talent and value.

### A Framework for Accountability

This agenda includes common objectives that will guide system-wide progress. The statewide strategies will be led by CPE, in conjunction with its partners.

Public institutions will implement campus-level strategies to advance this agenda. The strategic agenda will be reviewed and revised every three years or more often, if necessary.

CPE and campuses will set numeric targets for key performance indicators, which also will be updated on a three-year cycle. Additional contextual metrics will help us monitor progress and adjust strategies as needed, but targets will not be set.

Kentucky's higher education institutions will pursue these objectives, strategies and targets as one system, united by common challenges and enhanced by individual strengths.

***We must restore the value proposition to higher education.***



**Higher education strengthens the economy, creates wealth, reduces inequality, breaks cycles of generational poverty, improves health and well-being and preserves democracy.**



**60% of Kentucky's working-age adults (ages 25-64) will have a high-quality postsecondary credential by the year 2030.**



## KY's 60x30 Goal

### Our North Star

#### Progress Toward the Goal

In ancient times, sailors used the North Star as a navigational guide due to its fixed position in the sky. Today, the North Star has come to symbolize any guiding principle or purpose. During prosperity or adversity, it is a steadfast point on which we set our sights.

For Kentucky's postsecondary system, the 60x30 goal is our North Star. The previous strategic agenda, "Stronger by Degrees," established this educational attainment goal back in 2016. With its adoption, Kentucky joined 45 other states and the Lumina Foundation in efforts to raise the education and skill levels of our workforce to meet current and future demands for talent.

Kentucky has made phenomenal progress toward the goal. Between 2010 and 2020, Kentucky's improvement in educational attainment ranked fifth among states, according to Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce. At 56.2% in 2023, Kentucky's attainment rate is fast approaching the national average.

Much of this progress is due to increases in short-term credentials, which include certificates and industry certifications. The state's current short-term credential attainment rate is 16.7%, of which 11.8% are certificates and 4.9% are industry certifications.

#### Statewide Challenges

However, Kentucky is facing some strong headwinds in the decade to come, which threaten to blow us off course. These include:

**- A declining number of high school graduates.** Overall, Kentucky's high school graduate cohort size is expected to fall by 3% from 2022 to 2035. Decreases will be much larger in rural areas, which will disproportionately affect enrollment at some comprehensive universities and community and technical colleges. Campuses must increase participation among working-age adults and out-of-state students to maintain current enrollment levels.

**- Falling adult enrollments.** Undergraduate enrollment among adults 25 and older has fallen more than 40% over the last decade. Kentucky will need aggressive recruitment efforts and redesigned programs and supports to attract adults returning to college or enrolling for the first time.

**- Unequal rates of attainment.** There are significant disparities in educational attainment among subpopulations that must be closed.

#### Looking Ahead

CPE will provide more detailed projections to monitor progress toward the 60% attainment goal, and focus on raising the education and skills levels of our current workforce.

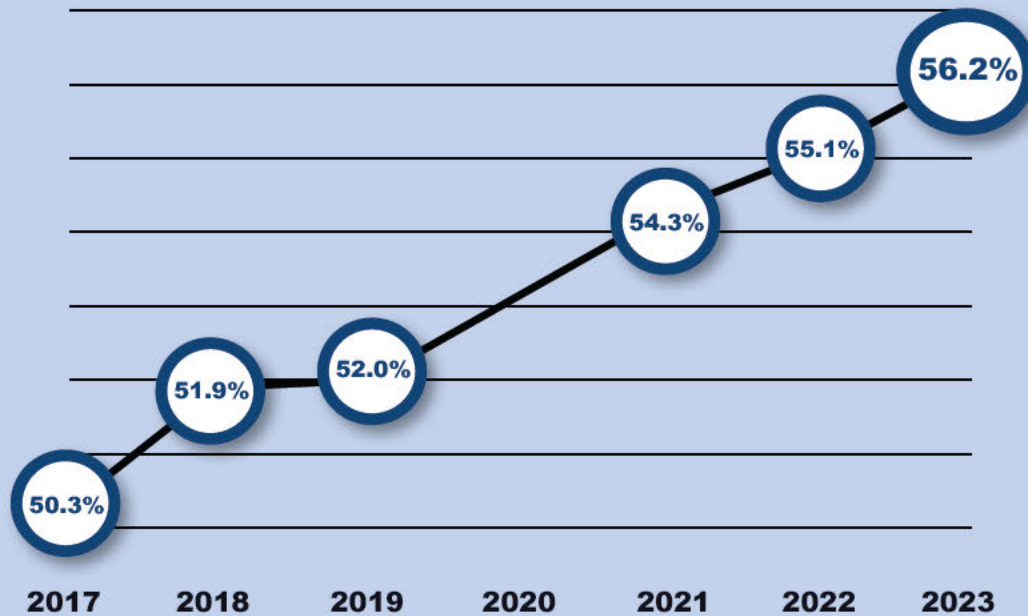
**From 2010 to 2020, KY's progress in educational attainment ranked 5th in the nation.**



## KENTUCKY'S ATTAINMENT GOAL

60% with a postsecondary credential

### KY is making progress toward the 60% goal



Percentage of Kentuckians (25-64) with a short-term certificate or higher. 2020 data are not available due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### KY attainment by credential level

**Certificate**



16.7%

**Associate**



9.9%

**Bachelor's**



18.2%

**Graduate**



11.5%

Percentage of Kentuckians (ages 25-64) with postsecondary credentials in 2023.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Building on previous agendas, “Higher Education Matters” is a blueprint for accelerating change and improvement in Kentucky’s public postsecondary system. The strategic priorities identified in this plan represent our primary issues and top concerns as we face head-on the demographic, economic and technological forces reshaping higher education in Kentucky.





# AFFORDABILITY

## A Strategic Priority

### Statewide Challenges

Over the last two decades, federal and state disinvestment in public higher education has shifted the majority of college costs to students and their families. In the past, the state of Kentucky subsidized about two-thirds of postsecondary operational costs, with tuition and fees accounting for one-third. Now, this situation is reversed, with one-third of costs supported by state appropriations and two-thirds borne by students.

Consequently, increases in college costs have become a serious burden for many Kentucky families. While the cost of living has steadily increased, real wages have remained flat. Declining amounts of college savings mean student borrowing is at an all-time high. As of 2024, student loan borrowers in the U.S. collectively owed over \$1.7 trillion in federal and private loans, exceeding auto and credit card debt.

At a time when postsecondary education and training are essential to long-term economic security, college is becoming financially inaccessible to our most vulnerable populations. If left unchecked, declines in college access will lead to greater income inequality, making it all but impossible for everyday Kentuckians to get ahead.

Responding to rising concerns from students, parents and elected officials, the Council has elevated college affordability to one of five strategic priorities our public postsecondary system will pursue over the next eight years.

***Federal & state disinvestment in public higher education has shifted costs to students.***

### Systemwide Responses

To this end, the state's higher education system will build on the success achieved over the last decade to increase college access and affordability.

We will work with elected leaders to increase state funding for postsecondary education and student financial aid, so rising costs are not passed on to students.

We will work to limit increases in tuition and fees, while exploring collaborative purchasing agreements, open educational resources and other efficiency measures to keep ancillary costs in check.

We will work in partnership with P-12 educators, advisors, counselors and other stakeholders to help incoming students understand the complexities of college pricing, and the role of grants, scholarships and responsible borrowing in managing costs. The published cost of attendance stops many students and families in their tracks. Providing greater transparency around out-of-pocket costs will ensure sticker shock does not prevent students from applying.

We also will focus on decreasing the time it takes to earn a credential, since additional semesters mean additional cost. Early postsecondary opportunities and improved advising are strategies that can help students graduate on time.



**Kentucky will ensure postsecondary education is affordable for all Kentuckians.**



# AFFORDABILITY

## Objectives, Strategies & KPIs

### 1. Reduce financial barriers to college enrollment and completion.

- 1a. Work with campuses, state leaders and other stakeholders to increase access to grants and scholarships for low- and middle-income students.
- 1b. Moderate increases in tuition and mandatory fees at Kentucky's public colleges and universities.
- 1c. Work with campuses to reduce unmet financial need and student loan debt among undergraduate students.
- 1d. Monitor the financial health of Kentucky public institutions and their ability to adequately discount costs for students.

### 2. Improve the public's understanding of the true cost of college and how to pay for it.

- 2a. Provide informational resources, financial literacy and advising strategies for counselors, teachers and community partners on paying for college.
- 2b. Coordinate and support efforts to educate Kentuckians about changes to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and increase the number of individuals who complete the application.
- 2c. Establish state-level networks for high school counselors and other college access professionals to share effective practices, build expertise and develop common outreach and messaging for Kentucky students.

### Key Performance Indicators

**First-time, In-state Student Unmet Need (State- and Campus-Level):** The total cost of attendance (tuition, fees, room and board, transportation, textbooks and other costs) for an academic year minus Student Aid Index or SAI (formerly Expected Family Contribution or EFC) and all financial aid, excluding loans.

**Debt at Graduation (Contextual Metric):** The sum of loans taken from the year of first enrollment to the highest undergraduate credential earned.



## COLLEGE IN KENTUCKY

### May Cost Less Than You Think

**The actual cost of college is less than advertised.**

The total estimated cost of college, including tuition, room, board, fees and other expenses

The actual out-of-pocket cost of college once federal, state and institutional grants and scholarships are factored in



**Sticker Price**



**Net Price**

**2-Yr. Public**

**\$12,550**

**\$5,567**

**4-Yr. Public**

**\$24,629**

**\$12,985**

*This chart reflects median annual amounts for in-state, undergraduate students at Kentucky public institutions. For median amounts by institution, visit KY Students' Right to Know at <https://kystats.ky.gov/Reports/Tableau/KSRTK>*

## What a typical KY undergraduate owes at graduation:



Graduate of a public community and technical college



**\$4,138**

Graduate of a public university



**\$18,674**

*Amounts reflect median loan balances for undergraduate students who completed a credential in 2022-23, including students with zero debt. When students with no debt are excluded, these medians rise to \$13,644 at a public community and technical college and \$33,317 at a public university. Source: Council on Postsecondary Education. "Undergraduate Student Debt Levels in Kentucky," April 2024.*



**Kentucky will ensure more students transition to college prepared to succeed.**



# TRANSITIONS

## A Strategic Priority

### Statewide Challenges

Over the decade, the U.S. saw little movement in the percentage of high school seniors enrolling directly in college. Kentucky, on the other hand, experienced a rather steep decline in its college-going rate, falling from nearly 60% in 2015 to 53.3% in 2022.

### Systemwide Responses

There are actions higher education can take to help more high school graduates successfully transition to postsecondary programs. We can provide extra and earlier guidance to students and remove tripwires that cause individuals to stumble on the path to college, particularly if they are first-generation or historically underserved by postsecondary institutions. We can simplify bureaucratic and onerous admission processes, for instance, and help demystify financial aid applications like the FAFSA.

The rise of early college experiences in high school show tremendous promise. Dual credit/enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) and similar programs allow students to earn college credit while still in high school, giving them a jump-start on postsecondary education. The challenge is to expand access to

students of all socioeconomic backgrounds and ability levels, and ensure credits count toward degree requirements and not just as electives.

It is unrealistic to expect high school guidance counselors to help every student navigate the maze of college admission requirements and decisions. With its partners, CPE will advocate for dedicated college coaches and advisors in middle and secondary schools, and create resources that walk students and their parents step-by-step through the planning and application process.

*The rise of early college experiences in high school show tremendous promise.*

Colleges and universities also must do their part to enroll and retain students through those critical first months. CPE will work with campuses to increase recruitment of traditional-age students, as well as working-age adults balancing careers and families. We will streamline and digitize admission processes and materials to the greatest extent possible.

Predictive analytics can help pinpoint at-risk students and better target intervention strategies.

