



# Quick Reference Guide for the Statewide Program Approval Process

## Notification of Intent (NOI)

1. Universities<sup>1</sup> should use CPE's [User Guide for New Academic Program Approval](#) to prepare a notification of intent (NOI) for submission through the program management module in KPEDS. **An NOI should be submitted early in the institutional program development process. Depending on an institution's internal processes, this could be one to three years prior to the submission of a proposal.** The purpose of the NOI is to alert other institutions and the CPE that an institution is planning to develop a program, and not that an institution has already developed a program and plans to submit a proposal soon.
  - a. An NOI notifies chief academic officers from other institutions about another institution's intention to submit a program proposal.
  - b. Contact Sheila Brothers ([Sheila.Brothers@ky.gov](mailto:Sheila.Brothers@ky.gov)) for assistance.
2. Within one week of receipt, CPE staff will review an NOI, discuss it internally, and (if needed) request additional information from the institution.
  - a. Institutions provide additional information via email.
3. An NOI received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month **for which all CPE questions have been answered** will be placed on the agenda of the Council of Chief Academic Officers (CCAO) meeting at the end of the month.
  - a. An NOI that does not include all required information **will not** move forward to the CCAO meeting, even if received by the 10<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. Note that the CCAO does not meet in December or June.
4. Unless issues are raised during the CCAO meeting, CPE staff will approve the NOI, and the institution may begin working on the program proposal.
  - a. Upon approval of the NOI, institutions have one year to submit the program proposal.

NOTIFICATION OF INTENT (NOI) TARGET DATES	
If an NOI is received <u>and</u> all CPE questions are answered by...	...the NOI will go to the CCAO meeting on....
January 10, 2025	January 24, 2025
February 10, 2025	February 28, 2025
March 10, 2025	March 28, 2025
April 10, 2025	April 25, 2025

<sup>1</sup> KCTCS programs are not subject to the NOI process.

May 10, 2025	May 23, 2025
June 10, 2025	July 25, 2025
July 10, 2025	July 25, 2025

## Important Considerations for the NOI Stage

- **Utilize the User Guide before submitting an NOI.** The [User Guide for New Academic Program Approval](#) has details about how the questions should be answered. If an institution does not provide complete answers, the review takes longer.
- **Consider CPE’s definition of a “similar program” (a program that has the same degree level and CIP code of the proposed program).** If institutions assert their program is similar but not in the same CIP code, CPE will evaluate the appropriateness of the suggested CIP code. An institution may be required to change its CIP code to align with similar programs. Conversely, the proposing institution may be required to change its CIP code to match similar programs at other institutions.

To identify similar programs, institutions are expected to review [the state’s program inventory](#) prior to submission of the NOI.

- **Consider CPE’s definition of “Unnecessary Duplication” (a program at the same degree level and with the same CIP code that is offered at another institution, which has insufficient enrollment and graduation rates, and student and market demand).** If a proposed program has the same CIP as an existing program with low and declining enrollment and low market and student demand, the proposing institution must describe why another program in that CIP is necessary, how the institution will ensure sufficient enrollment, and why the institution believes there are acceptable levels of student and market demand.
  - More specifically, unnecessary duplication at the university level is defined as programs at the same degree level and with the same that:
    - has low and declining enrollment (40 or fewer students and has been trending downward for three years);
    - low student demand (Gray 40<sup>th</sup> percentile or lower), and
    - low market demand (Gray 40<sup>th</sup> percentile or lower).

The questions in the “Unnecessary Duplication” section provide an opportunity to explain why the proposed program is a *necessary* duplication. Often, the curricular focus of a program, its modality, student population being served, or the institution’s geographic location are referenced in this section.

- **Provide a detailed summary of feedback from other institutions.** Information should include the names of those involved in the meetings or email exchanges, dates of meetings or communications, and a summary of the ideas and feedback that were shared. The NOI will not move forward without this feedback. Some feedback may not be positive, but this does not automatically stop the process. Feedback indicates



sufficient information was shared with other institutions and that they were included in the conversation.

- Examples of insufficient responses:
  - “Multiple institutions were contacted, and all were supportive.”
  - “The feedback has not yet been received.”
  - “Although they are in the same CIP, our program is quite different from the other program, so no feedback was requested.”
- Examples of sufficient responses:
  - “A meeting was held on February 29 with Institution X that was attended by their department chair, Professor A, and Professor B. The department chair mentioned that their institution’s program was at capacity, and there is a waiting list of 35 students. After the NOI is approved, we plan to meet again to talk about collaborative opportunities.”
  - “We sent an email to Institution A to solicit their feedback. While they noted the proposed program will have a slightly different focus, they expressed concern about the need for another program in the state.”
- Institutions may contact Sheila Brothers ([Sheila.Brothers@ky.gov](mailto:Sheila.Brothers@ky.gov)) for assistance in obtaining feedback from other institutions.

