

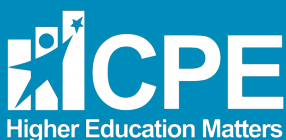


Pedagogicon 2026

FOCUS ON THE 10 ESSENTIAL SKILLS

May 15, 2026

Perkins Conference Center at Eastern Kentucky University



KENTUCKY'S 10 ESSENTIAL SKILLS



COMMUNICATION

Graduates will communicate effectively by listening, weighing influencing factors, and responding accurately and professionally. They will express their thoughts coherently in writing, orally, and in formal presentations.



CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

Graduates will think critically by evaluating assumptions and assessing information to make informed conclusions. They will also think creatively by combining ideas in original ways or developing new ways of addressing issues.



QUANTITATIVE REASONING

Graduates will hone their ability to provide solutions guided by data and choose the best methodologies for arriving at informed conclusions.



INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Graduates will demonstrate both self-awareness and appreciation of people with different perspectives, as well as the ability to collaborate, communicate, and work respectfully with others.



ADAPTABILITY AND LEADERSHIP

Graduates will accept change and find effective ways to work and thrive in different settings. They will motivate others in the pursuit of a common goal and coach others in the pursuit of this goal.



PROFESSIONALISM

Graduates will adhere to the code of ethics in their chosen profession and act with honesty and fairness. They will prioritize their tasks, manage their time, take initiative, and demonstrate accountability and reliability.



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Graduates will engage in political, social, and other activities to address issues that benefit society.



COLLABORATION AND TEAMWORK

Graduates will collaborate with colleagues, become effective team members, and manage conflict.



KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION

Graduates will articulate and apply the theoretical content of their academic preparation with relevant knowledge and abilities essential to their chosen careers.



INFORMATION LITERACY

Graduates will identify, evaluate, and responsibly use information needed for decision making.

WELCOME TO PEDAGOGICON 2026

About the 2026 Pedagogicon

The 2026 Pedagogicon centers on the transformative power of the **Kentucky Graduate Profile**. This gathering serves as a culminating moment for aligning the instruction necessary to support students in learning and practicing the **10 Essential Skills** across institutions.

As attendees explore the evolving landscape of higher education, sessions will dive deep into the intentional teaching of these skills through active learning, high-impact practices, and evidence-supported pedagogies. Through interactive workshops, panel discussions, and presentations, participants will examine how to embed these core competencies into every facet of the curricula. Additionally, Graduate Profile Academy Team posters will highlight progress for scaling, scaffolding, and sustaining the **10 Essential Skills**, ensuring every student graduates with the tools to thrive in their lives and careers.

We are thrilled to have you here as we refine our practice, ensuring every student graduates with the Essential Skills to thrive in their lives and careers.



Annual Pedagogicon Proceedings

The Pedagogicon began publishing conference proceedings in 2017. The Pedagogicon Proceedings features published work focused on areas of teaching and learning related to the conference theme. The articles are now open access and freely available using the archival information available below.

- **Innovations in Teaching & Learning: Inaugural Proceedings of the 2017 Pedagogicon.** Available from New Forums Press. Stillwater, OK.
- **Student-Centered Teaching and Learning: Proceedings of the 2018 Pedagogicon.** Available from New Forums Press. Stillwater, OK.
- **Transparency in Teaching and Learning: Proceedings of the 2019 Pedagogicon.** Available via ECU Encompass. encompass.ecu.edu/pedagogicon/2019/
- **Students as Partners in Teaching & Learning: Proceedings of the 2020 Pedagogicon.** Available in ECU Encompass. encompass.ecu.edu/pedagogicon/2020/
- **Agile Teaching & Learning: Proceedings of the 2021 Pedagogicon.** Available in ECU Encompass. <https://encompass.ecu.edu/pedagogicon/2021/>
- **Relationship-Rich Education in Teaching & Learning: Proceedings of the 2022 Pedagogicon.** Available in ECU Encompass. <https://encompass.ecu.edu/pedagogicon/2022/>
- **Workforce & Employability Skills: Teaching & Learning for Future Careers: Proceedings of the 2023 Pedagogicon.** Available in ECU Encompass. <https://encompass.ecu.edu/pedagogicon/2023/>
- **Student Engagement and Experiential Learning: Proceedings of the 2024 Pedagogicon.** Available in ECU Encompass. <https://encompass.ecu.edu/pedagogicon/2024/>
- **Teaching and Learning Durable Skills: Proceedings of the 2025 Pedagogicon.** Available in ECU Encompass. <https://encompass.ecu.edu/pedagogicon/2025/>

AGENDA-AT-A-GLANCE

Time	Session	Location
8:30-9:00 a.m. Keynote	The Future of Work is the Future of Higher Education	QUAD
9:15-10:00 a.m. Concurrent Sessions Round 1	Essential Skills Think Tank (Part I) - Pre-Registration Required	QUAD
	Beyond Graduation: Alumni Reflections on Interprofessional Learning and Essential Workforce Skills	210
	From Classroom to Community: Fostering Global Perspectives and Essential Skills Early	211
10:15-11:00 a.m. Concurrent Sessions Round 2	Essential Skills Think Tank (Part II) - Pre-Registration Required	QUAD
	From Hidden to Intentional: Faculty Development Strategies for Teaching Durable Skills	210
	Built In, Not Bolted On	211
	Small Challenges, Big Skills: Teaching Essential Professional Skills Through Weekly Practice	212
	Designing for Impact: Embedding Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills Through Intentional Course Design	219
	Teaching Adaptability as an Essential Skill: Scalable, Evidence-Based Strategies for Integrating EKU Essential Skills into Course Design and Assessment	
	Decoding the Invisible Curriculum: Using Custom GPTs for Automated Soft-Skills Mapping and Program Innovation	220
	Students' Reading Preferences: A Critical Examination of Students' Reading Preferences and Strategic Processes When Reading More Culturally Relevant/More Interesting Texts and Less Culturally Relevant/Less Interesting Texts	221
	Technical Minds, Strong Communicators: Reimagining ENG 101 for Workforce Success	
	Creating Custom AI Agents for High-Impact Learning	222
Growing the Graduate Profile: How a Students as Partners Program Cultivates Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills	229	
11:00-11:45 a.m.	Networking Lunch	QUADS
11:45-12:30 p.m.	Poster Presentations	Lobby
12:45-1:30 p.m. Concurrent Sessions Round 3	The Human Edge: Teaching the 10 Essential Skills in an AI-Shaped World	209
	Building Future-Ready Writers: Using RACE to Develop Essential Skills in Elementary Students	210
	Rehearsing the Future	211
	Meeting Essential Career Skills Through Mental Health Strategies	212
	Teaching Professionalism on Purpose: A Program-Level Model for Developing Professional Practice Competencies	214
	The Role of an Interdisciplinary Conference in Developing Essential Skills in Undergraduate Students	219
	Scholars Mentoring Scholars: Building Essential Skills Through Research Partnerships	220
	Using a TEDx Event to Teach Essential Skills for Tomorrow's Graduates	221
	Utilizing AI Generative Platform MagicSchool Across Learning Environments	222
	From Automation to Amplification: Using GenAI to Strengthen Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills	229