Such actions will go a long way toward creating smoother educational transitions, from cradle to career.



## TRANSITIONS

### Objectives, Strategies & KPIs

### 3. Increase students' readiness to enter postsecondary education.

- 3a. Expand access to high-quality, early postsecondary opportunities.
- 3b. Develop digital resources to help students explore career interests and college options.
- 3c. Partner with public P-12 schools, adult education programs and postsecondary institutions to provide outreach to students to help them prepare and plan for college.

### 4. Increase college-going rates and enrollment in postsecondary education.

- 4a. Enhance college recruitment strategies through partnerships with postsecondary institutions and other stakeholders, with attention to first-generation, adult and low-income students, as well as traditional-age students.
- 4b. Work with education providers to streamline and simplify postsecondary admission processes.

### Key Performance Indicators

**Undergraduate Enrollment (State- & Campus-Level):** Total unduplicated number of students who enroll in an undergraduate program in an academic year, either full-time or part-time.

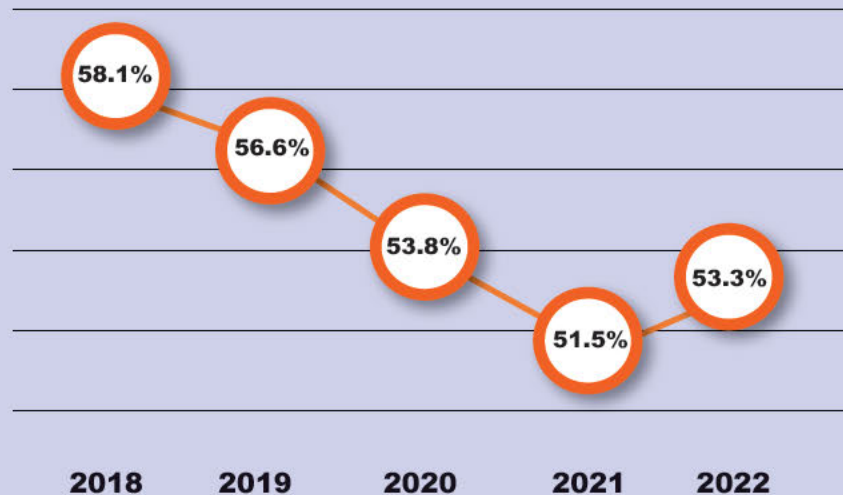
**Immediate College-Going Rate (State-Level):** Percent of recent Kentucky high school graduates who attend any in-state or out-of-state postsecondary institution in the summer, fall or spring following high school graduation.



## IMPROVING COLLEGE ACCESS

### Strengthening P-12 to College Transitions

**Kentucky must increase its immediate college-going rate.**



Percentage of KY high school students who enroll directly in an in-state or out-of-state public or private college the fall or spring following graduation.

Source: KY Center for Statistics (KYSTATS)

## These statewide initiatives will help.



- A federal grant program administered by CPE
- Provides early college awareness & readiness
- Serves thousands of K-12 and college students in low-income schools across Kentucky
- Teaches students how to plan, apply and pay for college
- Follows students from middle school through their first year of college
- Offers mentoring and support



### Commonwealth Education Continuum

- Collaboration of CPE, KDE, KHEAA and the Education & Workforce Development Cabinet
- Recommendations for increased early college experiences
- Strategies for improved college & career readiness
- Diversification of teaching & advising corps



## SUCCESS

### A Strategic Priority

#### Statewide Successes & Challenges

Kentucky's colleges and universities made impressive gains in retention and completion over the last decade. The six-year graduation rate rose from 48.9% to 59.9% at public universities, while the three-year graduation rate at KCTCS jumped from 23.4% to 41.2%.

Increasing degree production is an overriding concern of this agenda, but we are not prioritizing quantity over quality. High-quality credentials equip students to thrive in a rapidly evolving world that demands critical thinking, ingenuity, flexibility and teamwork. From certificates to doctorates, we must ensure students master the content, skills and mindsets necessary for future career success and personal fulfillment. The challenge is producing quality credentials at a pace commensurate with our overarching attainment goal.

#### Systemwide Responses

In the years ahead, Kentucky higher education will double down on the widespread adoption of high-impact practices that research has proven to be effective. CPE launched the Kentucky Student Success Collaborative, a one-of-a-kind center dedicated to the advancement of innovative strategies and best practices. This entity will increase our capacity to engage and unite campuses in more sustained, comprehensive improvement efforts.

We will continue to improve transfer from two-year to four-year institutions by helping students and practitioners understand how credits apply to specific degree programs across the state. We will promote credit for prior learning and accelerated programs to make our institutions friendlier for working-age adults, an underserved market that is critical to creating a more competitive workforce and reaching our 60x30 goal.

Just as technology is revolutionizing the way we work, it is also transforming teaching and learning. Artificial intelligence, global online collaborations and personalized learning software are only the beginning. Combined with face-to-face instruction, technology can accelerate and deepen learning in profound ways. But we cannot harness these powerful tools if educators lack training and resources, or if broadband access is not universally accessible and affordable.

*The system will not prioritize the quantity of credentials over quality.*

Finally, we intend to make internships, apprenticeships, service and other forms of work-based learning the rule rather than the exception. Students should be able to connect classroom learning to the world of work, and articulate these connections to employers. More robust employer partnerships will increase the relevance and responsiveness of academic programs and ensure students are able to secure meaningful employment in their field of study.



**Kentucky will ensure more students earn high-quality degrees and credentials.**



## **SUCCESS**

### **Objectives, Strategies & KPIs**

## **5. Increase persistence in and timely completion of postsecondary programs.**

- 5a. Share, implement and evaluate emerging, promising and proven practices supporting student success and college completion.
- 5b. Identify and promote efforts to ensure “on-time” program completion.
- 5c. Work with campuses and other state and national partners to close opportunity and success gaps for first-generation, adult and low-income students.
- 5d. Work with education providers to limit barriers to enrollment and completion for students balancing the competing demands of work, life, family and school.

## **6. Maximize transfer of academic and experiential credit.**

- 6a. Work with campuses to reduce barriers that prevent the seamless transfer of credit.
- 6b. Promote transfer opportunities and program pathways.
- 6c. Encourage credit for prior learning and competency-based instruction.

## **7. Ensure academic offerings are high-quality, relevant and inclusive.**

- 7a. Work with campuses to ensure the essential competencies and outcomes outlined in the Kentucky Graduate Profile are embedded in undergraduate programs.
- 7b. Enhance the relevance, inclusivity and quality of academic offerings through improvements in program review and approval processes.

## **Key Performance Indicators**

**Undergraduate Degrees and Credentials (State- & Campus-Level):** Total degrees and credentials awarded by public universities and KCTCS institutions.

**Graduation Rate (State- & Campus-Level):** The percent of first-time, full-time credential-seeking students receiving a bachelor’s degree within 6 years at public universities, or an associate degree or credential within 3 years at KCTCS from their starting institution.

**2-Year to 4-Year Transfer (Sector-Level):** Percent of first-time, full-time credential-seeking students entering KCTCS in the fall who transfer to any in-state, 4-year public institution within 3 years of entry.

**Retention Rate (State- and Campus-Level):** Percent of first-time, credential-seeking students enrolled in the summer or fall who return to the same institution the following fall.



# ACCELERATING SUCCESS

Building on a Decade of Credential Growth

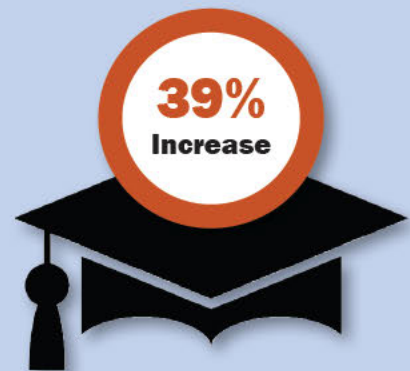
## Undergraduate Credential Growth Over the Last Decade:



In Certificates, Diplomas  
& Associate Degrees  
Awarded by KCTCS



In Bachelor's Degrees  
Awarded by Public  
Universities



In Graduate Degrees  
Awarded by Public  
Universities

## The Kentucky Student Success Collaborative

To accelerate meaningful transformation around student success, CPE launched the KYSSC, a first-of-its-kind statewide program supporting greater degree completion and successful career transitions. KYSSC offers its higher education partners the following resources and assistance:

### Professional Development

Virtual and online assistance based on campus priorities.

### Communities of Practice

Collaboration and resource sharing around common challenges and opportunities.

### Resource & Knowledge Hub

An interactive, online platform for faculty and practitioners to share experiences and resources.

### Technical Assistance

Guidance from national organizations and thought leaders on issues and challenges.

### Change Leadership Institute

A forum for faculty, staff, and administrators to build capacity for growth and innovation.

<https://kystudentsuccess.org>



**Kentucky will increase talent and innovation to support our communities, employers and economy.**



## TALENT

### A Strategic Priority

#### Statewide Challenges

A primary purpose of postsecondary education is to produce adaptive, highly skilled workers to fuel the economy. As noted by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, nearly three out of four jobs in the U.S. will demand postsecondary experience by the year 2031.

A 2021 report by the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce estimates that the state has 90,000 to 100,000 job openings in any given month, and 65% to 85% of these vacancies require training, credentialing or degrees beyond high school. Data from the Chamber's Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) program show that only 30% of the state's jobs require a high school diploma or less, corroborating this finding.

At 57.9%, Kentucky currently has one of the lowest workforce participation rates in the nation. Poor health, substance use disorders and childcare shortages are partly to blame, but the lack of requisite skills and credentials, especially in Appalachian counties, is a large and growing part of the problem. The lack of active, skilled workers limits Kentucky's economic growth and expansion, increases spending on public assistance programs and reduces state tax revenues.

***65% to 85%  
of Kentucky  
job openings  
require training  
beyond high  
school.***

#### Systemwide Responses

Kentucky must expand postsecondary access to undereducated, working-age adults to fill critical work shortages in healthcare, STEM fields, early childhood development and other high-demand areas. Work-based education opportunities, tuition assistance and public-private partnerships can put adults to work while they gain valuable credentials that move them up the career ladder.

Endless debates pitting technical training against liberal arts education miss the larger point: today's graduates need both. We must ensure liberal arts graduates gain technical and vocational proficiencies, just as students pursuing technical and vocational credentials gain exposure to the humanities and liberal arts.

Besides talent production, higher education institutions drive economic development through basic and applied research and business services. Innovations originating in laboratories are driven to the marketplace, spawning new companies and creating products and processes that improve our lives. To maximize economic development, these efforts should be aligned with the state's emerging and existing industries.

Finally, Kentucky's postsecondary system will continue its mission of regional stewardship by working with community partners to exchange knowledge and expertise for the mutual benefit of the Commonwealth.



## **TALENT**

### **Objectives, Strategies & KPIs**

#### **8. Improve postsecondary education's responsiveness to and alignment with current and projected workforce demands.**

8a. Engage post-traditional learners, veterans, justice-involved individuals and others in programs designed to fill critical workplace shortages.

8b. Work with colleges and universities to strengthen campus-based career advising and development.

8c. Facilitate meaningful partnerships among employers, community partners and education providers to improve the career outcomes of postsecondary programs and strengthen Kentucky's workforce and economy.

#### **9. Guide investments in research, training and scholarships to support innovation and growth.**

9a. Identify high-growth, high-demand and high-wage industries by region and target postsecondary programs for increased enrollment in those areas.

9b. Encourage targeted research, the development of signature academic programs and expanded community engagement supporting Kentucky's high-need workforce areas.

9c. Work with the General Assembly and other policy makers to alleviate barriers to workforce participation.

### **Key Performance Indicators**

**Graduate and Professional Degrees (State- & Campus-Level):** Total number of graduate/professional degrees awarded in an academic year.

