

MEETING MINUTES

Approved by the Committee on November 3, 2025

Who: Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Meeting Type: Academic and Strategic Initiatives Committee
Date: September 8, 2025
Time: 10:00 a.m. ET
Location: Virtual Meeting via ZOOM Webinar

CALL TO ORDER

The Academic & Strategic Initiatives Committee met Monday, September 8, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., ET. The meeting occurred virtually via ZOOM webinar. Committee Chair Karyn Hoover presided.

ROLL CALL

There was a quorum of 4 voting Council members in attendance.

- Dr. Kellie Ellis – attended
- Dr. Meredith Figg – did not attend
- Sean Garber – did not attend
- Karyn Hoover – attended
- LaDonna Rogers - attended
- Kevin Weaver - attended

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

CPE PRESIDENT UPDATE

Dr. Aaron Thompson, CPE President, provided a brief update to the Committee that included comments on the Council's work since the passage of Senate Bill 77 (2025), his trip to Oxford, England, to discuss the expansion of apprenticeship opportunities, increases in retention rates, and reductions in student debt levels.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the June 9, 2025, committee meeting were approved as presented.

REPEAL OF 13 KAR 2:0110: ADVANCED PRACTICE DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAMS AT COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES

Mr. Travis Powell, Executive Vice President and General Counsel, presented the Council's recommendation to approve regulation 13 KAR 2:111, which repeals 13 KAR 2:110, the regulation governing the approval of advanced practice doctoral degree programs at

comprehensive universities. The repeal was necessary due to changes to KRS 164.295, authorized by 2025 Senate Bill 77, which removes the requirement for an administrative regulation governing the approval of advanced practice doctoral programs at comprehensive universities. Application and approval processes for doctoral programs at comprehensive universities will now be governed by the Council's adopted program approval policy.

MOTION: Mr. Weaver moved the Committee endorse for final Council approval the regulation to repeal 13 KAR 2:110 and replace it with 13 KAR 2:111. Ms. Rogers seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

PROPOSED POLICY REVISIONS – NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM APPROVAL

Dr. Melissa Bell, Vice President of Academic Excellence and Ms. Sheila Brothers, Senior Director of Academic Excellence, presented the staff recommendation to approve the proposed revisions to the New Academic Program Approval Policy.

Over several months, Council staff collaborated with institutional representatives to update the current program approval process to align it more closely with the Kentucky Graduate Profile and incorporate recent legislative changes related to comprehensive universities' ability to offer doctoral programs (SB 77, KRS 164.295). The proposed changes were outlined in the materials and affected both universities and KCTCS.

MOTION: Mr. Weaver moved the Committee endorse for final Council approval the proposed revisions to the new Academic Program Approval Policy. Ms. Rogers seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed.

KRS 164.295(3) COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITY DOCTORAL PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CALCULATIONS

Mr. Powell, Mr. Travis Muncie, Assistant Vice President of Data and Advanced Analytics, and Mr. Brent Floyd, Senior Associate of Finance Policy and Programs, presented an overview of the eligibility criteria for comprehensive universities to submit a proposal for a new doctoral program.

In order to be eligible, a comprehensive university shall maintain:

- For bachelor's degree seekers, a first-year to second-year retention rate and a six-year graduation rate in at least two of the last three years:
 - In the 75th percentile of all comprehensive universities nationally; or

- In the 80th percentile of all comprehensive universities within states that are members of the Southern Regional Education Board; and
- Sufficient unrestricted cash reserves and short-term investments to cover the institution's total operating and nonoperating expenses for three (3) months as calculated from the prior fiscal year's audited financial statement.

Mr. Muncie discussed the methodology used in the student success metrics and provided examples. Mr. Floyd provided insight into how a university's liquidity will be calculated.

No action was required from the Council.

KCTCS PROGRAMS APPROVED BETWEEN APRIL-JUNE 2025

KRS 164.020 (15) mandates that the Council expedite the approval of requests from KCTCS for new programs of a vocational/technical and occupational nature. Ms. Brothers presented the three new programs reviewed and approved by the Council between June and August 2025. No action was required from the Committee.

- Henderson Community College - Associate of Applied Science, Electrical Technology (CIP 46.0302)
- West Kentucky Community and Technical College - Associate of Applied Science, Education (CIP 13.1501)
- Somerset Community College - Associate of Applied Science, Diagnostic Medical Sonography (CIP 51.0910)

COLLEGIATE RECOVERY RESOURCE CENTERS

Dr. Leslie Sizemore, Vice President of Workforce & Economic Development, and Mary Jackson, Senior Associate, provided an update on the Council's collaboration with the Kentucky Opioid Abatement Advisory Commission (KYOAAC), which awarded five Kentucky colleges and universities \$78,000 each for the 2025–26 academic year to launch or enhance Collegiate Recovery Resource Centers (CRRCs) on their campuses.

CRRCs provide trauma-informed, campus-based recovery support services for students in recovery from substance-use disorders or co-occurring mental health challenges. Services provided on campuses receiving the grant will include peer recovery and mental health support; academic and workforce readiness programming; partnerships with community recovery and mental health providers; and activities to reduce stigma and promote inclusion on campus.

CRRCs are a critical part of the state's strategy to create "recovery-ready campuses," which are environments where students can pursue education while receiving the recovery support they need. The CRRC initiative aligns with the Kentucky Opioid Abatement Advisory

Commission's priorities to reduce opioid misuse and overdose deaths, build sustainable recovery-ready communities and increase workforce participation for individuals in recovery.

CLIMB-HEALTH 2.0

Dr. Sizemore provided an update on the Council's partnership with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) to launch the CLIMB-Health 2.0 initiative. The initiative aims to expand Kentucky's mental and behavioral health workforce by creating structured pathways from secondary education into high-demand behavioral health careers. CHFS's Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities provided \$906,451 to fund the initiative. CLIMB 2.0 prioritizes underserved and rural communities and reflects Kentucky's commitment to addressing workforce shortages in behavioral health through early engagement and structured academic and employment pathways.

ADJOURNMENT

The Academic & Strategic Initiatives Committee adjourned at 11:00 a.m., ET.