AGENDA-AT-A-GLANCE

Time	Session	Location
1:45-2:30 p.m. Concurrent Sessions Round 4	Using High Impact Practices to Teach the 10 Essential Skills	209
	Growing Together: Building a Peer Observation Process for Learning Assistants Identifying KY Construction Job Requirements Using Professionalism and Communication Skills	210
	From Theory to Practice: Strengthening Graduate Skills by Embedding Pre-Service Teachers in P12 Settings Through a Revitalized University-Lab School Partnership	211
	Pathways: Innovative Approaches to Teaching the 10 Essential Skills	212
	Integration of the Ten Essential Skills for Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Success Beyond the Test: Authentic Assessment for Essential Skills	214
	AI-Integrated Engineering Education in Developing Kentucky Graduate Profile Skills	219
	Campus Meets Classroom: Powering Learning Through Student Partnerships	220
	Teaching the Essential Skills Through School Counseling Lessons	221
	Using Face-to-Face Team Feedback to Enhance Individual and Team Performance and Develop Professional Skills	222
	Using TeachAid to deliver rigorous and differentiated instruction Kickstart Keys in Action: Real-World Readiness for Future Educators	229
2:45-3:30 p.m. Concurrent Sessions Round 5	Teaching Critical Thinking and Professionalism Within Graduate Occupational Therapy: Integrating AI Tools to Support Research Application Developing Employable Skills: Mastering Collaboration and Teamwork	209
	Bridging the Gap: Scalable Assessment Strategies for the Graduate Profile's 10 Essential Skills	210
	Beyond the Syllabus: Intentionally and Implicitly Embedding Essential Skills Across a Professional Program AI as a Communication Partner: Assignment Design for Essential Workplace Skills	211
	Experiential Education: The Art of Becoming a Music Teacher	212
	Spaces + Places: Teaching Author Rights and Open Access Through Undergraduate Student Publishing	214
	Leadership Coherence and Co Teaching: Advancing Educational Equity in Inclusive Elementary Classrooms	219
	What's The Point[?]: A Thematic Analysis of Student TikTok Comments Around the Decision to Attend Class Competency-Based Education	220
	From Reaction to Reflection: Creative Writing as a Tool for Meaning-Making in Higher Education	221
	A "Patient" Interview: Discipline Specific Synthesis of Essential Skills Brewing Connections: Preparing Students to Interact Effectively with People Through Course-Integrated Networking	222
	Leveraging Artificial Intelligence to Develop Patient Communication Skills	229
3:45-4:15 p.m.	Closing Session & Top-Session Recognition	QUAD

MORNING SESSIONS

8:30-9:00 a.m. - WELCOME AND OPENING KEYNOTE

Location: Perkins QUAD



THE FUTURE OF WORK IS THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Dr. Aaron Thompson, President, Council on Postsecondary Education

While Kentucky leads the nation in key student success metrics—including retention and persistence rate improvements—the traditional "finish line" of graduation is no longer sufficient. In an era where only 31% of employers believe recent graduates are prepared for the workforce without significant training, higher education must evolve to meet the shifting demands of the labor market. Dr. Thompson will discuss why a credential alone often fails to provide a clear pathway into a strong first job and how Kentucky is addressing this through the Kentucky Graduate Profile.

9:15-10:00 a.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 1

Location: Perkins QUAD

Essential Skills Think Tank (Part I)

Pre-Registration Required

This two-part, interactive Think Tank, facilitated by experienced Essential Skill leads, invites faculty and academic leaders to move beyond theory and into the practical application of the Kentucky Graduate Profile. Participants will collaborate in small groups to design learning assessments aligned with each of the ten essential skills, with an emphasis on measurability and scalability across disciplines. Attendees will leave with a concrete assessment framework and a curated set of peer-developed strategies ready for adoption within their own programs. Frameworks and strategies will be shared with the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education for potential adoption as guidelines for assessing Essential Skills.



Process: Scan the QR Code to pre-register and select an Essential Skill to focus on during the Think Tank. Attendees will be placed into small groups by Essential Skill. Skill Leads facilitate the small group activity leading to a draft learning assessment.

Kevin Dvorak, Nova Southeastern University; From Eastern Kentucky University - Russell Carpenter, Alison Buck, Starr Wentzel, Gill Hunter, Krista Kimmel, Jamie Marie Miller, Amanda Balser, Jill Campbell, Pete Edwards, Trenia Napier

Location: Perkins 210

Beyond Graduation: Alumni Reflections on Interprofessional Learning and Essential Workforce Skills

Interprofessional education (IPE) develops essential workforce skills such as communication, collaboration, and teamwork. This study explores alumni perspectives on how classroom IPE experiences translate to real-world interprofessional collaborative practice. Findings highlight how experiential learning fosters career readiness and provide insights for faculty designing learning experiences that align with employer expectations.

Presenters: Karina Christopher, Berea College; Casey Humphrey & Leah Simpkins, Eastern Kentucky University; Christen Page, University of Kentucky

Moderator: Cindy Tran, Eastern Kentucky University



MORNING SESSIONS

9:15-10:00 a.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 1

Location: Perkins 211

From Classroom to Community: Fostering Global Perspectives and Essential Skills Early

Interactive Workshop

Integrating global perspectives in P12 classrooms fosters Essential Skills in areas like critical thinking, problem solving, and communication that align to “The 10 Essential Skills” from the Kentucky Graduate Profile. This presentation explores research on implementing globally focused curricula at a university-affiliated laboratory school, highlighting how educators can and should strengthen student abilities to consider multiple viewpoints long before higher education. In addition, participants will explore practical applications for a range of higher education contexts, including teacher preparation programs, assessment design, and university–school collaborations.