**Statewide Educational Attainment Goal (State-Level):** Percent of Kentuckians ages 25-64 with a postsecondary credential (certificate or higher).



## WORK-READY GRADUATES

Producing Talent for Kentucky Employers



Only **48%** of Kentuckians have skills training beyond high school, which **65%-85%** of jobs require.

Source: KY Chamber of Commerce, "20 Years in the Making: Kentucky's Workforce Crisis," September 2021.

**8 out of 10**



Kentucky businesses have trouble finding workers with the right skills.

Source: 2017 study conducted by Talent Pipeline Management, a statewide initiative of the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.

## Kentucky Graduate Profile



In partnership with Kentucky campuses, CPE identified 10 essential skills that employers expect in college graduates. CPE is working with campuses to integrate these competencies into their curricular and co-curricular offerings.



## VALUE

### A Strategic Priority

#### The Perceived Value of College

Increasingly, Americans are questioning the value of higher education. The extent of this skepticism varies according to socioeconomic status, political party affiliation, geographic region and other factors.

When Gallup first polled Americans about their faith in higher education in 2015, 57% had a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in higher education, while 10% had little or no confidence. By 2024, these percentages were nearly evenly divided, with 36% reporting a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in higher education, and 32% reporting little or no confidence.

#### The Actual Value of College

Unfortunately, negative beliefs about the value of college are based more on feeling than fact. College's return on investment in strict financial terms depends on how much you paid for your degree and the marketability of your chosen field. Some students reap greater financial rewards than others. But to promote the belief that college is no longer a wise investment is a grave disservice to parents and students everywhere. While a college credential does not guarantee economic security, the lack of a credential most certainly limits earning potential and perpetuates generational poverty in our communities.

In September 2021, CPE released a study showing that among Kentucky's high school class of 2011, postsecondary graduates were earning substantially more money than high school graduates by 2019, despite fewer years of full-time work. The typical community college or

university graduate recouped their higher education investment in about three to five years, depending on the credential earned.

Over a 30-year career, bachelor's degree graduates in Kentucky make about \$1.2 million more than high school graduates, while those with associate degrees make nearly half a million more.

#### Systemwide Responses

The Council on Postsecondary Education regularly disseminates communications and public awareness materials to counteract negative opinions about the value of college. We

educate students about the benefits of a college credential, and inform policy makers about how higher education increases tax revenue, decreases unemployment and public assistance expenditures, improves health outcomes and produces a myriad of benefits that can't easily be quantified, like increased volunteerism and voting.

Part of this effort is helping Kentuckians understand that college is not only a four-year, residential undergraduate degree. There are a multitude of college options in our state, many technical in nature, that allow students to pursue careers in the skilled trades, ranging from short-term certificates to applied associate degrees.

It is our hope that increasing higher education's value proposition will lead to greater investment from both the General Assembly and the private sector. More profoundly, it will restore our belief in higher education's ability to put Americans on a path to future prosperity and fulfillment.

***Workers with bachelor's degrees make \$1.2M more than high school graduates over a lifetime.***



**Kentucky will improve public understanding that postsecondary education is key to greater opportunity and economic growth.**



## VALUE

### Objectives, Strategies & KPIs

## 10. Increase the public's belief in the transformative power of postsecondary education.

10a. Implement communications strategies that articulate what postsecondary education is (i.e., it includes short-term technical training, certifications and degrees) and why it's critically important to individuals and the Commonwealth.

10b. Leverage partnerships with campuses, state agencies and national partners to amplify messages about postsecondary education's value and return on investment.

## 11. Build support for greater investment in postsecondary education.

11a. Communicate the benefits of higher education and the need for increased state and federal support.

11b. Seek funding from foundations and other external sources to support Strategic Agenda priorities.

### Contextual Performance Indicators

**State General Fund Appropriations (State-Level):** Percent change in net general fund appropriations for full-time equivalent students, excluding state financial aid or state monies for debt service.

**Economic Mobility (State-Level):** Percent of low-income students who are earning salaries in the top 50 percent of Kentucky wages within three years of graduation.



# HIGHER EDUCATION MATTERS

College-Educated Citizens Build a Better Kentucky

## College Benefits Individuals & Society



### Earnings

College graduates earn more and are less likely to rely on public assistance.



### Health

College graduates are more likely to be insured, exercise and enjoy better health.



### Civic Responsibility

College graduates are more likely to vote, donate to charity and be civically engaged.



### Literacy

College graduates are more likely to read to their children and be supportive of their education overall.



### Employment

College graduates are more likely to find jobs and stay employed, even in a down economy.



### Economy

The state gains more from college graduates through higher earnings and less dependence on public assistance.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CPE thanks the following individuals for their contributions to this Strategic Agenda in 2022:

### Academic & Strategic Initiatives Committee

Lori Harper, Chair  
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Colby Birkes  
Karyn Hoover  
Lucas Mentzer  
Richard Nelson  
Vidya Ravichandran  
Robert Staat  
Kevin Weaver

### CPE Staff to ASI Committee

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Lee Nimocks  
Melissa Young

### Campus Advisory Committee

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Mason Dyer, AIKCU  
Renee Fister, MuSU  
Bob Goldstein, UL  
Tuesdi Helbig, WKU  
Katherine McCormick, UK  
Beverly Schneller, KSU  
Tanlee Wasson, ECU

### CPE Board (upon adoption on 11/5/21)

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Karyn Hoover  
Richard Nelson  
Vidya Ravichandran  
Madison Silvert  
Elaine Walker  
Kevin Weaver  
Carol Wright  
Jason Glass (ex officio)

Thanks to Stefanie Ashley & Sarah Gilbert, ECU Facilitation Center, for leading focus groups & conducting executive interviews in 2022 with:

### Elected & State Officials

Jacqueline Coleman, Lt. Governor  
Jason Glass, Commissioner of Education  
Regina Huff, State Representative  
Robert Stivers, Senate President  
James Tipton, State Representative

Stephen Pruitt, Southern Regional Education Board  
Yolanda Watson Spiva, Complete College America  
Henry Stoeber, Association of Governing Boards  
Belle Whelan, Southern Association of Colleges & Schools  
Amanda Winters, National Governors Association

### National Organizations

Jeremy Anderson, Education Commission of the States  
Rob Anderson, State Higher Education Executive Officers  
Thomas Brock, Community College Research Center  
Alex Chough, National Council for Community & Education Partnerships  
Michael Collins, Jobs for the Future  
Kim Cook, National College Attainment Network  
Matt Gandal, Education Strategy Group  
Debra Humphreys, Lumina Foundation  
Rebecca Martin, National Association of System Heads

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Robert Jackson, Murray State University  
David McFaddin, Eastern Kentucky University  
Jay Morgan, Morehead State University  
OJ Oleka, Association of Independent KY Colleges & Universities  
Ashish Vaidya, Northern Kentucky University



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Thanks to all 2022 focus group participants:*

### **Focus Groups On Issues**

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- College Affordability
- Transitioning from Postsecondary Education to the Workforce
- Engaging the Adult Learner
- Stronger Partnerships between P-12 and Postsecondary Education

### **2022 Focus Groups with Standing Committees**

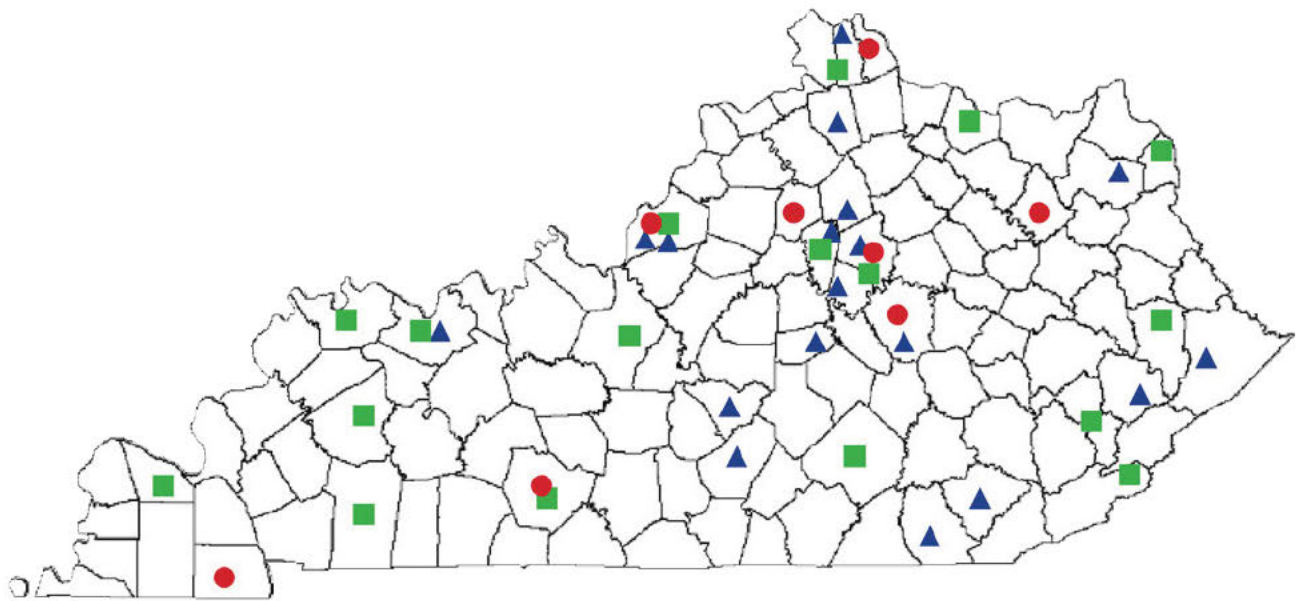
- **Student Advisory Group:** Eyouel Mehonnen, EKU; Aaron Nethery, MuSU; Abigail Stewart, UofL; Gregory Wieland, NKU; Emily Wiley, MoSU; Noah Young, UofL
- **Chief Business Officers:** Elizabeth Baker, UK; Buddy Combs, KCTCS; Jackie Dudley, MuSU; Mary Fister-Tucker, MoSU; Wendell Followell, KCTCS; Rick Graycerek, UofL; Ryan Green, EKU; Mike Hales, NKU; Brendan LeHane, KCTCS; Teresa Lindgren, MoSU; Shannon Means, UK
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- **CPE Executive Leadership Team:** Melissa Bell, Amanda Ellis, Jennifer Fraker, Lee Nimocks, Bill Payne, Travis Powell, Rick Smith, Aaron Thompson
- **CPE Senior Leadership Team:** Bruce Brooks, Leslie Brown, Ilona Burdette, Cody Davidson, Wayne Fielder, Jevonda Keith, Sarah Levy, Stephanie Mayberry, Shaun McKiernan, Travis Muncie, Dawn Offutt, Sue Patrick, Missy Ross, Kim Welch, Melissa Young

**Thanks to the following groups who assisted with the Strategic Agenda 2024 revision:**

- **CPE Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee:** Kellie Ellis, Meredith Figg, Karyn Hoover, LaDonna Rogers, Kevin Weaver
- **Campus Representatives:** Bethany Miller, EKU; Wendy Dixie, KSU; Jill Ratliff, MoSU; Dedrick Brooks, Renee Fister, and Alyssa Spencer, MuSu; Holly Chason and Amy Ishmael, NKU; Todd Brann, Angie Martin and Chris Thuringer, UK; Robert Goldstein and Becky Patterson, UofL; Tuesdi Helbig and Jessica Spears, WKU; Alicia Crouch, Alan Lawson and Steve Popple, KCTCS
- **CPE Internal Work Group:** Tony Bartley, Melissa Bell, Adam Blevins, Bruce Brooks, Shelia Brothers, Leslie Brown, Beth Ann Collins, Sterling Crayton, Amanda Ellis, Heather Faesy, Gabrielle Gayheart, Leah Halliday, Robin Hebert, Mitzi Holland, Mary Jackson, Ryan Kaffenberger, Chris Ledford, Lily Massa-McKinley, Michaela Mineer, Blake Nantz, Laura Negron, Lee Nimocks, Kelli Norman, Dawn Offut, Bill Payne, Jessica Romious, Missy Ross, Leslie Sizemore, Janna Vice, Trinity Walsh, Kim Welch, Carl Wilson, Melissa Young



