

2011-15 Strategic Agenda Focus on Student Success

Goal: Kentucky will be stronger by ensuring more of its people complete college with the skills and abilities to be productive and engaged citizens.

Policy Objective 4: Increase high-quality degree production and completion rates at all levels and close achievement gaps, particularly for lower-income, underprepared, and underrepresented minority students.

Strategy 4.1: Maximize KCTCS's role as a high quality, low-cost provider of postsecondary education and transfer opportunities encouraging college access and success.

- KnowHow2Transfer.org was launched on June 6, 2012. The website promotes a seamless student transfer experience from the Kentucky Community and Technical College System campuses to four-year institutions, which will save students time and money as they learn how their courses will transfer and count toward their four-year degree requirements.
- The revised Kentucky General Education Transfer Policy becomes effective in fall 2012. The policy requires a minimum of 30 unduplicated semester credit hours in the areas of communication, arts and humanities, quantitative reasoning, natural sciences, and social and behavioral science. The policy is predicated on the acquisition of competencies in these broad academic areas, rather than on a comparison of individual courses taken at individual institutions.



Strategy 4.2: Provide institution and student incentives to increase high-quality degree production and completion rates.

- The Council will distribute \$75,000 in mini-grants to campuses to address the root causes of student attrition by focusing on retention from the first to second year of college and the persistence to graduation of students who have accumulated at least 85 credit hours.

Date: June 21, 2012

- Council staff initiated discussions with institutional representatives on the possibility of using a number of the performance funding design elements included in the 2012-14 General Fund request to strengthen the link between tuition revenue and student success.

Strategy 4.3: Increase the use of data, information, research, and technology to improve student learning and outcomes.

- In the past year, Council staff has conducted original research on student characteristics and behaviors that predict degree completion and produced research-based white papers on student success. These “Leading Indicators” reports have been shared and discussed with institutional provosts at Council of Chief Academic Officers meetings. These reports are also used by implementation teams at member institutions of the Kentucky Delivery Network to spark conversation with academic, student services, and other campus staff about the challenges their students face.
- The Council’s online Stronger by Degrees dashboard was launched in September 2011 and was updated with the most recent 2010-11 metrics data this spring.
- Progress toward the Council’s 2015 graduation rate goals is being driven by a “survival analysis” of the students who will be graduating in that year. This report includes a detailed view of semester-to-semester retention and graduation through all six cohort years and addresses credit accumulation, stop-outs, and the impact of student characteristics on retention and completion.
- The P-20 Data Collaborative, which is a partnership of state education and workforce development agencies to share data and expand reporting about education, has successfully secured continuation funding in the 2012-14 Biennial Budget. The research of the P-20 Data Collaborative will greatly expand knowledge of college readiness and the college-going pipeline, as well as student outcomes in the labor market.

Strategy 4.4: Support new pathways for adult learners to enroll and complete postsecondary degrees and credentials.

- The Council is working with education experts and the business community to develop the concept of designating a public institution to focus extensively on adult learners. This institution would either create or expand an existing college within the university to focus on adults. The lead institution would also work closely with the Kentucky Community and Technical College System to encourage transfer into these flexible bachelor’s degree programs and possibly offer programs on KCTCS campuses.
- Project Graduate, a statewide initiative designed to recruit, retain, and graduate returning adult learners with 80 or more credit hours, continues to boost degree completion. Through spring 2011, 605 had graduated and hundreds more are in the pipeline. Campus-based advocates serve as a single point of contact for students to provide a smooth transition. Students also receive incentives, and, while they vary by campus, they include application fee waivers, priority enrollment, personalized academic plans, simplified admissions paperwork, one-on-one academic advising, career counseling, and study support skills. At least a couple of institutions also offer tuition assistance and credit for prior learning.

Strategy 4.5: Secure adequate institutional funding to support high-quality faculty and staff, effective student and academic support services, technology enhancements, and other resources to enhance student success.

- In November 2011, CPE submitted its 2012-14 budget request seeking additional state operating support for institutions. The request included \$37.2 million in unfunded maintenance and operating (M&O) funds for new facilities for 2008-12, as well as \$3 million in new M&O for 2012-14. The request also included \$57.2 million or a 5.7 percent increase in strategic investments aligned with CPE's new Strategic Agenda including funds for college readiness, performance funds to promote student success, and significant new investments in research support for UK and UofL, including an additional round of "Bucks for Brains."
- CPE also presented a new, multiyear capital concept (\$3 billion in capital investments over six years or approximately 38 percent of projected need) using data from a recent comprehensive facilities study to improve the balance between capital renewal/major renovation and new projects and promote stronger annual investments in existing postsecondary education infrastructure.
- Although state appropriations for public higher education have been reduced by about 15 percent since FY08, strong advocacy efforts on the part of institutional presidents and the Council kept these cuts to about half the reduction (25-30%) of many state agencies.
- In FY 2011, according to the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) annual finance report, Kentucky's adjusted state educational appropriation per FTE of approximately \$7,200 was 15 percent higher than the U.S. average of \$6,300 in FY 2011.
- The Council staff continues to work closely with the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) on student aid policies and advocacy strategies around postsecondary access. This work has helped to prevent cuts to the primary state financial aid programs which total approximately \$190 million in annual General Fund support.
- In 2009-10, Kentucky ranked 12th highest nationwide in state-funded, need-based undergraduate grant dollars per FTE student and 7th highest in state-funded, total undergraduate grant dollars per FTE student (NASSGAP, 41st Annual Survey Report, 2009-10).

Strategy 4.6: Promote student engagement, undergraduate research, internships, and other educational opportunities that improve the quality of the student experience, develop leaders, and lead to success after graduation.

- The Council hosted the first Kentucky Student Success Summit in April 2012 attended by more than 200 higher education faculty and staff. Eighty-six percent of participants who completed evaluations believed that the summit was a valuable professional development experience and 85 percent agreed that they learned things that would help them perform their job responsibilities. These positive responses highlight the Council's important role in showcasing high-impact practices that can be implemented on campuses to improve student success and close achievement gaps.

- The Council will organize a series of workshops over the next year to build on the best practices highlighted at the Kentucky Student Success Summit. These workshops will focus on topics such as classroom-based practices to increase engagement and learning among underrepresented minorities.

Strategy 4.7: Implement a statewide diversity policy that recognizes diversity as a vital component of the state's educational and economic development.

- Following the adoption of the Kentucky Public Postsecondary Education Diversity Policy and Framework for Institution Diversity Plan Development, the Council's Committee on Equal Opportunities (CEO) reviewed the institutions' diversity plans, followed by review/approval by the institutions' boards of regents and trustees. The CPE accepted the plans at its November 2011 meeting. The plans were implemented in fall 2011.
- The Council began the process of aligning the membership and goals of the Committee on Equal Opportunities with the Statewide Diversity Policy. The CEO provides oversight for the Council's Diversity Policy and has a fundamental interest in assisting Kentucky's public postsecondary institutions in developing a diverse student body and workforce in addition to closing the achievement gaps, particularly for lower income, underprepared, and underrepresented minority students.