Presenters: Jilliane McCardle, Eastern Kentucky University; Taylor Revis, Jessica Spears, & Mandy Williams, Model Laboratory Schools at Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Lucas Barnes, Eastern Kentucky University



10:15-11:00 a.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 2

Location: Perkins QUAD

Essential Skills Think Tank (Part I)

Pre-Registration Required

This session is a continuation of Part 1, and is a prerequisite for this session.

Kevin Dvorak, Nova Southeastern University; From Eastern Kentucky University - Russell Carpenter, Alison Buck, Starr Wentzel, Gill Hunter, Krista Kimmel, Jamie Marie Miller, Amanda Balser, Jill Campbell, Pete Edwards, Trena Napier

Location: Perkins 210

From Hidden to Intentional: Faculty Development Strategies for Teaching Durable Skills

Interactive Workshop

The TEK Faculty Fellows program supports instructors through the process of enhancing courses to intentionally teach Essential Skills within their disciplinary context. This session shares practical faculty development strategies—scaffolding frameworks, reflective teaching tools, and assignment design templates and practices—that help faculty to build confidence teaching essential, durable skills.

*Presenters: Shawna Felkins & Madeline Aulisio Miller, University of Kentucky**

Moderator: Steve Hammons, University of the Cumberlands



Location: Perkins 211

Built In, Not Bolted On

Interactive Workshop

This workshop examines how the Kentucky Graduate Profile's 10 Essential Skills can be built into curriculum architecture rather than added afterward. Using a blueprint metaphor, participants explore a replicable scaffolding model across course levels, leave with a transferable framework, and identify one concrete design change applicable to their own program.

Presenter: Jay Bourne, University of the Cumberlands

Moderator: Langdon Messer, Model Laboratory Schools at Eastern Kentucky University



MORNING SESSIONS

10:15-11:00 a.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 2

Location: Perkins 212

Small Challenges, Big Skills: Teaching Essential Professional Skills Through Weekly Practice

This session presents a graduate practicum redesign using scaffolded, incremental skill challenges to develop communication, interpersonal interaction, and professionalism. Grounded in deliberate practice, experiential learning, and scaffolded pedagogy, the model illustrates how repeated practice and structured reflection in authentic settings support development of complex professional skills in higher education.

Presenters: Maria Bane & Robyn Wahl, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Jamie Wiesmueller, Thomas F. Frist, Jr. College of Medicine, Belmont University



Location: Perkins 219

Designing for Impact: Embedding Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills Through Intentional Course Design

This presentation equips faculty with practical strategies to embed Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills into course design through culturally responsive pedagogy. Participants will actively redesign assignments and feedback practices to strengthen communication, collaboration, adaptability, and professionalism using research-informed, transferable approaches.

*Presenter: Sau Hou Chang, Indiana University Southeast**

Moderator: Allison Fowler, Spalding University

Teaching Adaptability as an Essential Skill: Scalable, Evidence-Based Strategies for Integrating EKU Essential Skills into Course Design and Assessment

Adaptability is a core EKU Essential Skill required for student success in dynamic professional environments. This session presents scalable, evidence-supported instructional strategies and authentic assessments that integrate adaptability into course design. Participants will develop transferable approaches that strengthen students' career readiness, leadership capacity, and ability to thrive in changing workplace conditions. The session emphasizes approaches that are transferable across disciplines and adaptable to multiple course formats, including undergraduate, graduate, online, and face-to-face instruction. Participants will engage in guided activities to develop or revise assignments that integrate Essential Skills into their own teaching contexts.

Presenter: Kevin Hub, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Allison Fowler, Spalding University



Location: Perkins 220

Decoding the Invisible Curriculum: Using Custom GPTs for Automated Soft-Skills Mapping and Program Innovation

Traditional curriculum maps often miss durable skills like adaptability and critical thinking embedded in teaching. This session shows how Custom GPTs analyze course descriptions, outcomes, and syllabi to generate dynamic Skills Maps, revealing curricular gaps and supporting AI-assisted workflows that align academic learning with workforce competencies.

Presenters: Rheanna Plemons & Will Perry, Western Kentucky University

Moderator: Jonathan Vorbeck, Eastern Kentucky University



MORNING SESSIONS

10:15-11:00 a.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 2

Location: Perkins 221

Students' Reading Preferences: A Critical Examination of Students' Reading Preferences and Strategic Processes When Reading More Culturally Relevant/More Interesting Texts and Less Culturally Relevant/Less Interesting Texts

This session explores a collaborative research project where preservice elementary teachers critically utilized a Culturally Relevant Reading Interest Inventory to obtain information about an elementary student's cultural and reading interests to select more cultural/more interesting texts. Attendees will learn strategies for developing questions related to students' preferences and culture to increase their interest and motivation in content.

Presenter: Kathryn Smith, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Rianna Reese, University of Kentucky College of Medicine

Technical Minds, Strong Communicators: Reimagining ENG 101 for Workforce Success

This session explores a contextualized ENG 101 approach that connects writing instruction to technical careers. Presenters will share an instructional module integrating labor market data, technical program assignments, and embedded writing coaching. Research on student motivation demonstrates how contextualized instruction and tutoring support can strengthen communication skills and workforce readiness for community college graduates.

Presenters: Stephanie Tolliver Hyman & Kathryn LeFevre, Southcentral Kentucky Community & Technical College

Moderator: Rianna Reese, University of Kentucky College of Medicine



Location: Perkins 222

Creating Custom AI Agents for High-Impact Learning

This session will be a live demo for all audiences, regardless of AI experience. The session will move beyond the basics of generative AI to the power of Google's Gemini Gem agent. The session will follow along with the building of a custom AI assistant that can automate the creation of authentic assessments and high-impact practices.