# KENTUCKY CAMPUSES



## ● Public Universities

Eastern Kentucky University  
Kentucky State University  
Morehead State University  
Murray State University  
Northern Kentucky University  
University of Kentucky  
University of Louisville  
Western Kentucky University

## ■ Kentucky Community & Technical College System

Ashland Community & Technical College  
Big Sandy Community & Technical College  
Bluegrass Community & Technical College  
Elizabethtown Community & Technical College  
Gateway Community & Technical College  
Hazard Community & Technical College  
Henderson Community College  
Hopkinsville Community College  
Jefferson Community & Technical College  
Madisonville Community College  
Maysville Community & Technical College  
Owensboro Community & Technical College  
Somerset Community College  
Southcentral Kentucky Community & Technical College  
Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College  
West Kentucky Community & Technical College  
KCTCS System Office Headquarters

## ▲ Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities

Alice Lloyd College  
Asbury University  
Bellarmine University  
Berea College  
Brescia University  
Campbellsville University  
Centre College

Georgetown College  
Kentucky Christian University  
Kentucky Wesleyan College  
Lindsey Wilson College  
Midway University  
Spalding University  
Thomas More University

Transylvania University  
Union Commonwealth University  
University of Pikeville  
University of the Cumberlands





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# EXHIBIT I

## KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

## ACTION ITEM

June 30, 2025

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<b>TITLE:</b>	Revision to New Academic Program Approval Policy
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	Staff recommend the Council approve the proposed revisions to the New Academic Program Approval Policy.
<b>STAFF CONTACTS:</b>	Travis Powell, Executive Vice President & General Counsel Melissa Bell, Vice President, Academic Excellence Sheila Brothers, Senior Director, Academic Excellence

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### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Council is the approving body for academic programs at Kentucky's public institutions. KRS 164.020(15) empowers the Council to define and approve the offering of all technical, certificate, diploma, associate, baccalaureate, graduate, and professional degrees at public postsecondary institutions. It also mandates that the Council expedite the approval of requests from KCTCS for new programs of a vocational-technical and occupational nature. This statutory duty is operationalized through the Council's New Academic Program Approval Policy, which was last updated in September 2020.

### RECOMMENDATION

In accordance with HB 4 (2025), Council staff recommend the following revisions to the New Academic Program approval policy:

- Added sentence in the "History" section that details the legislative changes
- Minor revisions to ensure the applicable legislative language was reflected
- Addition/deletion of relevant legislation and definitions

The policy with tracked changes has been included as reference.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In response to the SJR 170 (2024) study and SB 77 (2025), the Council has been working with campus representatives to substantially revise the policy to include an approval process for doctoral programs at comprehensive universities. Council staff expect to have this work completed over the summer and will present those updates for Council approval at the September meetings.



# New Academic Program Approval

Approved by the Council:

Effective Date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
July 1, 2025

# Approval of New Academic Programs: Policy and Procedures

## History

Prior to the Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997, institutions notified the Council's predecessor, the Council on Higher Education (CHE), semi-annually of new programs under development. The institution then submitted a program proposal and a two-page executive summary after the proposal had completed all institutional approvals. Staff performed the preliminary review; a Programs Committee made up of CHE members reviewed the proposals; and the full CHE acted upon the staff and Programs Committee recommendations.

In November 1997, the newly formed Council on Postsecondary Education (the Council) directed staff to review academic program policies. Until the new policies were established, staff considered a new academic program only if it documented an immediate, critical need.

- The Council streamlined its academic policies at its September 1998 meeting by directing staff to develop new procedures that “enable institutions to respond quickly to changing market demands and place primary responsibility for quality assurance with institutional governing boards, within broad system-wide guidelines that address statewide needs and protect consumer interests.”
- As a first step in streamlining, in April 1999 the Council delegated to the Kentucky Community and Technical College (KCTCS) board of regents program approval authority for new certificate, diploma, associate in arts, associate in science, associate in applied science, and associate in applied technology degree programs at the KCTCS institutions. This delegation was reaffirmed in November 2000.
- At the November 1999 meeting, the Council delegated its approval authority for new academic programs within designated program bands to each institution's governing board while retaining approval authority for first professional programs; engineering programs at the comprehensive institutions and engineering programs at the doctoral level at the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville; teacher and school personnel preparation programs; health-related programs above the baccalaureate level; associate degree programs at public universities; and other programs falling outside each institution's negotiated program band. Proposals for new academic programs within an institution's program band were subject to a six-week public review by the chief academic officers of Kentucky's public institutions, the president of the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities, and others. If there were no significant problems with the proposal, the institution was allowed to complete its internal process of program approval and subsequently implement the program without full Council approval.

The policy was significantly revised at the September 2011 Council meeting. Definitions were aligned to those of the U.S. Department of Education, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). The program bands were eliminated, a notification of intent process was developed, and the program approval criteria were more closely aligned with that of the review of existing academic programs.

Between 2011 and 2016, there were revisions to IPEDS and SACSCOC definitions. In addition, both CPE staff and institutional representatives identified areas of the policy and processes that needed further clarification or alteration. CPE staff worked with institutional representatives to update the policy and procedures accordingly. In 2017, the policy was revised. The highlights of the updated policy included:

- 1) A streamlined process for certificates that are not considered substantive changes by SACSCOC.
- 2) A curricular review in the pre-proposal stages rather than in the full proposal stage.
- 3) A shorter review period to help institutions better respond to student and workforce demands.
- 4) A time limit on the submission of pre-proposals and full proposals to help the process progress smoothly and efficiently.
- 5) A more explicit connection between the academic program approval policy and the review of existing academic programs policy by requiring complete submission of the previous year's program reviews before any new programs can be proposed.

This 2020 policy revision further streamlines the process and aligns the process more closely with the information required by SACSCOC.

In June 2025 the policy was again revised to comply with legislation prohibiting approval of programs for which the primary purpose is to indoctrinate participants with a discriminatory concept.

## Related Legislation

Numerous statutes and administrative regulations define the role of the Council as well as institutional authority in the area of academic programming.

- [KRS 164.003](#) goals for achievement by 2020, including a seamless, integrated system of postsecondary education strategically planned and adequately funded to enhance economic development and quality of life.
- [KRS 164.020\(15\)](#) empowers the Council to define and approve the offering of all technical, certificate, diploma, associate, baccalaureate, graduate, and professional degree at public postsecondary institutions. It also mandates that the Council expedite

the approval of requests from KCTCS for new programs of a vocational-technical and occupational nature.

- [KRS 164.020\(16\)](#) authorizes the Council to eliminate, in its discretion, existing programs or make any changes in existing academic programs at the state's postsecondary educational institutions, taking into consideration (a) consistency with the institution's mission and the strategic agenda; (b) alignment with the priorities in the strategic implementation plan for achieving the strategic agenda; (c) elimination of unnecessary duplication of programs within and among institutions; and (d) efforts to create cooperative programs with other institutions through traditional means, or by use of distance learning technology and electronic resources, to achieve effective and efficient program delivery; and (e) eliminate any program that includes a requirement for a course or training of which the primary purpose is to indoctrinate participants with a discriminatory concept.
- KRS164.020(15)(a) restricts the Council from approving a new degree, certificate, or diploma program that includes a requirement for a course or training of which the primary purpose is to indoctrinate participants with a discriminatory concept. "Indoctrinate" means to imbue or attempt to imbue another individual with an opinion, point of view, or principle without consideration of any alternative opinion, point of view, or principle. "Discriminatory concept" means a concept that justifies or promotes differential treatment or benefits conferred to individuals on the basis of religion, race, sex, color, or national origin, unless the differential treatment or benefit is:
  - Excluded from a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative under an exclusion set forth in subsection (7)(b) of KRS 164.2894; or
  - Established or required by law, including but not limited to differential treatment or benefits on the basis of citizenship status.
- [KRS 164.125](#) allows the University of Kentucky, upon Council approval, to provide associate, baccalaureate, masters, and specialist programs. It also allows joint doctoral programs in cooperation with other public postsecondary institutions in the state; doctoral and postdoctoral programs; and professional instruction including law, medicine, dentistry, education, architecture, engineering, and social professions.
- [KRS 164.295](#) allows comprehensive universities to provide, upon Council approval, associate and baccalaureate programs as well as master's-degree programs in education, business, and the arts and sciences. It also allows for specialist degrees and programs beyond the master's-degree level to meet the requirements for teachers, school leaders, and other certified personnel. It also allows for advanced practice doctorates. Comprehensive universities may also provide programs of a community college nature as provided in KRS 164.580.
- [KRS 164.2951](#) encourages public postsecondary institutions to limit the credit-hour requirements to 60 credit hours for associate of science or associate of arts degree

programs and to 120 credit hours for bachelor of arts or bachelor of science degree programs, except in situations in which the quality and content of the program would be negatively impacted or if required by external accreditor in order to meet specific program standards.

- [KRS 164.296](#) states that no public postsecondary institution shall offer any new program of a vocational-technical occupational nature below the associate degree level without the review of KCTCS board of regents and Council approval. The KCTCS board of regents, with Council approval, may contract with public postsecondary institutions for the operation of specific programs and projects.
- [KRS 164.580](#) allows KCTCS, upon Council approval, to offer associate degree programs. Technical colleges, through their faculty and accrediting procedures, may develop degree programs that shall be considered for approval by the board of regents and the Council.
- [KRS 164.815](#) allows the University of Louisville, upon Council approval, to provide associate and baccalaureate degree programs of instruction, master's-degree programs, specialist degrees above the master's-degree level, doctoral degree programs and joint doctoral programs in cooperation with other public institutions of higher education, and professional degree programs including medicine, dentistry, law, engineering, and social professions.
- [13 KAR 2:110](#) outlines the criteria and conditions upon which an advanced practice doctorate may be approved at comprehensive universities.
- [13 KAR 2:060](#) establishes the process for equal opportunity goal setting, measurement of progress, and attainment of a temporary waiver. It is related to KRS 164.020(19).

## Policy Fundamentals

- An institution may not submit a proposal unless it has submitted all academic program reviews for the preceding academic year, per the Review of Existing Academic Programs Policy.
- Institutions should recommend the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code of the proposed program after careful consideration. CPE will review the recommendation and finalize the CIP code with the requesting institution.
- After a program is approved by the Council, an institution has up to three years to implement the program. If the program has not been implemented within this timeframe, it must undergo the new program approval process.

- If institutions advertise or publish in institutional catalogs a new academic program prior to approval by the Council, the qualifier “pending Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education approval” must be included until approval is received.
- After a program has been approved and entered into the program inventory, it is the institution’s responsibility to ensure that all information is correct and current. Institutional staff will update program information in the Kentucky Postsecondary Education System (KPEDS) Program Inventory module.
- The Council reserves the right to create special program approval processes for programs that require extraordinary consideration, such as responding to legislative requirements and administrative regulations.
- The Council is the approving body for academic programs. An institution should follow its internal processes and gain approval from its local governing board before the proposal is submitted for approval to the Council.
- Items that do not require new program approval:
  - Inclusion of new degree designations within an existing degree level.
  - Implementation of significant changes to the program provided the CIP code remains unchanged.

### **Merged and Separated Programs**

If two academic programs are combined into one program, the combined program will be considered a new academic program and must follow the policy and procedures related to new academic programs only if it requires a new CIP code to describe accurately the discipline of the combined program.

