
TOPIC/TITLE:	Kentucky State University's Response to SB 185 (2026)
STAFF CONTACTS:	Travis Powell, Executive Vice President & General Counsel Greg Rush, Assistant Vice President, Finance Policy and Programs
TYPE/REQUEST:	☒ Action ☐ Information

SUMMARY OF ACTION REQUESTED

Council staff recommends the Committee endorse for Council approval the proposed six areas of study for Kentucky State University as well as the proposed list of 28 academic programs to continue and 4 academic programs to close. These recommendations were reviewed and approved by the KSU Board of Regents at their meeting on May 28, 2026.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

In Kentucky [SB 185](#) (RS 26), the General Assembly declared a state of financial exigency at Kentucky State University (KSU) for five years. The legislation modified KSU's mission to be one of a polytechnic university, and directed KSU to focus on highly technical, industry-based applied learning and offer liberal studies and polytechnic programs that are aligned with the workforce needs of the Commonwealth.

To accomplish this new directive, SB 185 required that KSU conduct a thorough review of all academic programs for long-term viability, financial stability and alignment with the university's mission as a polytechnic institution.

After completing this review, KSU was required to develop and submit a comprehensive academic transformation plan to the Council. The plan must detail how KSU would realign its academic portfolio with a revised polytechnic mission, including the consolidation and elimination of academic programs that did not fit within the approved structure and the organization of remaining offerings into a limited number of defined academic areas of study. For those programs proposed to be eliminated, teach out plans must be provided as they would need to be submitted to KSU's accreditor, SACSCOC.

SB 185 requires that the Council review the program list and teach out plans and may amend any portion before KSU submits to SACSCOC for review and approval July 1, 2026.

REVIEW PROCESS

KSU carried out a multi-phase process to review its academic programs. First, deans and department chairs created one-page overview of each academic program. Then, a group of faculty, students, and administrators were provided with these overviews, as well as program enrollment, marketability, academic outcomes, and overall program contribution based on costs and revenue, and used rubrics to score each academic program. Council staff were invited to participate in these meetings.

KSU provided all information to its academic leadership and President Koffi Akakpo made the final recommendations to be presented to the board. On May 28, 2026, KSU's Board of Regents approved the series of programmatic recommendations, which met the SB 185 deadline of June 1, 2026.

KSU'S RECOMMENDATIONS OF ACTION

KSU's Board of Regents took the following actions at their May 28 meeting, and recommend the Council accept the following with no amendments:

1. Approved six areas of study as: Applied Sciences, Engineering, Health Sciences, Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Technology.
2. Approved the following 28 academic programs to continue. KSU's rationale is that these programs combine workforce demand, scalable delivery, and strong or improving financial contribution. They also serve as enrollment engines supporting KSU's areas of study and overall academic portfolio.
 - Agriculture, Food, and Environment (baccalaureate)
 - Aquaculture (baccalaureate and master's)
 - Biological and Agricultural Engineering (bachelor's and master's)
 - Biology (baccalaureate)
 - Business Administration (baccalaureate and master's)
 - Criminal Justice (baccalaureate)
 - Chemistry (baccalaureate)
 - Computer Science – Cybersecurity (baccalaureate)
 - Elementary Education (baccalaureate)
 - Environmental Science and Technology (master's)
 - Exercise Science (baccalaureate)
 - Interdisciplinary Studies (associate's and baccalaureate)
 - Manufacturing and Agricultural Engineering (baccalaureate)
 - Mathematics (baccalaureate)
 - Music and Industry (baccalaureate)
 - Mass Communication (associate's)
 - Nursing (associate's and baccalaureate)

- Nursing Practice (doctoral)
 - Psychology (baccalaureate and master's)
 - Social Work (baccalaureate and master's)
 - Special Education (master's)
3. Approved the following 4 academic programs to close. KSU's rationale for closing these programs is that they exhibit limited enrollment scalability and market differentiation.
- Bachelor of Music Education (1 student enrolled)
 - Bachelor of Music Performance (1 student enrolled)
 - Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (13 students enrolled)
 - Bachelor of Arts in Child Development and Family Studies (17 students enrolled)

NEXT STEPS

Upon final approval by the Council, CPE staff will report the actions taken to KSU leadership, who will then submit the necessary documentation to SASCO by July 1, 2026.



KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF REGENTS

DATE: May 28, 2026
SUBJECT: Proposed Programs for Continuing and Discontinuing with Teachout Planning
FROM: Academic Affairs
ACTION ITEM: Yes

BACKGROUND:

Pursuant to Senate Bill 185 (SB 185) signed into law on April 13, 2026, by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The submission of the results of a comprehensive academic program viability is enclosed herein for review and necessary action.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES: Program Analysis Summary

The Kentucky State University Academic portfolio shows strong alignment between high-growth, high-revenue programs (Environmental Sciences and Technology, Elementary Education, Nursing - *AS & BA*, Business - BA, Psychology, Social Work, Computer Science) and mission-critical but lower-margin programs (Agriculture, Aquaculture-MS, Special Education, Chemistry, Political Science, Mass Communication). The programs through careful analysis are considered contribution negative in their current form. Some of these programs require adjustments, while others will be recommended for closure (DNP, Computer Science – MS, Psychology-MS, Math, Music, Music Education/Performance, and Child Development). Strategic growth should prioritize online expansion, workforce-aligned redesigns, STEM, and Health related areas.