Presenters: Christopher Royse, Southcentral Kentucky Community & Technical College

Moderator: Mallory Mullins, Model Laboratory Schools at Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 229

Growing the Graduate Profile: How a Students as Partners Program Cultivates Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills

Interactive Workshop

Growing Graduates from the Ground Up (G3U) is a Students as Partners program in the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment at the University of Kentucky. This presentation maps G3U's curricular innovation model to the Kentucky Graduate Profile's 10 Essential Skills, demonstrating how student-faculty partnerships cultivate these competencies through authentic instructional experiences.

Presenters: Robert Hirsch, Wyatt Driskell, Brittany Ray, Chloe Ebelhar, & Sarah Johnson, University of Kentucky

Moderator: Jilliane McCardle, Eastern Kentucky University



NETWORKING LUNCH

11:00-11:45 a.m. - NETWORKING LUNCH & PROGRAM

Location: Perkins QUAD

Join colleagues for a collaborative lunch to celebrate the dedication and impact of our Graduate Profile Team Leads. This session offers a dedicated space to connect with peers and share insights while we formally acknowledge the leadership driving our student success initiatives forward.

Graduate Profile Academy Leads

- Eastern Kentucky University - Dr. Starr Wentzel
- Kentucky State University - Dr. Frederick Williams
- Morehead State University - Dr. Chris Schroeder
- Murray State University - Ashley Ireland
- Northern Kentucky University - Andrea Brooks
- University of Kentucky - Dr. Brandi Frisby
- University of Louisville - Dr. Beth Willey
- Western Kentucky University - Dr. Rheanna Plemons
- Ashland Community and Technical College - Dr. Steve Flouhouse
- Big Sandy Community and Technical College - Dr. Todd Brand
- Bluegrass Community and Technical College - Dr. Shelley Larrabee
- Elizabethtown Community and Technical College - Dr. Telly Sellars
- Gateway Community and Technical College - Frannie Bennett
- Hazard Community and Technical College - Dr. Amanda Spencer-Barnes
- Henderson Community College - Dr. Mike Knecht
- Hopkinsville Community College - Dr. Chris Boyett
- Jefferson Community and Technical College - Dr. April Pennington
- Madisonville Community College - Dr. Brittney Stevenson
- Maysville Community and Technical College - Dr. Angela Fulz
- Owensboro Community and Technical College - Jacqueline Jackson
- Somerset Community College - Dr. Ron Meade
- Southcentral Kentucky Community and Technical College - Dr. Christopher Roysse
- Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College - Dr. Erin Reasor
- West Kentucky Community and Technical College - Sancu Teague



Scan the QR code for access to the **Kentucky Graduate Profile Resource Center**. This site provides postsecondary faculty and staff resources to incorporate and assess the 10 Essential Skills in academic and co-curricular programming.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

11:45-12:30 p.m. - POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Location: Perkins Lobby

AI-Supported Program Mapping for Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills

This poster showcases an AI-supported curriculum mapping model that aligns course outcomes and assessments to Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills. The approach increases alignment accuracy, reduces faculty workload, and strengthens workforce coherence. Attendees will explore a scalable framework for embedding Essential Skills across programs.

Presenter: Nathan Hamblin, University of the Cumberlands



AI in Accounting Education

In auditing, we use AI to scaffold chapter comprehension, professional exam practice, professional writing, and digital literacy. Students use AI for iterative feedback while learning to design prompts, critique and edit outputs, and document use to improve communication, critical thinking, and readiness for the workplaces.

Presenter: Kim Fatten, Morehead State University



Evaluating Student Outcomes in an Authentic-CURE Based Undergraduate Neurophysiology Lab

A Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) survey was used to measure student interest and experiences with hands-on work, collaboration, attitude toward science, and participation in research. Student responses revealed high overall satisfaction with the course (15/16). Group work was scored as a major strength, with strong gains in working in small groups, explaining science ideas to others, and taking responsibility for a specific part of the research project. Students reported a better understanding of the research process by engaging in hands-on skills including data collection, data analysis, and learning laboratory techniques. Smaller gains were reported for the traditional elements of reading textbooks, working on problem sets, and taking in-class tests.

Presenter: Leandra Dolloff, Erin Richard, & Robin L. Cooper, University of Kentucky



Effects of Student-led Workshops on the Success of Nursing Students

Through graphs and statistics, the poster will show the benefit of the supplemental, student-led workshops on the success of first semester nursing students. The poster will also indicate some additional improvements to the workshops as they have continued into the third year.

*Presenter: Beth Killian, Eastern Kentucky University**



Metacognitive Processes for Thinking Critically: Reimagining Problem-Based Learning

Thinking critically to solve problems requires the ability to access higher order cognitive skills (interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating information) leading students to create logical and appropriate actions. Carefully designed assignments using team and problem-based learning techniques help students acquire the metacognitive skills necessary to solve problems or create new solutions.

Presenter: Amanda Balsler, Eastern Kentucky University



Embedding Statewide Workforce Competencies in a Comprehensive Transition Program: Assessment and Implementation at WKU

Western Kentucky University's SAV-Y program integrates the Kentucky Graduate Profile's Essential Skills into the curriculum and assessment for students with intellectual disabilities. The team redesigned rubrics across social, academic, and vocational components to document Essential Skill development, connect learning to microcredentials, and support workforce readiness within an inclusive postsecondary education program.

*Presenters: Rheanna Plemons, Michael Matney, & Christina Noel, Western Kentucky University**



POSTER PRESENTATIONS

11:45-12:30 p.m. - POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Location: Perkins Lobby

Graduate Profile Academy Posters

The Graduate Profile Academy Team posters showcase our strategic efforts to scale, scaffold, and sustain the 10 Essential Skills. These displays highlight how Kentucky is moving beyond simple completion to ensure graduates are intentionally prepared for meaningful careers.