If an existing academic program is separated into two or more academic programs, at least one of the separated programs is considered a new academic program and must follow the policy and procedures related to new academic programs. The other program will not be considered a new academic program if the existing CIP code remains the best disciplinary descriptor of the program.

### **Collaborative and Joint Programs**

If any partner institution does not currently offer the academic program, that institution must undergo the new academic program approval process and must provide a “Memorandum of Understanding” that clearly outlines program responsibilities and fiscal arrangements among participating institutions.

If two or more institutions create a collaborative or joint program with academic programs that are already offered at each institution, then the program does not need to undergo the new academic program process at either institution. The institutions should notify the Council of the

arrangement and provide a copy of the “Memorandum of Understanding” through the KPEDS Program Inventory module.

### **Suspended and Closed Programs**

If a program has been suspended for fewer than five years, an institution may reinstate the program through the program inventory system.

After a program has been suspended for five years, it will be considered closed, and this status will be updated automatically in the program inventory.

If a program has been closed and an institution wants to reopen the program, an institution must complete the new program approval process.

## **Program Approval Process for KCTCS Institutions**

This section outlines the process for approving new diploma, certificate, and associate degree programs for KCTCS institutions.

### **New Diploma and Certificate Programs**

The institution will complete a New Diploma/Certificate Form through KPEDS. Programs will be approved upon receipt of the completed form.

### **Associate Degree Programs of a Vocational-Technical-Occupational Nature (i.e. AAS)**

KCTCS will post a proposal to online program approval system. Institutions and Council staff will have 30 days to respond to the proposal.

- *If no issues are identified with the proposal*, the program will be approved by Council staff and reported as an information item at the next Council meeting.
- *If issues are identified with the proposal*, the institution will address those via the online program approval system, and the review period will be extended. Once the issues are resolved, the program will be approved by Council staff and reported as an information item at the next Council meeting. If concerns cannot be fully resolved, the Council staff will inform KCTCS that it should not proceed with its internal process of program approval.

### **New Transfer-Oriented Associate Degree Programs (i.e. AA, AS, AFA)**

KCTCS will post a proposal to the online program approval system. Institutions and Council staff will have 30 days to respond to the proposal.

- *If no issues are identified with the proposal*, the program will be approved by Council staff and reported as an information item at the next Council meeting.
- *If issues are identified with the proposal*, the institution will address those via the online program approval system, and the review period will be extended. Once the issues are resolved, the program will be approved by Council staff and reported as an information item at the next Council meeting. If the concerns cannot be fully resolved, the Council

staff will inform KCTCS that it should not proceed with its internal process of program approval.

## Program Approval Process for Universities

This section outlines the approval process for all diploma, certificate, baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral programs at each public university.

### New Diploma and Certificate Programs

The institution will complete a New Diploma/Certificate Form through KPEDS. Programs will be approved upon receipt of the completed form.

- [KRS 164.296](#) states that no public postsecondary institution shall offer any new program of a vocational-technical occupational nature below the associate degree level without the review of KCTCS board of regents and Council approval. After review of KCTCS board of regents, the institution will complete a New Diploma/Certificate Form through KPEDS.

### All Degree Programs (Excluding Advanced Practice Doctorates at Comprehensive Universities)

The institution will post to the online Notification of Intent system. The notification will then be shared with the chief academic officers at the other public institutions.

- For associate degree programs, the program will only move forward if KCTCS determines, within 30 days of notification, that a community and technical college(s) in the proposing institution's area of geographic responsibility (1) does not have an interest in creating a similar program and (2) does not have the ability to implement the program in a more cost-efficient and effective manner.

If no issues are identified, the institution will then post a proposal to the online program approval system within one year. Institutions and Council staff will have 30 days to respond to the proposal.

- *If no issues are identified with the proposal*, the program will be sent to the Council for approval.
- *If issues are identified with the proposal*, the institution will address those via the online program approval system, and the review period will be extended. Once the issues are resolved, the program will be sent to the Council for approval. If concerns cannot be fully resolved, the Council staff will inform the institution that it should not proceed with its internal process of program approval.

### Advanced Practice Doctorates Programs at Comprehensive Universities

The process for approval of Advanced Practice Doctorate Programs is outlined in [13 KAR 2:110](#).

## KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

### ACTION ITEM

June 30, 2025

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**TITLE:** Revision to Statewide Academic Program Review Policy

**DESCRIPTION:** Staff recommend the Council approve the proposed revisions to the Statewide Academic Program Review Policy.

**STAFF CONTACTS:** Travis Powell, Executive Vice President & General Counsel  
Melissa Bell, Vice President, Academic Excellence  
Sheila Brothers, Senior Director, Academic Excellence

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### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Council has the authority to review academic programs after they are implemented. Under KRS 164.020(16), the Council has the authority to eliminate or modify existing programs using the criteria of consistency with institutional mission, alignment with the statewide strategy agenda, elimination of unnecessary duplication, and the creation of collaborative programs. This statutory duty is operationalized through two Council policies – the Statewide University Program Review Policy, which was last revised in June 2021, and the KCTCS Program Review Policy, which was approved in January 2023.

Due to recently approved legislation, the Statewide University Program Review Policy must be revised. The KCTCS Program Review Policy does not require any edits.

### RECOMMENDATION

In accordance with HB 4 (2025), Council staff recommend the following revisions to the statewide policy:

- Added sentence in the “History” section that details the legislative changes
- Added paragraph describing KRS 164.020(16).

The policy with tracked changes has been included as reference.



# Statewide Academic Program Review Policy

Approved by the Council: \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Date: July 1, 2025

# Statewide Academic Program Review: Policy and Framework

The statewide academic program review process is a key responsibility of state coordinating boards like the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE). The process ensures that academic programs are consistent with state priorities and that public resources are used efficiently for the greater good of the Commonwealth.

## History of Kentucky Statewide Academic Program Review

The Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997 created CPE and outlined the criteria for program review in statute.

More specifically, KRS 164.020 (16) outlines four criteria for statewide academic program review to determine:

- Consistency with the institution's mission;
- Alignment with the state's strategic postsecondary agenda and implementation plan.
- Elimination of unnecessary duplication of programs within and among institutions.
- Efforts to create cooperative programs with other institutions through traditional means, or by use of distance learning technology and electronic resources, to achieve effective and efficient program delivery.

Statewide program review has taken several forms since the inception of CPE but each process has focused on continuous improvement as well as the operationalization of statutory criteria.

In November 1999, CPE passed a series of guidelines related to academic programs that streamlined the process of reviewing programs and recognized the need for institutional flexibility within the new postsecondary structures of the Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997. The Council's Guidelines for Review of Academic Program Productivity established degree production thresholds to identify programs for review. The Council conducted four rounds of program productivity review under these streamlined policies. At its January 30, 2006, meeting, the Council amended its Guidelines for Review of Academic Program Productivity to specify a four-year review cycle, and several more rounds of statewide review were conducted.

The statewide program review policy was revised again in 2011, with an implementation date of the 2013-14 academic year. The policy revisions were made in light of best practices, better coordination among state and institutional practices, and an improved connection between academic program approval and review of existing academic programs. CPE conducted five rounds of program reviews under this iteration of the policy.

After several iterations of policy development and numerous rounds of program review, CPE decided to do a one-time comprehensive analysis of academic programs in the state. In 2019, CPE contracted with Gray Associates to work with universities to review all baccalaureate programs. Gray Associates assisted Council staff to create a methodology that provides campuses with consistent, detailed information to help guide decisions about program needs and improvement. The marginal financial contribution and more than 50 metrics related to student demand, employment, and competition were calculated for each program. Campus representatives participated in facilitated workshops to review these data and analyze each baccalaureate program. CPE also used this data analysis to operationalize unnecessary duplication and identify programs that met the criteria.

In June 2025, the policy was updated to reflect the Council's responsibility to eliminate programs with a primary purpose of indoctrinating participants with a discriminatory concept.

## Academic Program Review Process

The program review policy incorporates elements of the comprehensive data analysis with a greater focus on program alignment with the statewide strategic agenda.

The process consists of three major components:

- Annual reports summarizing institutional review efforts;
- Statewide data analysis focused on efficiency criteria; and
- Efforts to scale up implementation of the statewide postsecondary education strategic agenda.

As part of the program review process, KRS 164.020(16) authorizes the Council to eliminate, in its discretion, existing programs or make any changes in existing academic programs at the public state's postsecondary educational institutions, taking into consideration (a) consistency with the institution's mission and the strategic agenda; (b) alignment with the priorities in the strategic implementation plan for achieving the strategic agenda; (c) elimination of unnecessary duplication of programs within and among institutions; and (d) efforts to create cooperative programs with other institutions through traditional means, or by use of distance learning technology and electronic resources, to achieve effective and efficient program delivery; and (e) eliminate any program that includes a requirement for a course or training of which the primary purpose is to indoctrinate participants with a discriminatory concept.

### Institutional Annual Reports

Institutions will be required to submit an annual report by July 15<sup>th</sup> that:

- Summarizes the institutional program review process for the previous academic year, with a special emphasis on the data analyses conducted as well as summaries of meetings of university faculty, committee, or administration where data and processes were discussed;
- Highlights the programmatic decisions made during the previous academic year, with an accompanying rationale for the decision that summarizes all data sources and any supplementary information used to arrive at the stated conclusion; and
- Discusses the plans for institutional program review for the upcoming year.

CPE staff will evaluate these reports and work with institutions if any information is missing or any questions arise. Staff will provide a summary report to the Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee as well as the full Council.

### Statewide Data Analysis

CPE staff will analyze data across institutions each spring semester to determine which programs continue to meet the following criteria for unnecessary duplication:

- Multiple programs in the same CIP code;
- Low and declining enrollment;
- Low new student demand;
- Low market demand; and
- Low or negative contribution margins.

Using this operationalized definition of unnecessary duplication, CPE staff will identify potential collaborative opportunities and work with institutions to identify other potential efficiencies. Staff will provide a summary report to the Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee and the full Council.

### Statewide Strategic Agenda

The strategic agenda highlights priority areas to focus statewide discussions and strategies to accomplish our postsecondary goals. To facilitate implementation of the strategic agenda, each year CPE staff will focus on one or more of the priorities to:

- Understand existing policies and practices at institutions related to the priority;
- Identify obstacles to full implementation of initiatives related to the priority;
- Provide professional development opportunities related to the priority; and
- Evaluate campus plans to create, implement, or expand initiatives related to the priority.

Staff will provide regular updates on this process to the Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee. In addition, staff will provide an annual report highlighting all these efforts to the full Council.

## Summary

Statewide academic program review efforts will continue to monitor the efficiency of the statewide academic program portfolio while expanding the focus on the implementation of high-priority initiatives identified by the statewide postsecondary education agenda.

CPE staff will continue to update the Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee and submit an annual report to the committee with information about the three major elements of the statewide program review process – institutional annual reports, statewide data analysis and implementation of initiatives related to the statewide agenda.

**KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION****ACTION ITEM**June 30, 2025

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<b>TITLE:</b>	Revision of name and charge of the Committee on Equal Opportunities
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b>	Staff recommend the Council approve the proposed changes to the current Committee on Equal Opportunities
<b>STAFF CONTACTS:</b>	Travis Powell, Executive Vice President & General Counsel Dawn Offutt, Executive Director, Student Access

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In 1981, the Governor designated the Council as the state agency to develop, implement, and monitor a statewide higher education desegregation plan. In 1987, by Executive Order (EO 87-971), then Governor Martha Layne Collins abolished the Desegregation Plan Implementation Committee and established the Council's Committee on Equal Opportunities, which would oversee implementation of institutional compliance of KRS 164.020(9) and 13 KAR 2:060 in meeting its goals towards its diversity, equity and inclusion.