In Phases One and Two of the implementation plan, Deans, Chairs, Faculty, and Students review academic programs using a rubric, the Gray Decision Intelligence process including individual scorecards. The process involved a focus on program enrollment, marketability, academic outcomes, and overall program contribution based on costs and revenue.

The scorecard-based approach implemented in 2023 supports ongoing institutional effectiveness and provides clear evidence of compliance with SACSCOC expectations for systematic evaluation, improvement, and planning. Since 2023, Kentucky State University has created 12 new programs, with approximately eight of them in STEM related fields. The University also discontinued or sunset five academic programs and five certificates based on a comprehensive academic program review.

The academic program review demonstrates that the institution effectively uses data-informed analysis to evaluate program performance and drive continuous improvement. The academic portfolio is strategically aligned with workforce demand, fiscally sustainable, while also preserving disciplines aligned with the polytechnic vision and critical to Kentucky State University's HBCU and Land Grant Mission. The programs identified as continuing are aligned under six areas of study.

RECOMMENDATION:

President Koffi C. Akakpo recommends that the Board of Regents approve the proposed academic programs to continue as well as those programs we recommend discontinuing with teach out planning.

MOTION:

To approve the recommendation as stated.

Kentucky State University
Academic Program Review Process and Methodology
Submitted to the Kentucky State University Board of Regents
Submitted to the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education

I. Purpose and Legislative Context

Kentucky State University (KSU), pursuant to Senate Bill 185 (SB 185) and in partnership with the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE), conducted a comprehensive Academic Program Review to ensure academic offerings are mission aligned, financially sustainable, workforce-relevant, and positioned to support the University's emerging polytechnic vision as a public HBCU and 1890 land-grant institution.

This review builds upon a data driven program evaluation process KSU has conducted annually since Spring 2023. The University expanded the process to include all academic programs in response to SB 185. The comprehensive academic program review provided Kentucky State University the opportunity to engage deans, chairs, faculty, staff and students as contributing stakeholders to assess academic programs to determine program viability. The process emphasizes data over advocacy, institutional transparency, shared governance, and compliance with accreditation and legislative requirements.

II. Academic Program Review Process

The Academic Program Review followed a methodology articulated in the *Academic Program Review Implementation Plan* and reinforced during formal collaboration session with the Council on Post-Secondary Education Leadership (CPE).

Phase 1: Program-Level Analysis (Deans and Chairs)

Establish a shared, factual baseline for evaluation before any decisions regarding continuation, modification, or discontinuation.

Key Elements:

- Deans and department chairs reviewed the Gray & Associates (GrayDI) Program Economics data for each academic program in their area.
- Programs were evaluated using standardized templates to ensure consistency and comparability.
- Analyses addressed:
 - Enrollment trends (residential & online)
 - Graduation and retention rates
 - Program market demand and workforce alignment
 - Instructional cost structures
 - Net revenue and contribution margins
 - Alignment with the University's polytechnic framework (STEM + Health)

Phase 2: Committee Work Session and Decision Framework

Purpose: Move from analysis to decision-making using a committee approach.

Committee Composition:

- Faculty representatives (*three selected by each college dean*)
- Student representatives (*selected by students*)
- Deans and department chairs (*advisory role in Phase 1 only*)
- Academic Affairs and University leadership (*facilitation and subject matter expertise*)

Decision Criteria:

- Enrollment viability
- Financial sustainability (program cost vs. net revenue)
- Workforce relevance and market demand
- Contribution to institutional mission, identity, and SB 185 Areas of Study
- Long-term strategic fit within a polytechnic model

All recommendations were explicitly tied to GrayDI data, ensuring decisions were evidence-based and defensible. This effort also reemphasized the guiding principle of decision making through data and not advocacy. The committees reviewed the academic programs using the provided rubric. Using the decision criteria, guiding questions were provided to guide the review and scoring process and provide recommendations for continuing, changing, or discontinuing programs with a planned teach out.

Phase 3: Program Continuation, Modification, or Teach-Out

Using a Plus/Delta approach, Academic Affairs Leadership reviewed the committee's work session results and identified the “plus” indicator as continuing, “delta” indicator as needed change, modification, or alignment, and a “minus” indicator for recommended discontinuance and planned teach out.