Two-Year Institutions

- Ashland Community and Technical College
- Big Sandy Community and Technical College
- Bluegrass Community and Technical College
- Elizabethtown Community and Technical College
- Gateway Community and Technical College
- Hazard Community and Technical College
- Henderson Community College
- Hopkinsville Community College
- Jefferson Community and Technical College
- Madisonville Community College
- Maysville Community and Technical College
- Owensboro Community and Technical College
- Somerset Community College
- Southcentral Kentucky Community and Technical College
- Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College
- West Kentucky Community and Technical College

Four-Year Institutions

- Eastern Kentucky University
- Kentucky State University
- Morehead State University
- Murray State University
- Northern Kentucky University
- University of Louisville
- Western Kentucky University

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

12:45-1:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 3

Location: Perkins 209

The Human Edge: Teaching the 10 Essential Skills in an AI-Shaped World

As AI becomes a routine part of academic and professional life, the 10 Essential Skills need more intentional teaching, stronger judgment, and clearer evidence of student learning. This panel examines that challenge through four connected lenses. Lisa Blue introduces the AI Proficiency Pathway, AIPP, as a framework for helping students develop the Essential Skills when AI is part of the environment. Trey Conatser focuses on faculty development and institutional support for teaching these skills intentionally. Jacqueline Jackson brings the employer perspective, emphasizing the human capabilities graduates need to use AI responsibly and effectively in the workplace. Rheanna Plemons addresses assessment, showing how these capacities can be made more visible and measurable across programs. Attendees will leave with practical ideas for making the 10 Essential Skills more visible in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Presenters: Lisa Blue, Eastern Kentucky University; Trey Conatser, University of Kentucky; Jacqueline Jackson, Owensboro Community & Technical College; & Rheanna Plemons, Western Kentucky University
Moderator: Janna Vice, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education



Location: Perkins 210

Building Future-Ready Writers: Using RACE to Develop Essential Skills in Elementary Students

This presentation highlights how the RACE writing strategy supports elementary students in developing critical thinking, communication, and evidence based reasoning. Participants will explore classroom practices that integrate structured writing across subjects to strengthen writing skills and build essential competencies aligned with the Kentucky Graduate Profile.

Presenter: Mallory Mullins, Model Laboratory Schools at Eastern Kentucky University
Moderator: Jonathan Vorbeck, Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 211

Rehearsing the Future

Interactive Workshop

This interactive workshop demonstrates how AI-supported simulation can operationalize Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills through structured rehearsal of professional decision-making. Participants will engage in a live scenario, analyze consequences, and explore a scalable, research-informed model for embedding Essential Skill development across disciplines and institutional contexts.

*Presenter: Tim Jansky, Eastern Kentucky University**
Moderator: Shirley O'Brien, Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 212

Meeting Essential Career Skills Through Mental Health Strategies

Career success depends on one's ability to manage emotions, communicate effectively, and self-regulate in the workplace. In this presentation, we will discuss our occupational therapy in mental health course in which we teach weekly positive, evidence-based strategies for students to support their own mental health while providing care to patients.

*Presenters: Cody West & Cheryl Carrico, Eastern Kentucky University**
Moderator: Karina Christopher, Berea College



AFTERNOON SESSIONS

12:45-1:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 3

Location: Perkins 214

Teaching Professionalism on Purpose: A Program-Level Model for Developing Professional Practice Competencies

This session presents a program-level process for developing professional readiness in Communication Sciences and Disorders students through structured Professional Practice Competencies (PPCs). Through guided self-reflection, faculty feedback, and iterative improvement planning, this approach helps students strengthen professionalism, interpersonal effectiveness, and collaboration, preparing them for clinical practice and the workforce.

Presenters: Maria Bane, Jade Robinson, & Robyn Wahl, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Jamie Wiesmueller, Thomas F. Frist, Jr. College of Medicine, Belmont University



Location: Perkins 219

The Role of an Interdisciplinary Conference in Developing Essential Skills in Undergraduate Students

This study examines the process of organizing an interdisciplinary undergraduate research conference as a high-impact educational practice. We highlight how participation fosters collaboration, communication, analytical, and professional skills among undergraduates while offering faculty meaningful mentorship opportunities. Findings indicate that such experiences significantly enhance students' Essential Skills development and engagement.

Presenters: Karina Powell, Alison Buck, Kimberly Swisher, Niki Hill, Shelby Champlin, Sara RicoGodoy, Alfonso Roca, Mary Ru Smith, & Alessandra Dellinger, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Jay Bourne, University of the Cumberlands



Location: Perkins 220

Scholars Mentoring Scholars: Building Essential Skills Through Research Partnerships

This presentation shares findings from a mixed-methods study of university faculty mentoring high school seniors completing original research at a laboratory school. Data from surveys and interviews reveal how mentoring relationships form, the role of communication and collaboration, and how partnerships develop Essential Skills aligned with the Kentucky Graduate Profile.

Presenters: Pete Edwards, Eastern Kentucky University; Christopher Budano, Model Laboratory Schools at Eastern Kentucky University; & Jilliane McCardle, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Tathagata Ray, Morehead State University



Location: Perkins 221

Using a TEDx Event to Teach Essential Skills for Tomorrow's Graduates

In this panel, students will explain gaining skills through collaboration toward executing a TEDx event. By working together with advisors and mentors, students grow in leadership as they choose speakers, performers, vendors, and activities to help enhance attendees' understanding of differences among people coming together in celebration at the event.

Presenters: Bellarmine University - Shawn Apostel, Layla Osborn, Layah Hodges, Grace Long, & Sophia Schindler; Abilene Christian University - Kristi Apostel

Moderator: Steve Hammons, University of the Cumberlands



AFTERNOON SESSIONS

12:45-1:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 3

Location: Perkins 222

Utilizing AI Generative Platform MagicSchool Across Learning Environments

MagicSchool is an AI platform enabling university professors to enhance pedagogical efficiency and student engagement. It rapidly generates customized lesson materials, assessments, rubrics, and differentiated assignments aligned with institutional standards. The tool reduces preparation time while supporting accessibility, data-informed decision-making, and academic integrity. This presentation demonstrates practical applications across content creation, assessment design, and active learning strategies in undergraduate and graduate courses.

Presenter: Svjetlana Watson, Spalding University

Moderator: Leah Simpkins, Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 229

From Automation to Amplification: Using GenAI to Strengthen Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills*

Interactive Workshop

Artificial intelligence is reshaping higher education and workforce expectations. This session moves beyond tool adoption to demonstrate how GenAI can intentionally amplify Kentucky's 10 Essential Skills. Participants will explore evidence-informed design strategies, assessment models, and scalable practices that preserve academic integrity while strengthening critical thinking, communication, and ethical reasoning.