In its current form, this Committee meets quarterly and has a membership of both members of the Council as well as citizen members from around the state.

**PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee met on June 23, 2025, and support the following proposed revisions to the committee:

- Rename the committee to the "Committee on Educational Opportunities"
- Establish the committee's main objectives as to:
  - Monitor and encourage institutional practices and supports for all students, especially those from low-income households, students with disabilities, adult learners and first-generation students.
  - Monitor educational attainment trends for those populations and provide recommendations to the Council that support advancement of the statewide strategic agenda for postsecondary education.

If approved by the Council, staff will formalize the changes for review at the next meeting.

**KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION****ACTION ITEM**June 30, 2025

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**TITLE:** Removal of Cultural Competency Credential Certification Process

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommend the Council discontinue the Cultural Competency Credential Certification Process to comply with provisions of HB 4 (2025).

**STAFF CONTACTS:** Travis Powell, Executive Vice President and General Counsel  
Dawn Offutt, Executive Director, Student Access

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In alignment with the Council's Policy for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, the Council adopted a voluntary cultural competency credential certification process for institutions effective July 1, 2021. The process was designed to encourage micro-credentials to be offered at institutions that provide individuals with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to increase their effectiveness in relating across cultural differences and prepares them for life in increasingly diverse domestic and international environments. As part of their plans for diversity, equity, and inclusion, institutions were required to implement initiatives designed to increase the cultural competence of students, faculty, and staff and this program supported institutions in fulfilling this requirement. The prior approved process is attached for reference.

**REQUESTED ACTION AND RATIONALE**

HB 4, adopted in the 2025 Regular Sessions of the Kentucky General Assembly, eliminated KRS 164.020(19) and 13 KAR 2:060, which incorporated the Council's diversity, equity, and inclusion policy by reference. With the elimination of this policy and the potential that the cultural competency credential certification process could violate provisions of HB 4 that prohibit initiatives that promote differential treatment or consideration based on religion, race, sex, color, or national origin, staff recommends that the Council discontinue this program.



**Kentucky Council on  
Postsecondary Education**

**Andy Beshear**  
Governor

100 Airport Road  
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601  
Phone: 502-573-1555  
<http://www.cpe.ky.gov>

**Aaron Thompson, Ph.D.**  
President

June 26, 2025

Ms. Emily Caudill  
Administrative Regulation Compiler  
Administrative Regulation Review Subcommittee  
[Emily.Caudill@kylegislature.gov](mailto:Emily.Caudill@kylegislature.gov)

Dear Ms. Caudill,

HB 4, enacted in the 2025 Regular Session and effective June 27, 2026, eliminates KRS 164.020(19) which states that the Council shall:

Postpone the approval of any new program at a state postsecondary educational institution, unless the institution has met its equal educational opportunity goals, as established by the council. In accordance with administrative regulations promulgated by the council, those institutions not meeting the goals shall be able to obtain a temporary waiver, if the institution has made substantial progress toward meeting its equal educational opportunity goals.

CPE's regulation implementing this statutory responsibility is 13 KAR 2:060 and Section 14 of HB 4 states:

Contrary provisions of any section of the Kentucky Revised Statutes notwithstanding, 13 KAR 002:060, Degree program approval; equal opportunity goals, shall be null, void, and unenforceable as of the effective date of this Act.

As such, we ask that you this regulation be removed in accordance with the legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Travis Powell".

Travis Powell  
Executive Vice President & General Counsel

An Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/D

TEAM  
KENTUCKY

## EXHIBIT P

HB 4 Compliance Training for CPE Staff - Meeting

File

Meeting

Scheduling Assistant

Tracking

Help

Tell me what you want to do

Delete

Join Teams Meeting

Send to OneNote

Respond

Options

Tags

Dictate

All Apps

Immersive Reader

New Scheduling Poll

Viva Insights

Actions

Teams Meeting

OneNote

Accepted on 5/1/2025 8:35 AM.

HB 4 Compliance Training for CPE Staff

Organizer

Faesly, Heather M (CPE)

Sent Tue 4/22/2025 12:32 PM

Time

Wednesday, May 7, 2025 9:30 AM-11:00 AM

Location

CPE Conf Rm AB & Teams option; CPE Conference Room A; CPE Conference Room B

Response

✓ Accepted

Change Response

During the 2025 Legislative Session, the Kentucky General Assembly enacted House Bill 4—commonly referred to as the "anti-DEI bill"—affecting postsecondary education. This legislation has specific implications for the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE). Travis Powell will lead a training session to provide an overview of HB 4 and outline the necessary steps for compliance.

All available staff are expected to attend in person or via the Teams link.

Microsoft Teams

Need help?

Join the meeting now

Meeting ID: 211 215 772 726 8

Passcode: hH2YJ6D6

In Shared Folder

Calendar

# House Bill 4 (2025 Regular Session) Compliance

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Travis Powell  
Senior Vice President and General Counsel  
Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education



# Background

- 2024 Regular Session
  - Senate Bill 6
  - House Bill 9
  - Senate Bill 6 with House Committee Substitute
- Interim Testimony
  - CPE and all universities and KCTC spoke before the Interim Joint Committee on Education about DEI initiatives at various meetings.

# 2025 Regular Session – House Bill 4

- Only “Anti-DEI” bill filed in either chamber.
- Filed February 12<sup>th</sup>
- March 3<sup>rd</sup> - Reported Favorably from House Postsecondary Education with Committee Substitute
  - House Committee Substitute made a few concessions, added prohibitions for professional licensing entities.
- March 5<sup>th</sup> – Passed House 81-18 with Committee Substitute and Floor Amendment
  - Committee Substitute changed the enforcement provisions and added a piece about prohibiting DEI in professional licensing requirements.
  - Floor Amendment removed KCTCS/university salary reporting requirements.
- March 12<sup>th</sup> – Passed Senate 32-6 with title amendment
- March 13<sup>th</sup> – House concurred 79-19 and delivered to Governor
- March 20<sup>th</sup> – Governor vetoed
- March 27<sup>th</sup> – House and Senate overrode veto (same margins)

# Public Institution Prohibitions - “An institution shall not...”

- Provide any differential treatment or benefits to an individual, including a candidate or applicant for employment, promotion, contract, contract renewal, or admission, on the basis of the individual's religion, race, sex, color, or national origin; EXCEPT
  - A bona fide qualification or accommodation based on biological sex that is historically maintained in the usual course of operating an institution and does not constitute a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative; or
  - A bona fide qualification based on national origin that is related to the eligibility of an individual for a visa;
- Discriminate in student admissions on the basis of religion, race, sex, color, or national origin.

# Public Institution Prohibitions - “An institution shall not...”

- Impose any scholarship criteria or scholarship eligibility restriction on, or provide differential treatment or benefits to, a scholarship applicant, candidate, or recipient on the basis of an individual’s religion, race, sex, color, or national origin; or
- Execute or renew any legally binding restriction that would require an institution to consider the religion, race, sex, color, or national origin of a scholarship applicant, candidate, or recipient;  
EXCEPT
  - Endowments for privately funded scholarships that existed before the effective date of this Act that require an institution to consider the religion, race, sex, color, or national origin of a scholarship applicant or candidate until the balance of corpus is exhausted;

# Public Institution Prohibitions - “An institution shall not...”

- Prioritize or provide preferential consideration for vendors, contracts, or other transactions based upon the religion, race, sex, color, or national origin of the ownership, management, or staff of any business or nonprofit entity, except that the institution may provide preferential consideration for businesses owned by residents of Kentucky and the United States;
- Make student housing assignments on the basis of religion, sex, race, color, or national origin unless an exception is necessary to:
  - Maintain separate living facilities for members of a single biological sex; or
  - Permit need-based access to student housing facilities during school breaks, provided that room assignments are not implemented in a discriminatory manner or segregated by religion, race, color, or national origin;

# Public Institution Prohibitions - “An institution shall not...”

- Initiate an investigation of a bias incident unless the general counsel for the institution authorizes the investigation and certifies in writing that the investigation is necessary because the conduct being investigated:
  - May rise to the level of student-on-student harassment if all facts alleged are taken as true; or
  - Is subject to mandatory investigation pursuant to applicable state or federal law;
- Bias incident - noncriminal conduct that is alleged to constitute an act or statement against a particular group or individual because of the group's or individual's religion, race, sex, color, or national origin, or perceived religion, race, sex, color, or national origin;
- Student-on-student harassment - means unwelcome conduct directed toward a student by another student that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies equal access to an educational opportunity or benefit.

# Public Institution Prohibitions - “An institution shall not...”

- Expend any resources to:
  - Establish or maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion office;
  - Contract or employ an individual to serve as a diversity, equity, and inclusion officer;
  - Provide diversity, equity, and inclusion training or contribute to any cost associated with planning, promoting, hosting, traveling to, attending, presenting, or otherwise participating in diversity, equity, and inclusion training; or
  - Establish or maintain a **diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative**;

# What is a “diversity, equity, and inclusion” initiative?

A policy, practice, or procedure designed or implemented to promote or provide differential treatment or benefits to individuals on the basis of religion, race, sex, color, or national origin, including but not limited to any such policy, practice, or procedure related to employment, employee recruitment, employee hiring, employee promotion, contracts, contract renewal, student recruitment, student admission, student housing, financial assistance, and scholarship awards;

**BUT...DOES NOT INCLUDE...**

# A “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative” does not include...

A policy, practice, procedure, office, employee, training, program, or activity that is required pursuant to:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. sec.12101 et seq., as amended;
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. sec.1400 et seq., as amended;
- The Federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, 29 U.S.C. sec. 621 et seq., as amended;
- The federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, Pub. L. No. 88-352, as amended;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. sec.1681 et seq.;
- The Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993, 42 U.S.C. 21B sec. 2000bb et seq.;
- The Kentucky Religious Freedom Restoration Act, KRS 446.350;
- Any other applicable federal or state law;
- A court order; or
- A binding contract entered into prior to the effective date of this Act;

# A “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative” does not include...

- A bona fide qualification or accommodation based on sex that is historically maintained in the usual course of operating an institution, including but not limited to:
  - Sex-based athletic eligibility restrictions;
  - Sex-based fraternal organization membership restrictions;
  - Sex-based restrictions required to establish or maintain separate living facilities for members of a single biological sex; or
  - Bona fide occupational qualifications reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the institution;
- A bona fide accommodation based on religion that is required under any applicable federal or state law;
- Differential treatment or benefits necessary to provide medical treatment or information; or
- Services and programming of resource centers, provided that the participation of each student, faculty member, staff member, and volunteer in each resource center program is optional, not mandatory, and that access to center services is not restricted on the basis of religion, race, sex, color, or national origin;

# Public Institution Prohibitions - “An institution shall not...”

- Expend any resources to:
  - Establish or maintain a **diversity, equity, and inclusion office**;
  - Contract or employ an individual to serve as a diversity, equity, and inclusion officer;
  - Provide diversity, equity, and inclusion training or contribute to any cost associated with planning, promoting, hosting, traveling to, attending, presenting, or otherwise participating in diversity, equity, and inclusion training; or
  - Establish or maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative;

# What is a “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Office”?

A nonacademic office, division, or other unit of an institution that is:

- Responsible for developing, implementing, or promoting a discriminatory concept, a diversity, equity, and inclusion training, or a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative, regardless of whether the office is designated by the institution as a diversity, equity, and inclusion office; and
- Not expressly required pursuant to applicable federal or state law, a court order, or a binding contract entered into prior to the effective date of this Act;

# What is a “Discriminatory Concept”?

A concept that justifies or promotes differential treatment or benefits conferred to individuals on the basis of religion, race, sex, color, or national origin, unless the differential treatment or benefit is:

- Excluded from a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative under an exclusion set forth in subsection (7)(b) of this section; or
  - See the list of exclusions on the earlier slide.
- Established or required by law, including but not limited to differential treatment or benefits on the basis of citizenship status;

