Council on Postsecondary Education

What is the Council on Postsecondary Education?
The Council on Postsecondary Education is Kentucky’s statewide postsecondary and adult education coordinating agency charged with guiding the reform efforts envisioned by state policy leaders in the Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997 and the Adult Education Act of 2000. The Governor appoints the Council members, including 13 citizens, one faculty member, and one student member; the Commissioner of Education is an ex-officio member.

What key legislation impacts the Council’s work?
- The Kentucky Postsecondary Education Improvement Act of 1997 (HB 1) established six goals for raising Kentucky’s standard of living and quality of life to at least the national average by year 2020.
- The Kentucky Adult Education Act (2000), which transferred the administration and oversight of Kentucky’s statewide basic adult education program, located in 120 counties, from Workforce Development to CPE.
- The Kentucky Innovation Act (2000), which calls on Kentucky to move to a more entrepreneurial economy and charges the Council to implement funding programs that promote research, innovation, and technology.
- College and Workforce Readiness Legislation (SB1, 2009), which calls on the Council to work closely with the Department of Education to significantly increase college and career readiness, and the success rates of students enrolled in postsecondary education.

Key duties of the Council —
- Serve as the Commonwealth’s chief postsecondary education advocate and policy advisor to the Governor and the General Assembly.
- Develop and implement a strategic agenda for postsecondary and adult education that includes measures of educational attainment, effectiveness, and efficiency.
- Produce and submit a biennial budget request for adequate public funding on behalf of public postsecondary and adult education.
- Monitor and approve tuition rates and admission criteria at public postsecondary institutions.
- Approve academic programs at public institutions.
- License non-public postsecondary institutions.
- Coordinate statewide efforts to improve college and career readiness, access to postsecondary education, and student success, including statewide transfer agreements, adult learner initiatives, KY GEAR UP, and postsecondary work related to SB1.
- Administer Kentucky’s statewide adult education program and GED testing centers.
- Collect and analyze comprehensive data on postsecondary education performance.
- Ensure the coordination and connectivity of technology among public postsecondary institutions.
- Administer the Kentucky Virtual Campus and Kentucky Virtual Library to provide online resources and services to K-12, universities, state agencies and other organizations across the state.
- Administer contract spaces for veterinary medicine and optometry.

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STRONGER by DEGREES
http://cpe.ky.gov/strongerbydegrees
What is the Stronger by Degrees strategic agenda?

In February, the Council on Postsecondary Education approved a statewide public agenda. Stronger By Degrees will guide postsecondary and adult education through 2015. The agenda is focused on four key policy areas—college readiness, student success, research, economic and community development, and efficiency and innovation. The agenda also includes performance metrics, which provide transparency and accountability.

What is the Council’s relationship with campuses?

As a coordinating agency, the Council works closely with the state’s eight public universities, the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, and Kentucky’s private colleges--all autonomous institutions with their own governing boards--to achieve state goals. Forty-eight states have either a statewide higher education coordinating agency or a governing agency.

When was the Council formed?

The Council on Higher Education was created in 1934, but it lacked broad coordinating authority until 1966 when duties were expanded to determine the overall needs of higher education, develop comprehensive plans, review the public institutions’ funding requests, and approve professional schools. In May 1997, during the First Extraordinary Session called by the Governor to reform higher education, the Council was abolished and the Council on Postsecondary Education was created (KRS 164.011).

Contact:

Lee Nimocks
502-573-1652, ext. 244
lee.nimocks@ky.gov
www.cpe.ky.gov

The Council on Postsecondary Education believes in the transformative power of postsecondary education. Stronger by Degrees, the new strategic agenda for Kentucky’s postsecondary and adult education system, is powering a stronger Kentucky economy and improving the lives of Kentuckians. To learn more about Stronger by Degrees, visit http://cpe.ky.gov/strategicagenda.