Presenter: Nathan Hamblin, University of the Cumberlands

Moderator: Christopher Royse, Southcentral Kentucky Community & Technical College



1:45-2:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 4

Location: Perkins 209

Using High Impact Practices to Teach the 10 Essential Skills

This session explores how High-Impact Practices—such as service learning, undergraduate research, internships, and education abroad—serve as the premier vehicles for mastering the 10 Essential Skills. The session will cover the 10 HIPs and the common elements that ensure how these immersive experiences move beyond traditional lectures to foster deep learning and real-world competency in students. Attendees will leave with actionable ideas for scaling the experiential education focused HIPs to ensure every graduate achieves the holistic excellence defined by the Graduate Profile.

Presenters: Chris Schroeder, Megan Boone, & Tim O'Brien, Morehead State University

Moderator: Janna Vice, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education



AFTERNOON SESSIONS

1:45-2:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 4

Location: Perkins 210

Growing Together: Building a Peer Observation Process for Learning Assistants

During this session, we will describe the peer observation process used with our undergraduate Learning Assistants in the Center for STEM Excellence at EKU. We will give an overview of its development, the process we use, and feedback from our Learning Assistants, who are an integral part of the process.

*Presenters: Elise Lahiere & Rachel S. J. Maggard, Eastern Kentucky University**

Moderator: Robert Hirsch, University of Kentucky

Identifying KY Construction Job Requirements Using Professionalism and Communication Skills

Students in Construction Management (ECC 306) at MSU reached out to construction professionals. (1) They applied ethics, organizational, time management, terminology, and tools. (2) They engaged in formal conversations and wrote a structured report. Consequently, they achieve Milestone-level mastery of Professionalism and Communication.

Presenter: Tathagata Ray, Morehead State University

Moderator: Robert Hirsch, University of Kentucky



Location: Perkins 211

From Theory to Practice: Strengthening Graduate Skills by Embedding Pre-Service Teachers in P12 Settings Through a Revitalized University-Lab School Partnership

This presentation examines how a regional university revitalized a decades-long partnership with its laboratory school to embed teacher candidates directly into a P12 setting. Attendees will explore how cohort-based, school-embedded coursework cultivates knowledge application, professional identity, and civic responsibility in the next generation of educators.

Presenters: Pete Edwards, Heather Campbell, Ashlee Smethers, & Jason Miller, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Cindy Tran, Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 212

Pathways: Innovative Approaches to Teaching the 10 Essential Skills

Pathways are an innovative approach to integrating the Essential Skills into Essential Education (EKU's general education curriculum). This approach offers an Honors-like in-depth experience around themes related to real world challenges and that connect courses across disciplines. Students in Pathways courses still meet general education requirements while applying the Essential Skills to a problem relevant to the world into which they will graduate. EKU faculty have built five inaugural Artificial Intelligence (AI) Pathway courses that each emphasize different Essential Skills across five different disciplines. This presentation will give an overview of the Pathways approach as a way to implement the Essential Skills using cutting-edge teaching techniques and cross-disciplinary problem-solving. The session will end with takeaways for other institutions interested in implementing similar approaches to the 10 Essential Skills.

Presenters: Alison Buck & Matthew Winslow, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Starr Wentzel, Eastern Kentucky University



AFTERNOON SESSIONS

1:45-2:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSIONS, ROUND 4

Location: Perkins 214

Integration of the Ten Essential Skills for Occupational Therapy Fieldwork Success

Occupational therapists assist with retraining of functional skills across the lifespan. The experiential learning process includes Level I and II Fieldwork training courses. Fieldwork training emphasizes the ten Essential Skills of Employability. Students learn how to use current research to communicate, treat ethically and effectively.

Presenters: Leah Simpkins & Karen Puckett, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Gill Hunter, Eastern Kentucky University

Beyond the Test: Authentic Assessment for Essential Skills

Authentic assessment requires students to apply knowledge in meaningful contexts. Through tasks involving problem solving, collaboration, analysis, and communication, students demonstrate a broader range of competencies than traditional assessments allow. This session explores how authentic assessment measures Essential Skills and offers practical strategies for integrating it into coursework.

*Presenter: Sonja Yow, Eastern Kentucky University**

Moderator: Gill Hunter, Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 219

AI-Integrated Engineering Education in Developing Kentucky Graduate Profile Skills

This case study examines how a team-based class project “integrating AI techniques into RF-circuit design” helped undergraduate students develop three Essential Skills: (i) Critical Thinking and Decision-Making through a project report; (ii) Communication Skills through a conference presentation. and (iii) Collaboration & Teamwork, assessed through peer feedback.

Presenter: Anindita Paul, Morehead State University

Moderator: Kevin Dvorak, Nova Southeastern University



Location: Perkins 220

Campus Meets Classroom: Powering Learning Through Student Partnerships

Teachers, college students, and professors collaborate to strengthen classrooms through hands-on partnerships. This session highlights kindergarten–speech therapy teamwork, science learning collaborations, and special education support. Discover how higher education partnerships expand instructional capacity, enrich student learning, and prepare future educators through meaningful, real-world classroom experiences.

Presenters: Ellie Riley, Gretchen May, & Megan Saylor, Model Laboratory Schools at Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Allison Fowler, Spalding University



AFTERNOON SESSIONS

1:45-2:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 4

Location: Perkins 221

Teaching the Essential Skills Through School Counseling Lessons

School Counselors play a key role in developing essential life skills for students. This session will highlight engaging counseling lessons that focus on life skills such as communication, collaboration, perseverance, civic engagement, and self-reflection for learners. Participants for this session will explore practical strategies and tools that are being modeled in our classrooms at Model Laboratory School. As school counselors in a K–12 laboratory school, we will share our experiences designing and implementing counseling lessons that intentionally develop essential life skills across grade levels.

Presenters: Cheyanne Pate & Rebecca Petrey, Model Laboratory Schools at Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Karina Christopher, Berea College



Location: Perkins 222

Using Face-to-Face Team Feedback to Enhance Individual and Team Performance and Develop Professional Skills

This presentation outlines a team evaluation intervention in which students assess both overall team performance and the individual contributions of their peers. It explores the benefits and challenges for students and faculty, with particular attention to communication, professionalism, collaboration and teamwork, interpersonal relations, and adaptability and leadership.