# Public Institution Prohibitions - “An institution shall not...”

- Expend any resources to:
  - Establish or maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion office;
  - Contract or employ an individual to serve as a diversity, equity, and inclusion officer;
  - Provide **diversity, equity, and inclusion training** or contribute to any cost associated with planning, promoting, hosting, traveling to, attending, presenting, or otherwise participating in **diversity, equity, and inclusion training**; or
  - Establish or maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative;

# What is a “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training”?

A training, conference, presentation, meeting, or professional development that:

- Contains, implements, or promotes a discriminatory concept;
- Is not expressly required pursuant to applicable federal or state law, a court order, or a binding contract entered into prior to the effective date of this Act; and
- Does not include academic courses or instruction;

# Public Institution Prohibitions - “An institution shall not...”

- Expend any resources to:
  - Establish or maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion office;
  - Contract or employ an individual to serve as a **diversity, equity, and inclusion officer**;
  - Provide diversity, equity, and inclusion training or contribute to any cost associated with planning, promoting, hosting, traveling to, attending, presenting, or otherwise participating in diversity, equity, and inclusion training; or
  - Establish or maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative;

# What is a “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer”?

An employee, contractor, or volunteer:

- Whose responsibilities include developing, implementing, or promoting a discriminatory concept, diversity, equity, and inclusion training, or a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative outside of the context of academic courses or instruction, regardless of whether the position is designated as a diversity, equity, and inclusion position or affiliated with a diversity, equity, and inclusion office; and
- Who serves in a role that is not expressly required pursuant to applicable federal or state law, a court order, or a binding contract entered into prior to the effective date of this Act;

# Public Institution Prohibitions – “An institution shall not...”

On an application for employment, promotion, contract, contract renewal, admission, housing, financial aid, or scholarship, compel, solicit, or consider any pledge or statement on an applicant's experience with or views on religion, race, sex, color, or national origin, except an institution may:

- If an applicant for admission or scholarship submits an unsolicited statement concerning how a matter relating to religion, race, sex, color, or national origin affected his or her life, consider the statement but shall not provide differential treatment or benefits based upon the race, sex, religion, color, or national origin of the applicant; and
- Require an applicant for housing to disclose his or her biological sex for the purpose of maintaining separate living facilities for members of a single biological sex;

# Public Institution Prohibitions – “An institution shall not...”

- Require any student to enroll in or complete an academic course of which the primary purpose is to indoctrinate participants with a discriminatory concept; or
  - Indoctrinate - to imbue or attempt to imbue another individual with an opinion, point of view, or principle without consideration of any alternative opinion, point of view, or principle.
- Require or incentivize students, faculty, or staff to attend a diversity, equity, and inclusion training.

## But...none of this applies to the following:

- Rights secured by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution or Section 1 of the Constitution of Kentucky;
- Academic course content or instruction;
- Academic freedom of faculty, students, and student organizations;
- Academic research or creative works by an institution's students, faculty, or research personnel;
- The distribution of grant funding for academic research;
- Religious freedom of faculty, students, and student organizations;
- Publications and the freedom of expression of student newspapers and university press;
- Activities, funding, conduct, speech, and freedom of association of student-led organizations, or the conduct or speech of students acting in their individual capacity;

## But...none of this applies to the following:

- Activities, programs, and initiatives for military veterans, Pell Grant recipients, first-generation college students, low-income students, nontraditional students, transfer students from the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, or students with unique abilities;
- Arrangements for guest speakers and performers with short-term engagements, including those invited by students or faculty;
- The purchase of materials for university library inventory and the access of the public to university library inventory;
- Endowments for privately funded scholarships that existed before the effective date of this Act that require an institution to consider the religion, race, sex, color, or national origin of a scholarship applicant or candidate until the balance of corpus is exhausted;
- Mental or physical health services provided by certified or licensed professionals;

## But...none of this applies to the following:

- A bona fide qualification or accommodation based on biological sex that is historically maintained in the usual course of operating an institution and does not constitute a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative;
- A bona fide qualification based on national origin that is related to the eligibility of an individual for a visa;
- A bona fide accommodation based on religion that is necessary to comply with federal or state law;
- The ability of an institution to investigate criminal acts or acts of discrimination in accordance with applicable federal or state law;
- Programs or measures required for institutional accreditations; or
- Programs or measures intended to enable the collection of demographic data.

# CPE Prohibitions - “The council shall not...”

- Provide any differential treatment or benefits to an individual on the basis of the individual's religion, race, sex, color, or national origin;
- Expend any resources to:
  - Establish or maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion office;
  - Contract with or employ an individual to serve as a diversity, equity, and inclusion officer;
  - Provide diversity, equity, and inclusion training or contribute to any cost associated with planning, promoting, hosting, traveling to, attending, presenting, or otherwise participating in diversity, equity, and inclusion training; or
  - Establish or maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative; or
- Compel, solicit, or consider as part of the employment application process any statements on the applicant's religion, race, sex, color, or national origin.

# Certification of Compliance

- Public institutions and CPE shall ensure compliance by June 30, 2025
- Beginning July 1, 2026 each public institution and CPE shall submit an annual certification that certifies that the institution has not spent money in violation of this section during the previous fiscal year.
  - Public institutions certify to CPE and CPE certifies to the Legislative Research Commission.

# Enforcement

- The Attorney General may bring a civil action for a writ of mandamus to compel compliance.
- At least once every 4 years, the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) shall conduct a compliance audit to determine if an institution has expended resources to:
  - Establish a DEI office;
  - Employ or contract with a DEI officer;
  - Provide or contribute to a DEI training; or
  - Establish a DEI initiative.
- If the APA finds a violation, it shall notify the institution and provide 180 days to cure.
- If an institution fails to cure, then the institution shall not be eligible to receive performance funding increases
- If an institution disputes the finding, within 30 days the institution can petition the Attorney General to review.

# Viewpoint Neutrality

- No later than June 30, 2025, each public institution governing board shall:
  - Adopt a policy on viewpoint neutrality that prohibits discrimination on the basis of an individual's political or social viewpoint and promotes intellectual diversity within the institution; and
  - Publish the amended policy in the institution's student handbook and faculty handbook and on a prominent, publicly accessible page of the institution's website.
- An institution shall not require any individual to endorse or condemn a specific ideology, political viewpoint, or social viewpoint to be eligible for hiring, contract renewal, tenure, promotion, admission, or graduation.
- The Attorney General may bring a civil action for a writ of mandamus to compel an institution to comply with this section.

# Compliance Reporting

- No later than August 30, 2025, each public institution and CPE shall submit a report to the Legislative Research Commission containing:
  - A description of compliance with each provision of the Act that certifies compliance with each provisions, steps taken to achieve compliance, and guardrails to ensure future compliance.
  - Any obstacles to compliance and when and how those will be overcome;
  - A detailed description of the strategy for attracting and retaining faculty members with diverse perspectives and points of view; and
  - A description of the strategy for fostering a campus environment where the free exchange of ideas is a prized value and where ideas can be freely discussed and debated in accordance with First Amendment principles and without intimidation.

# Compliance Reporting

- No later than October 1<sup>st</sup> each year, each public institution shall publish a report that includes the following:
  - Contain a complete list and description of the nature, costs, and source of authority of all policies, programs, practices, and procedures of the institution that are:
    - Designed or implemented to promote or provide differential treatment or benefits to individuals on the basis of religion, race, sex, color, or national origin; and
    - Required pursuant to any applicable federal or state law, a court order, or a binding contract entered into prior to the effective date of this Act.
- In order to claim as a defense that the institution's policies, programs, etc. are required by law in an action taken by the Attorney General, an institution must include it in its most recent annual report.
- Expires June 30, 2031.

# Annual Intellectual Freedom and Viewpoint Diversity Survey

- No later than October 1, 2025, CPE shall develop and publish an annual survey to assess intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity using statistically valid survey techniques to evaluate the extent to which the students, faculty, and staff of an institution:
  - Are exposed to a variety of ideological and political perspectives, including competing ideas and perspectives; and
  - Feel at liberty to express their ideological and political viewpoints and beliefs on campus and in the classroom.
- Public institutions shall administer the survey by November 1 of each year to students, faculty, and staff.
- Results shall be reported to CPE for a report to be published January 7<sup>th</sup> of each year.
- Expires June 30, 2031.

# Other CPE Related Items

- CPE shall not approve a new degree, certificate, or diploma program that includes a requirement for a course or training of which the primary purpose is to indoctrinate participants with a discriminatory concept.
- As part of its academic program review process, eliminate any program that includes a requirement for a course or training of which the primary purpose is to indoctrinate participants with a discriminatory concept.
- Removal of the requirement that CPE postpone the approval of new academic programs unless institutions meet their equal educational opportunity goals as established by CPE.

# Professional Licensing Authorities

- A licensing authority shall not require diversity, equity, and inclusion training as a prerequisite for an initial or renewal license.
- A licensing authority shall not use an applicant's or licensee's lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion training as a reason to:
  - Discipline an applicant or licensee; or
  - Deny, suspend, revoke, or otherwise restrict a license.
- Any diversity, equity, and inclusion training requirement for applicants or licensees enforced by a licensing authority prior to the effective date of this Act is void.

# QUESTIONS?



Twitter: CPENews and CPEPres



Websites: <http://cpe.ky.gov> and <http://kyhigheredmatters.org>



Facebook: KYCPE



## EXHIBIT R

**From:** [Ellis, Amanda P \(CPE\)](#)  
**To:** [Smith, Rae E \(CPE\)](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] [Powell, Travis \(CPE\)](#)  
**Subject:** Unit Name Change and Title Change  
**Date:** Friday, May 2, 2025 8:58:06 AM

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Good morning Rae,

In light of the evolving changes in our agency's work, [REDACTED] unit will now be called Student Access and that will also be reflected in her title. [REDACTED] is in the process of reviewing and updating the information online to align with these changes. Travis has approved and asked me to relay the information to you.

Thank you and have a great Friday,

**Amanda Ellis, Ed.D**

Vice President, Student Access and Success  
Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education  
100 Airport Road, Second Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601

<http://cpe.ky.gov>



CPEHR  
Rev  
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Date: April 2025  
Business Unit: SAS

### Job/Position Description

FLSA Exempt: X FLSA Non-Exempt:       

Employee Name	<span style="background-color: black; color: black;">[REDACTED]</span>
Position Title	Executive Director, Student Access
Business Unit	Student Access and Success
Function of Position	Provides oversight in the development and implementation of the Council's student access initiatives.
Position Reports to	Vice President for Student Access and Success

**Primary working conditions of the position** are an office environment with telework as agency directed.

Student access means making sure that all students, no matter their background or circumstances, have the opportunity to go to college and succeed. It involves removing barriers—such as cost, lack of information, or accommodations—so that more people can enroll, stay in school, and graduate. In this role, student access focuses on helping first-generation students, low-income students, adult learners, and students with disabilities by creating or improving policies, programs, and partnerships that support them transitioning to postsecondary.

### Duties and Responsibilities:

- Implement and oversee programs that enhance postsecondary access for all students with a special emphasis on first-generation, low-income, students with disabilities, and adults ensuring alignment with CPE's Strategic Agenda for Higher Education and Performance Funding Metrics.
  - Design initiatives that reduce barriers for these populations, including financial aid awareness, college readiness programs, transition support, and improved accessibility and guidance on best practices for supporting students with disabilities.
- Strengthen partnerships with K-12 school districts, community organizations, workforce development agencies, business leaders, and higher education institutions to create seamless pathways for students.
- Collaborate within CPE to align strategies and outreach with current initiatives to strengthen the pipeline from access to success.

