

Higher Education Legislation from the 2025 Session of the Kentucky General Assembly

Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education
Updated April 4, 2025



House Bill 4 (Rep. Decker)

- An act relating to initiatives regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- This bill mandates that institutions adopt policies ensuring non-discrimination based on political or social viewpoints and prohibits the use of resources for DEI offices, officers, and training programs. The bill also prohibits mandatory DEI statements in hiring, admissions, and contracts. It establishes strict compliance measures, requiring annual certification of adherence and periodic audits, with funding penalties for violations. Institutions must comply by June 30, 2025, with annual reporting beginning in 2026.
- Removes the requirement that CPE postpone the approval of new academic programs unless institutions meet their equal educational opportunity goals.
- Received final passage via veto override on March 27.

Senate Bill 77 (Sen. Deneen)

- Through its Senate Committee Substitute (SCS), this bill establishes an approval process for doctoral programs at comprehensive universities.
- It removes existing restrictions preventing these institutions from offering certain doctoral degrees, such as Ph.D. and veterinary medicine programs.
- It establishes criteria that require comprehensive universities to meet national or regional retention and graduation rate standards and standards for financial stability in order to submit proposals to offer doctoral programs.
- It grants CPE the authority to review and approve new doctoral program proposals from comprehensive universities, with a process to make funding recommendations for new doctoral programs as part of the biennial budget process.
- Signed by the Governor on March 19.

House Bill 424 (Rep. Tipton)

- An act relating to employment at postsecondary institutions.
- The bill establishes new employment standards and accountability measures for faculty and administrators at Kentucky's public postsecondary institutions.
- It requires performance and productivity evaluations for presidents, faculty, and staff at least once every 4 years, with the possibility of removal for those who fail to meet standards, regardless of tenure status.
- It allows boards of regents and trustees to delegate appointment and removal decisions to the president, in accordance with board-approved policies.
- Institutions must have their evaluation policies in place by January 1, 2026, with implementation to begin on July 1, 2026.
- Received final passage via veto override on March 27.

Senate Bill 87 (Sen. Funke Frommeyer)

- An act relating to aviation.
- This bill aims to enhance and expand air traffic control education.
- It directs the CPE, in collaboration with the Transportation Cabinet, to assess the capacity of public postsecondary institutions to offer programs that lead to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-recognized credentials in air traffic control safety, submit a report of findings to the LRC, and notify institutions who are identified as capable by December 1, 2025.
- By January 1, 2026, the institution(s) shall submit a request to CPE for approval of those programs and by June 30, 2026 shall approve said program(s).
- Signed by the Governor on March 14.

Senate Resolution 237 (Sen. Reed)

- This resolution aims to enhance civic education by improving Kentucky students' understanding of the United States' constitutional republic and its democratic processes.
- It requests CPE and the Kentucky Department of Education to submit a joint report (due July 1, 2025) to the LRC regarding:
 - Current programs within public education institutions to comply with the federal requirement of education on the Constitution
 - Implementation strategies to comply with and expand these educational programs.

Senate Joint Resolution 55 (Sen. Tichenor)

- This resolution directs public postsecondary institutions to adopt policies aimed at combating antisemitism by January 1, 2026.
- These policies are required until June 30, 2028, and must align with the definition of antisemitism established in 2021 SR 67.
- Institutions are also required to include Jewish organizations as community resources for their students.
- It mandates that institutions annually report relevant data to the CPE, which will compile the findings, submit them to the LRC, and publish on the Council's website.
- Signed by the Governor on April 2.

Senate Bill 3 (Sen. Wise)

- This bill relates to student-athletes in Kentucky being able to earn money from sponsorships or deals related to their name, image, or likeness (NIL).
- It allows institutions to contract with student athletes and set reasonable limits on how much athletes may earn, ensuring the payments are not extreme compared to what's usual.
- It adds liability protections for individuals employed by affiliated corporations.
- It exempts certain institutional agreements from disclosure under the Kentucky Open Records Act.
- Signed by the Governor on March 13.

House Bill 303 (Rep. Bratcher)

- An act relating to military healthcare personnel.
- The bill aims to streamline the transition of military healthcare personnel into civilian healthcare careers by enabling Kentucky colleges and universities to create academic career pathways and bridge programs. These programs are designed to reduce the time needed for credentialing by integrating military training and experience into civilian healthcare education.
- The bill promotes faster certification and employment for at least 27 military healthcare occupations (including Combat Medic, Radiology Specialist, and Pharmacy Specialist).
- The bill also encourages collaboration with professional licensure boards, the DOD SkillBridge Program, and various veterans' organizations to enhance recruitment, reduce transitional barriers, and support the employability of military healthcare professionals.
- Signed by the Governor on March 19.

House Bill 193 (Rep. Payne)

- This bill merges two existing statutes related to dual credit scholarships for general and career and technical education.
- It requires that general education courses be in the statewide general education core to be eligible for the dual credit scholarship.
- It removes the requirement that students pay back 50% of their scholarship if they do not successfully complete the dual credit course.
- Signed by the Governor on March 19.

Proposed Legislation (*that did not pass*)

Statewide Transfer Pathways (HB 427, Rep. Grossl)

This bill proposed the creation of statewide transfer pathways for the first 60 credit hours of high-demand baccalaureate programs at public universities and KCTCS. Once established, institutions must accept transfer credits within these pathways as general education or program-specific credits before applying them as electives.

Statutory Relief for Campuses (HB 491, Rep. Riley)

This bill proposed eliminating burdensome state government and capital projects requirements by redefining "equipment" to include advanced computing devices, such as smart medical and scientific equipment, raising financial thresholds for capital projects, increasing the minimum cost for real estate leases, equipment purchases, and IT system upgrades to qualify as capital projects. Additionally, it removes certain administrative requirements, such as invoice form specifications and meeting deadlines for university boards of regents.