Presenters: Kristie McHugh & Jill Cadotte, Ohio Northern University

Moderator: Mallory Mullins, Model Laboratory Schools at Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 229

Using TeachAid to Deliver Rigorous and Differentiated Instruction

TeachAid is an AI resource that helps teachers plan rigorous and differentiated instruction for students. It also allows teachers to create activities tailored to individual learners, which follow the Kentucky Academic Standards. We want to also showcase how TeachAid allows teachers at Model to plan instruction based on the Model Core Competencies here at Model Lab School.

Presenter: Langdon Messer, Model Laboratory Schools at Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Rheanna Plemons, Western Kentucky University

Kickstart Keys in Action: Real-World Readiness for Future Educators

Kickstart Keys for Future Educators is a collaborative professional learning initiative connecting EKU teacher candidates with PK–12 practitioners. This session shares the program's origins, structure, and impact, offering practical guidance for implementing similar, practice-based learning experiences grounded in student feedback and university–school partnerships.

Presenter: Model Laboratory Schools at Eastern Kentucky University - Amber Catron, Mary Beth Hammond, Christopher Budano. Eastern Kentucky University - Brandy Blackburn.

Moderator: Rheanna Plemons, Western Kentucky University



AFTERNOON SESSIONS

2:45-3:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 5

Location: Perkins 209

Teaching Critical Thinking and Professionalism Within Graduate Occupational Therapy: Integrating AI Tools to Support Research Application

Health care practitioners are often challenged by applying critical appraisal skills for educational use. Confidence gaps in research appraisal are skills that may wane over time. Integrating AI tools into graduate instruction may scaffold these competencies while reinforcing professional values of discernment and intellectual integrity, warranting further outcome evaluation.

Presenters: Shirley O'Brien, Eastern Kentucky University; & Melba Custer, Spalding University

Moderator: Jilliane McCardle, Eastern Kentucky University

Developing Employable Skills: Mastering Collaboration and Teamwork

This presentation will demonstrate strategies for developing, scaffolding, and assessing Collaboration and Teamwork Skills throughout a single course. The presentation includes a discussion of curriculum mapping and scaffolding, examples of assignments, progression from acquiring knowledge to demonstrating mastery, and a rubric proposal utilizing the Ten Essential Skills (KY CPE, 2026) framework.

Presenters: Karen Clancy & Amanda Hale, University of Kentucky

Moderator: Jilliane McCardle, Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 210

Bridging the Gap: Scalable Assessment Strategies for the Graduate Profile's 10 Essential Skills

The 2026 Pedagogicon assessment panel offers a collaborative deep dive into the practical integration of the Kentucky Graduate Profile's 10 Essential Skills within academic curricula. This session focuses on moving beyond theory to showcase evidence-based strategies for evaluating core competencies across Essential Skills. Panelists will share scalable assessment models and digital toolkits designed to help students not only master these skills but also articulate their value to future employers. Attendees will leave with actionable frameworks to align their instructional practices with the statewide mission of preparing graduates for success in a rapidly evolving workforce.

Presenter: Alison Buck, Eastern Kentucky University; Tierra Freeman-Taylor, Kentucky State University; Leah Halliday, Council on Postsecondary Education; & Chris Royse, Southcentral Kentucky Community and Technical College

Moderator: Jay Bourne, University of the Cumberlands



Location: Perkins 211

Beyond the Syllabus: Intentionally and Implicitly Embedding Essential Skills Across a Professional Program

This session demonstrates how Essential Skills are embedded both intentionally and implicitly across a professional program. Through threaded courses, scaffolded expectations, performance-based assessments, structured peer review, and faculty modeling, participants will explore practical strategies for transforming Essential Skills from written objectives into a sustained, assessable program culture.

*Presenter: Steve Hammons, University of the Cumberlands**

Moderator: Shawna Felkins, University of Kentucky

(Part 2 on next page)

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

2:45-3:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 5

Location: Perkins 211

AI as a Communication Partner: Assignment Design for Essential Workplace Skills

This session showcases three scaffolded AI-integrated assignments from a business communication course designed to develop critical thinking, metacognition, and workplace-ready communication skills. Participants will explore practical models that move students from passive AI use to strategic collaboration, with adaptable materials, student examples, and implementation insights.

*Presenters: Jamie Wiesmueller, Belmont University; Marcel Robles, Eastern Kentucky University**

Moderator: Shawna Felkins, University of Kentucky



Location: Perkins 212

Experiential Education: The Art of Becoming a Music Teacher

In this session, the presenter will discuss experiential learning and ways she incorporated it into music education coursework. Participants will examine student reflections and will have time to brainstorm scenarios for their own classrooms. Attendees will leave feeling empowered to offer opportunities for their students to "learn by doing."

Presenter: Michele Paynter Paise, Morehead State University

Moderator: Starr Wentzel, Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 214

Spaces + Places: Teaching Author Rights and Open Access Through Undergraduate Student Publishing

Spaces + Places is a collection of student essays published in an open access online book. This session will cover how the assignment operates; elements include education about open licensing and author rights, teaching students about web accessibility, and helping students make informed decisions about licensing their work.

Presenters: Stephen Krueger & Patrick Lee Lucas, University of Kentucky

Moderator: Kevin Dvorak, Nova Southeastern University



Location: Perkins 219

Leadership Coherence and Co Teaching: Advancing Educational Equity in Inclusive Elementary Classrooms

Discover how leadership coherence transforms co teaching into a powerful system for advancing equity in inclusive classrooms. This qualitative multiple case study explores how transformational and culturally responsive leadership support collaborative instructional practices that expand equitable access, engagement, and participation for diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

Presenters: Rebekah Gooslin & Tracey Francis, University of the Cumberlands

Moderator: Tathagata Ray, Morehead State University



AFTERNOON SESSIONS

2:45-3:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 5

Location: Perkins 220

What's The Point[?]: A Thematic Analysis of Student TikTok Comments Around the Decision to Attend Class

This session covers a qualitative thematic analysis of a semi-viral TikTok asking students to share their reasons for not attending classes. The session focuses on the major themes uncovered from the analysis of TikTok comments, with an emphasis on student misconceptions and recommendations for how professors can improve learning outcomes.