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Date: April 2025  
Business Unit: SAS

### Job/Position Description

- Analyze statewide student access data to inform best practices and policy recommendations, particularly in relation to populations represented in the performance-based funding outcomes.
- Seek grant opportunities to support access initiatives and coordinate funding strategies with institutional partners.
- Coordinate a CPE Student Access Summit.
- Represent CPE at meetings, conferences, and public forums, effectively communicating access priorities and fostering partnerships that enhance postsecondary participation.
- Coordinate quarterly meetings and provide support for the Committee On Equal Opportunities.
- Develop, implement and monitor the Academic Leadership Development Institute
- Supervise and designate work to positions in the division
- Provide input for policy insights and grant proposals
- Other duties as assigned

Agreed:  \_\_\_\_\_  
Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Agreed: *AE* \_\_\_\_\_  
Immediate Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Agreed: *Amanda Ellis* \_\_\_\_\_  
Unit Head/Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Reviewed:  \_\_\_\_\_  
HR Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# Essential Skill 1:

## Communicate effectively

Graduates will communicate effectively by listening, weighing influencing factors, and responding accurately and professionally. They will express their thoughts coherently in writing, orally, and in formal presentations.

<b>Benchmark</b> College entry	<b>Milestone</b> End of 2 years of college	<b>Capstone</b> Bachelor's degree completion
Asks questions to clarify understanding.	Gives focused attention to others, asks clarifying questions, and shows awareness of non-verbal signals.	Facilitates conversation by using active listening techniques and non-verbal signals.
Expresses thoughts and ideas through writing.	Writes formally and informally using logical structure, complete sentences, standard grammar and correct punctuation.	Tailors written communication to the audience and situation, such as using professional vocabulary and tone and a logically organized structure that is suited to the context and purpose.
Shares content through one-on-one and small group conversations.	Engages in formal conversations with peers and professionals by offering information and ideas.	Prepares, structures, and delivers an oral presentation in a professional setting.



# Essential Skill 2:

Think critically in order to solve problems and create new ideas and solutions.

Graduates will think critically by evaluating assumptions and assessing information to make informed conclusions. They will also think creatively by combining ideas in original ways or developing new ways of addressing issues.

<b>Benchmark</b> College entry	<b>Milestone</b> End of 2 years of college	<b>Capstone</b> Bachelor's degree completion
Describes a problem in general terms based on gathered information.	Identifies aspects of a problem clearly by locating and using relevant sources of information.	Analyzes a problem and its components accurately using credible sources, data, and information.
Acknowledges personal perspectives and how these may help or hinder problem-solving.	Seeks out and considers different perspectives on a problem.	Evaluates alternative perspectives, allowing new information to add depth to thinking about a problem.
Compiles possible solutions that are loosely connected to a problem.	Articulates patterns, relationships, context, and other factors that are relevant to a problem.	Evaluates reasonable implications and weighs and synthesizes significant evidence and relevant perspectives to draw informed and innovative conclusions about a problem and potential solutions.
Contributes ideas that reflect an understanding of a problem in a brainstorming session.	Links concepts to generate novel ideas or solutions to problems.	Integrates diverse perspectives to propose an innovative idea or solution.



## Essential Skill 3:

Apply quantitative reasoning skills to analyze and solve numerical problems.

Graduates will hone their ability to provide solutions guided by data and choose the best methodologies for arriving at informed conclusions.

<b>Benchmark</b> College entry	<b>Milestone</b> End of 2 years of college	<b>Capstone</b> Bachelor's degree completion
Identifies key information from data presented in multiple forms, including equations, graphs, and tables.	Illustrates contextual data using a variety of models, including equations, graphs, and tables.	Analyzes real-world data (e.g. case studies, simulations, and experiments) using appropriate quantitative and qualitative strategies.
Performs basic arithmetic operations on real numbers within complex order of operations including the calculation of percentages and basic statistics.	Applies percentages and statistics to describe contextual data.	Differentiates between appropriate and inappropriate uses of statistics within real-world contexts in the presentation of arguments.
Demonstrates relevance of quantitative data in identifying problems and related assumptions.	Utilizes a variety of quantitative strategies to articulate assumptions and solve problems.	Applies quantitative reasoning to real-world scenarios to reach well-reasoned and data-informed conclusions.



## Essential Skill 4:

Interact effectively with people from different backgrounds.

**Graduates will reflect on their own cultural identities, appreciate cultural and intellectual differences, and effectively interact with people from different backgrounds. They will collaborate, communicate, and work respectfully with people with different perspectives, ideas, and cultural beliefs.**

<b>Benchmark</b> College entry	<b>Milestone</b> End of 2 years of college	<b>Capstone</b> Bachelor's degree completion
Shows foundational self-awareness by articulating own background, biases, and lived experiences.	Identifies how one's own background, biases, and lived experiences impact perspectives.	Articulates insights into one's own background, biases, and lived experiences to mitigate biases and create openness to new perspectives.
Recognizes how different backgrounds impact interactions.	Identifies positive ways to interact with people from different backgrounds.	Creates positive interactions with people from different backgrounds.
Demonstrates awareness of the existence of multiple perspectives, ideas, and cultural beliefs.	Identifies multiple perspectives, ideas, and cultural beliefs through interactions.	Engages effectively with individuals from different backgrounds by applying insights about one's own background and beliefs to mitigate biases and bridge differences.



# Essential Skill 5:

Adapt to changing circumstances while leading and supporting others.

**Graduates will accept change and find effective ways to work and thrive in different settings. They will motivate others in the pursuit of a common goal and coach others in the pursuit of this goal.**

<b>Benchmark</b> College entry	<b>Milestone</b> End of 2 years of college	<b>Capstone</b> Bachelor's degree completion
Describes how people can cooperate to reach a common goal.	Contributes toward achieving a common goal.	Overcomes barriers or obstacles to achieving a common goal, often by providing guidance and support to others.
Explains how new situations may require a change in the way things are done.	Adjusts to new situations by doing things differently and showing a positive mindset.	Responds to and anticipates change by practicing and modeling new strategies and tools to thrive in a dynamic environment.
Recognizes how people are motivated by others to achieve a goal.	Encourages others to persist in achieving goal(s) through changing situations.	Coaches others through changing situations.



# Essential Skill 6:

Perform professionally within their chosen field of study or occupation.

**Graduates will adhere to the code of ethics in their chosen profession and act with honesty and fairness. They will prioritize their tasks, manage their time, take initiative, and demonstrate accountability and reliability.**

<b>Benchmark</b> College entry	<b>Milestone</b> End of 2 years of college	<b>Capstone</b> Bachelor's degree completion
Demonstrates honesty, fairness, and respect when engaging with others.	Describes what constitutes ethical behavior and makes choices accordingly.	Models ethical behavior and adheres to a professional code of ethics, as applicable.
Acknowledges how meeting deadlines and being punctual impact success.	Applies organizational and time management skills to prioritize and complete assigned tasks.	Shows initiative by leveraging organizational and time management skills to proactively seek professional opportunities for growth.
Demonstrates reliability by meeting obligations and following through on commitments.	Takes personal accountability for actions, including mistakes.	Uses feedback from others to improve performance.
Exhibits a desire to learn about professional fields of study.	Converses with others using field-specific terminology and tools.	Stays current with industry standards, including best practices and technological tools within the chosen profession.



# Essential Skill 7:

## Engage in civic life to improve society.

**Graduates will engage in political, social, and other activities to address issues that benefit society.**

<b>Benchmark</b> College entry	<b>Milestone</b> End of 2 years of college	<b>Capstone</b> Bachelor's degree completion
Respectfully discusses basic ideas related to public policy and the social good, expressing one's own opinions and acknowledging those of others.	Engages with others who represent diverse perspectives on public policy and the social good through active listening, clear and responsive dialogue, and collaboration.	Assesses fact-based dimensions of community-based problems to generate solutions that reflect multiple needs and perspectives by engaging with others and credible resources.
Articulates knowledge of democratic principles and the impact of individual and community involvement in American government (both historical and current).	Leverages knowledge of the impact of the civic participation of individuals and communities on public policy to plan for social action.	Collaborates to engage community stakeholders in civic action that targets appropriate levers for civic change.
Describes opportunities for individuals or groups to engage in civic life to bring about positive change.	Presents persuasive arguments for social action initiatives based on reflection and analysis of personal experiences, observation, and outside knowledge or perspectives.	Tailors communications to elicit support for civic action in response to the needs, interests, and/or potential contributions of different audiences, integrating reflection on the impacts of that action.



# Essential Skill 8:

## Collaborate and work in teams.

**Graduates will collaborate with colleagues, become effective team members, and manage conflict.**

<b>Benchmark</b> College entry	<b>Milestone</b> End of 2 years of college	<b>Capstone</b> Bachelor's degree completion
Supports team decisions by participating in discussions.	Contributes ideas aligned to identified objectives of the team.	Advocates for evidence-based solutions that promote the teams' identified objectives.
Responds promptly to messages and requests for information.	Addresses conflicts constructively, communicating expectations and adjusting own behavior based on feedback received.	Fosters strong team cohesion by giving and soliciting feedback and responding transparently.
Completes tasks on time and recognizes how individual responsibilities impact team goals.	Identifies tasks required to reach a goal and learns about team members' assets to support the distribution of roles and responsibilities.	Collaborates with multiple teams, utilizing different perspectives and skills to achieve common goals.
Acknowledges both strengths and limitations within a team.	Adapts to changing project requirements and roles in a way that fosters mutual trust and respect amongst team members.	Navigates between leading and supporting through advocacy for mutual goals and integration of team members' strengths.



## Essential Skill 9:

Apply academic knowledge, skills, and abilities to their chosen career.

**Graduates will articulate and apply the theoretical content of their academic preparation with relevant knowledge and abilities essential to their chosen career.**

<b>Benchmark</b> College entry	<b>Milestone</b> End of 2 years of college	<b>Capstone</b> Bachelor's degree completion
Identifies the type of work within their desired career path and how this work aligns to career opportunities.	Applies learned knowledge to resolve foundational problems pertinent to their desired career pathway.	Analyzes and solves complex, real-world problems in the field using advanced knowledge, skills, and abilities to achieve solutions.
Describes foundational knowledge, skills and abilities needed for career.	Explains concepts that support the practical application of knowledge, skills, and abilities related to professional interests.	Integrates academic learning with hands-on experience to critically assess and solve complex challenges encountered in professional environments, providing a clear rationale tailored to a range of stakeholders.
Engages in career exploration, while considering personal strengths, interests, values, and goals.	Reflects on personal and academic experiences to assess compatibility and provide reasoning for career choice.	Articulates career development plan that builds on prior learning and experiences to define clear goals for achievement and continued learning after graduation.



# Essential Skill 10: Use information for decision making.

**Graduates will identify, evaluate, and responsibly use information needed for decision making.**

<b>Benchmark</b> College entry	<b>Milestone</b> End of 2 years of college	<b>Capstone</b> Bachelor's degree completion
Identifies topics requiring information to make a decision.	Develops questions with the appropriate scope for the field.	Articulates questions informed by key concepts, relevant terminology, and related questions in the field.
Develops basic search strategies on given topics with familiar resources.	Implements search strategies to find information using credible resources relevant to the field.	Executes well-developed search strategies that consider all available resources and revises the strategy as necessary.
Identifies strengths and weaknesses of information sources.	Analyzes strengths and weaknesses of information sources to identify elements of bias, expertise, and point of view.	Critiques information sources to thoroughly evaluate bias, expertise, point of view, and relevance and currency to the field.
Describes the primary ideas in a variety of sources when making a decision.	Identifies connections between relevant sources to make a decision.	Synthesizes patterns across sources, excluding irrelevant information to draw conclusions and reach and communicate informed decisions.
Identifies the source of information used for decision making.	Provides appropriate recognition of sources used for decision making.	Attributes ethically accessed information consistently using conventions appropriate to the field.