**NOTE: Institutions are expected to use the time between the NOI stage and Program Proposal stage to strengthen the program proposal and identify specific collaborative opportunities with other institutions. The program proposal should incorporate feedback from the CPE and other institutions.**

## Program Proposals

1. Institutions should utilize the User Guide for New Program Proposals (for [Universities](#) or for [KCTCS](#)) to prepare a program proposal for submission through the Program Management module in KPEDS.
  - a. The 30-day window for review and comments begins when the institution submits the Program Proposal.
  - b. **The Program Proposal is the official state record of the program, so all pertinent information must be included. The proposal should be complete, accurate, and detailed.** If CPE must request information that should have been provided in the proposal (per the User Guides for [Universities](#) and for [KCTCS](#)), all the various correspondence must be aggregated and maintained along with the proposal. It is simpler for institutions to provide all required information at the beginning of the process.
2. During the 30-day review period, CPE staff reviews the information, discusses it internally, and (if needed) requests additional information from the institution.
  - a. An institution will respond to CPE’s questions via email.
3. During the 30-day review period, public institutions may comment on the proposal.



- a. An institution provides comments via the online program management module within KPEDS.
4. Upon completion of the 30-day review window, proposals from universities **for which all CPE questions and any issues raised by other institutions have been addressed** will be placed on the agenda for a future meeting of the Academic and Strategic Initiatives (ASI) Committee.

Upon completion of the 30-day review window, proposals from KCTCS **for which all CPE questions and any issues raised by other institutions have been addressed** will be approved by Council staff and reported as an information item at the next ASI Committee meeting. This completes the process for KCTCS Program Proposals.

- a. Refer to the deadlines below. If a proposal has not completed the review process in enough time for CPE staff to meet deadlines for submitting ASI agenda items, the proposal will be placed on a subsequent ASI Committee meeting agenda.
  - b. CPE staff will contact an institution for the name, title, etc. of the institutional representative(s) who will attend the ASI Committee meeting and provide a high-level overview of the program for members.
5. If approved by the ASI Committee, the proposed program will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Education (Council).
6. The ASI Committee Chair will present the committee report to the Council.
7. Upon approval by the Council, CPE staff will approve the program within KPEDS.
8. An institution has up to three years to implement/activate the program; otherwise, the process will restart at the NOI stage.
9. When the program is implemented, the institution must go into the program inventory system and provide the required information, thereby “activating” the program.

PROGRAM PROPOSAL TARGET DATES			
<u>Date of Submission</u>	<u>ASI Committee Deadline</u>	<u>ASI Meeting Date</u>	<u>Council Meeting Date</u>
<b>If an institution submits a Program Proposal by...</b>	<b>...and it has completed the 30-day comment period <u>and</u> all CPE questions are answered by...</b>	<b>...the Program Proposal will go to the ASI meeting on...</b>	<b>...and to the full Council on Postsecondary Education on....</b>
November 22, 2024	January 10, 2025	January 27, 2025	January 30, 2025
February 14, 2025	March 28, 2025	April 14, 2025	April 17, 2025
April 11, 2025	May 23, 2025	June 9, 2025	June 13, 2025



## Important Considerations for the Proposal Stage

- **Utilize the User Guide for New Program Proposals (for [Universities](#) or for [KCTCS](#)) before submitting a Program Proposal.** The User Guides detail how the questions should be addressed. If an institution does not provide complete answers, the review process takes longer. Remember the proposal should provide more detailed information than the NOI.
  - **If an institution does not address all details required by the User Guide, the process is less efficient because CPE must request the information via the Program Approval module or email.** If the questions are fully addressed in the program proposal at the outset, the process continues more quickly.
- **Continue discussions that began at the NOI stage.** Institutions are expected to provide *more detailed information* about their *ongoing conversations* with institutions that offer a similar program.
  - Whereas the NOI form asks for a summary of feedback from institutions with similar programs, the proposal stage requires additional details about how the proposed program will efficiently utilize state resources by cooperating and/or collaborating with existing programs.
- **Ensure consistency of basic information from the NOI to the Program Proposal stage.** To avoid the appearance of contradictory information, note any changes in structure from the NOI stage. For example, if two tracks were initially proposed but there are three proposed tracks at the Program Proposal stage, clarify that the number of tracks has changed.
- **Do not assume a new program will be cost-free.** There are *always* costs involved in a new program, and they need to be included in the program proposal.
- **Provide information to the CPE about revenue that is new to the institution.** If most of the students in the proposed program are anticipated to come from existing majors at the institution, the proposal should address the financial impact on those existing programs.