Presenters: Allison Fowler & Sarah Beach, Spalding University

Moderator: Gill Hunter, Eastern Kentucky University

Competency-Based Education

Through Option 9 and competency-based education (CBE), students demonstrate current knowledge, complete coursework, and make meaningful connections while maintaining full-time positions in elementary education settings. The purpose of this presentation is to highlight how CBE is used across an eight-course sequence that empowers students to demonstrate competency in work-ready skills.

Presenters: Marie Manning & Chris Budano, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Gill Hunter, Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 221

From Reaction to Reflection: Creative Writing as a Tool for Meaning-Making in Higher Education

This session explores how reflective writing strengthens communication, critical and creative thinking, interpersonal relations, and adaptability in medical students. We report findings from 200 student responses to open-ended, arts-based prompts. Domains of personal grounding, sense-making, and reactive vs. reflective stance were used to evaluate responses for learning depth.

Presenters: Rianna Reese & April Hatcher, University of Kentucky College of Medicine

Moderator: Leah Simpkins, Eastern Kentucky University



Location: Perkins 222

A "Patient" Interview: Discipline Specific Synthesis of Essential Skills

Synthesis of seven Essential Skills in a nutrition counseling assignment facilitates students' progression from foundational skills to clinical application. Through patient interviewing and intervention planning, students communicate effectively and think critically, cultivating skills for entry-level practice which are applicable across health and human sciences.

Presenter: Erin Eliassen, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Russell Carpenter, Eastern Kentucky University

Brewing Connections: Preparing Students to Interact Effectively with People Through Course-Integrated Networking

This session presents ECU Public Health Program's Morning Brew Networking Event, a course-integrated networking initiative designed to help students develop the Kentucky Graduate Profile skill of interacting effectively with people. Presenters will outline the planning, implementation, and evaluation process and share strategies for integrating structured networking experiences into academic curricula.

Presenter: Jonathan Vorbeck & Laurel Schwartz, Eastern Kentucky University

Moderator: Russell Carpenter, Eastern Kentucky University



AFTERNOON SESSIONS

2:45-3:30 p.m. - CONCURRENT PEDAGOGICAL SESSIONS, ROUND 5

Location: Perkins 229

Leveraging Artificial Intelligence to Develop Patient Communication Skills *Interactive Workshop*

Pre-PA undergraduate and PA graduate students were assigned to utilize the ChatGPT app to practice verbal patient-provider interviews. Students were provided with specific prompts for ChatGPT to initiate the interview. Students were instructed to also request feedback from ChatGPT following the interview. By providing a low-stakes, technology-enhanced environment for practicing patient interviews, this workshop highlights how emerging AI tools can strengthen Essential Skills critical to healthcare education. Educators can apply this simulated AI approach by designing prompts with variable patient behaviors or feedback conditions, and providing students opportunities to practice Communication and flexible decision making in changing contexts.

Presenters: Cheryl Vanderford & Phillip (Andy) Williford, University of Kentucky

Moderator: Matthew Winslow, Eastern Kentucky University



3:45-4:15 p.m. - CLOSING SESSION & TOP-SESSION RECOGNITION

Location: Perkins QUAD

As the 2026 Pedagogicon draws to a close, the final session will synthesize the innovative ideas and transformative teaching and learning strategies shared throughout the day. Organizers will reflect on Kentucky's collective work to implement the Graduate Profile, distilling key insights into actionable takeaways for teaching the 10 Essential Skills. A resource guide to support Graduate Profile implementation will be distributed to attendees.

The Planning Committee also will recognize the presenters who earned top-session honors for their outstanding contributions to the conference. These awards were determined by peer reviewers' ratings based on the inclusion of evidence-based strategies and innovative approaches. These sessions are indicated in the program with an asterisk (*).



Scan the QR code for access to the **Kentucky Graduate Profile Resource Center**. This site provides postsecondary faculty and staff resources to incorporate and assess the 10 Essential Skills in academic and co-curricular programming. Enjoy access to:

- Graduate Profile Implementation Guide
- CPE Videos and webinars
- Levels of Mastery Charts for all 10 Essential Skills
- Curriculum Development Toolkit
- and more!

SPECIAL THANKS

2026 Pedagogicon Planning Committee

- Dr. Melissa Bell, Vice President of Academic Excellence, Council on Postsecondary Education
- Dr. Russell Carpenter, Assistant Provost & Professor of English, Eastern Kentucky University and Senior Fellow, Council on Postsecondary Education
- Heather Faesy, Events Manager and Board Liaison, Council on Postsecondary Education
- Dr. Janna Vice, Senior Fellow, Council on Postsecondary Education

Proposal Reviewers

- Lucas Barnes - Eastern Kentucky University
- Jay Bourne - University of the Cumberlands
- Chris Butcher - Eastern Kentucky University
- Amber Catron - Eastern Kentucky University, Model Laboratory School
- Jill Cadotte - Ohio Northern University
- Charla Chailland - Florida Gulf Coast University
- Karina Christopher - Berea College
- Kevin Dvorak - Nova Southeastern University
- Peter Edwards - Eastern Kentucky University
- Shawna Felkins - University of Kentucky
- Nathan Hamblin - University of the Cumberlands
- Marie Manning - Eastern Kentucky University
- Jilliane McCardle - Eastern Kentucky University
- Langdon Messer - Eastern Kentucky University
- Mallory Mullins - Model Laboratory Schools
- Shirley O'Brien - Eastern Kentucky University
- Michele Paynter Paise - Morehead State University
- Tathagata Ray - Morehead State University
- Ellie Riley - Model Laboratory School
- Leah Simpkins - Eastern Kentucky University
- Kathryn Smith - Eastern Kentucky University
- Cheryl Vanderford - University of Kentucky
- Jonathan Vorbeck - Eastern Kentucky University
- Svjetlana Watson - Spalding University
- Matt Winslow - Eastern Kentucky University

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- Lucas Barnes - Eastern Kentucky University
- Jay Bourne - University of the Cumberlands
- Alison Buck - Eastern Kentucky University
- Karina Christopher - Berea College
- Kevin Dvorak - Nova Southeastern University
- Shawna Felkins - University of Kentucky
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