

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.

- The Council staff reorganized the Statewide Transfer Committee to better facilitate communication between CPE and the institutions.
- Degree Pathways work groups are creating semester-by-semester sample progression academic plans for numerous majors.
- The Council and KCTCS partnered with CollegeWeekLive to create a first-of-its-kind virtual event focused on helping community college students successfully transfer to four-year institutions. Over 1,600 potential transfer students attended the virtual event, where they were able to chat live with representatives from 27 different colleges and universities.



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

- The Council distributed \$50,000 in mini-grants to campuses to address the root causes of student attrition by focusing on retention from the first year to the second year of college and persistence to graduation among students near completion.

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

- The Council collaborated with Dr. Larry Abele, Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs at Florida State University, to provide Kentucky's provosts with three-year trend data for each institution's retention and completion rates. These data focused on low-income students, underrepresented minorities, and underprepared students.
- The Council is undertaking analyses of data intended to aid Kentucky's institutions in the preparation of targeted strategies and initiatives. Current analyses focus on factors of persistence and success in developmental math courses and on leading indicators of adult student degree completion.
- The P-20 Data Collaborative has been institutionalized in statute and renamed the Kentucky Center on Education and Workforce Statistics. Council staff expects greatly expanded reporting from KCEWS in the coming year on P-12 student success precursors and workforce outcomes.
- More concentrated efforts have been made to increase the use of publicly available data to supplement the current comprehensive database. The use of Census and Bureau of Labor Statistics data led to the release of CPE's first policy brief in six years, "College Still Pays," which provided insight into the relationship between education and post-graduate success. Real-time jobs data and information on degrees have provided an outlet for gap-analyses that may hold promise for aligning institutions with regional needs.

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

- The Council is facilitating discussions with KCTCS and the public universities to develop, implement, and fund a collaborative, affordable higher education delivery model that offers competency-based, online baccalaureate degree programs in high-demand fields tailored to working adults. These programs should be supplemented by high-tech, high-student success services.

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.

- As of spring 2013, CPE staff is working collaboratively with college and university chief budget officers, chief academic officers, and presidents to formulate a reasonable yet aggressive postsecondary education budget request for 2014-16. Despite a potentially challenging state fiscal environment, CPE and the institutions are committed to submitting a funding request that supports continuing progress toward the attainment of Strategic Agenda and HB1 goals.
- In 2012-14, CPE presented a new, multi-year capital concept (\$3 billion in capital investments over six years, or approximately 38 percent of projected need) using data from a comprehensive facilities study

to improve the balance between capital renewal and major renovation projects and new projects, and to promote stronger annual investments in existing postsecondary education infrastructure. Based on conversations to date, CPE staff anticipates using a similar approach in 2014-16.

- CPE is developing a 2014-16 Capital Plan that addresses Kentucky's information technology infrastructure needs, providing high-speed access for CPE and the postsecondary institutions to enhance student success and research.
- Although state appropriations for Kentucky's public postsecondary institutions were reduced by 15.5 percent between FY08 and FY13, strong advocacy efforts on the part of institutional presidents and the Council kept these cuts to about half the reduction experienced by many state agencies. For example, in fiscal year 2012-13, many Kentucky state agencies (including CPE) had a base reduction of 8.4 percent, while the cut to state colleges and universities was held to 6.4 percent.
- Postsecondary education spending cuts were also less severe in Kentucky than those experienced in most states, due in large part to Council and institutional advocacy efforts. According to a recent Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Report (2013), postsecondary education budgets in 26 U.S. states recorded larger per student spending cuts, between fiscal years 2008 and 2013, than did Kentucky.

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 second annual Kentucky Student Success Summit in April 2013. The theme of the summit was **Building Partnerships between Academic and Student Affairs: Creating a Holistic Approach to Student Success**, and it featured highly acclaimed experts in higher education research, such as Vincent Tinto.
- The Council will organize professional development opportunities over the next year to build on the best practices highlighted at the Kentucky Student Success Summit.
- Council staff has formed two new committees, composed of institutional representatives and other stakeholders, with responsibilities relevant to the improvement of the quality of student experiences. The Committee on Academic Quality will focus on the implementation of best practices related to the continuous improvement of student learning and the Committee on Persistence and Graduation will focus on root causes of student attrition and strategies to increase student engagement.

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

- All institutions submitted their first Institutional Diversity Plan Assessment Reports spring 2013. A review team composed of Council staff evaluated the progress reported by the institutions and provided suggestions for changes and further opportunities to enact best practice. A summary of the Institutional

Diversity Plan Assessment Reports was presented to the Committee on Equal Opportunities March 25, 2013.

- Two statewide diversity support programs will take place June 2013. The 13th Annual Governor's Minority Student College Preparation Program Statewide Conference was hosted by Morehead State University. This program brought together middle school students from across the Commonwealth to enhance their knowledge of the tools needed to enroll in and graduate from a postsecondary institution. The 26th Annual Academically Proficient High School Junior and Senior Diversity Conference will be hosted by Eastern Kentucky University. This event benefits both students, who gain information about colleges and universities from across the Commonwealth, and postsecondary institutions, who are provided a forum in which to interact with many of Kentucky's brightest college-bound students.
- The Southern Regional Education Board's Doctoral Scholars Program is part of a nationwide initiative to produce more minority Ph.D.s and to encourage them to seek faculty positions. Currently, 33 SREB Doctoral Scholars are enrolled at Kentucky institutions, and 32 percent of these students are studying STEM disciplines. Kentucky has a total of 69 Scholars Program completers, 17 of whom now work in the Commonwealth. Eight program graduates have earned tenure in their faculty positions.