- Programs to Continue (with possible polytechnic-aligned modifications)
- Programs to Continue with Adjustments (curricular redesign, delivery modality changes, or integration into broader areas of study)
- Programs to Discontinue with formal teach out plans, meeting SACSCOC and CPE requirements

Teachout planning prioritized:

- Student progression and degree completion
- Clear communication timelines
- Accreditation compliance

Phase 4: Alignment to Legislatively Required Areas of Study

In collaboration with CPE, KSU aligned all programs to the following Areas of Study, consistent with SB 185:

- Applied Sciences
- Engineering
- Health Sciences
- Humanities
- Natural Sciences
- Technology

The proposed academic programs for continuance or modification were aligned to the identified areas for study. As reference in SB 185 the University can have no more than 10 Areas of Study. Kentucky State University has identified six areas, knowing that over the next five years these areas may expand as the polytechnic vision is implemented ensuring a focused academic approach while supporting integrated, applied learning pathways.

Proposed Academic Program Recommendations

CONTINUE AND GROW (Action Item)

The academic programs demonstrate clear capacity for expansion and should be prioritized for investment (faculty lines, marketing, potential modality expansion, alignment to polytechnic vision). Additionally, the programs combine workforce demand, scalable delivery, and strong or improving financial contribution. They also serve as enrollment engines supporting the university's areas of study and academic portfolio.

- Nursing (AS, BS– Residential & Online)
- Computer Science – Cybersecurity (BS Online; MS potential)
- MS Environmental Science and Technology (Residential)
- Social Work (BS – Residential & MSW - Online)
- Interdisciplinary Studies (BS & AS, STEM+, General Education, Dual Credit, PEP)
- Psychology (BS; MA Counseling, Forensic, School)
- Special Education (MA – Online, Redesigned in 2025 - Protected)
- Exercise Science (BS – New CIP)
- Aquaculture (MS, BS Aquatic Sciences – Fall 2026)
- Criminal Justice (BS – Residential & Online)
- Biology (BS – Residential)
- Manufacturing and Agricultural Engineering – Introduced in 2025
- MS in Biological and Agricultural Engineering – Introduced in 2025

These programs require curricular redesign, delivery modification, or repositioning to remain viable.

- Agriculture, Food, and Environment (BS – Residential) – change to include specification such as animal science, plant science, etc.
- Business Administration (BS – reduce complexity & MBA – Residential & Online)
- DNP – (Online – Cost analysis for revenue adjustment)
- Elementary Education (BA – HB 250 Redesign ongoing)
- Mathematics (BS – Reopened 2025)
- Music & Industry (Curriculum Redesign – Marketability)
- Mass Communication – (Curriculum Redesign – Technology Integration & Digital Media)
- Chemistry (BS – Reopened to Support Engineering)
- Psychology (MA – Curriculum alignment with workforce and clinical practice)

Rationale: These programs combine workforce demand, scalable delivery, and strong or improving financial contribution. They also serve as enrollment engines supporting the university's areas of study and academic portfolio.

DISCONTINUE – TEACHOUT (Action Item)

Programs to Discontinue with teach-out effective July 1

- Bachelor of Music Education (1 student enrolled)
- Bachelor of Music Performance (1 student enrolled)
- Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (13 students enrolled, 5 seniors)
- Bachelor of Arts in Child Development & Family Studies (17 students enrolled, 5 seniors)

Rationale: These programs exhibit limited enrollment scalability and market differentiation. Continuation or reinstatement will be contingent upon demonstrable redesign outcomes, alignment with the polytechnic vision, external partnerships, or enrollment recovery. SACSCOC limits the reinstatement window to three years. The Council on Post-Secondary Education limits the reinstatement to five years.

Proposed New Program Development Over the Next Five Years (Information Item Only)

- BS in Health Sciences (submitted NOI prior to 4/28 deadline)
- MS Cybersecurity
- Ph.D. Aquatic Sciences
- BS/MS Applied Engineering
- BS/MS Mechanical Engineering
- BS/MS Electrical Engineering
- BS/MS Biomedical Engineering
- MA Public Policy
- PsyD Counseling Psychology
- DBA Organizational Management
- DCJE Criminal Justice
- Graduate Certificate Nursing Education

Rationale: The proposed academic programs at Kentucky State University supports vision for polytechnic alignment, workforce development, and expansion in STEM fields. We recognize additional opportunities may be presented, further positioning the University to meet the needs of the Commonwealth and beyond.



KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY

Academic Program Review Presentation to the ASI Committee
6.8.26

Kentucky State UNIVERSITY

Remains Kentucky's only public HBCU and 1890 Land Grant Institution - Advancing the Commonwealth through applied learning, innovation, partnerships, and purpose.



1

SPRING 2023

STOP, START, & GROW

- Comprehensive academic program review
- Sunset five academic programs and five certificate programs



2

FALL 2023

- Board approved general education review
- Academic Affairs reorganization
 - Three colleges formed
 - New academic programs proposed
 - Eight of eleven program focused on STEM and Health Sciences



3

SPRING 2024

REDUCED ACADEMIC DEGREE PATHWAY COMPLEXITY

- Restructured advising model
- DegreeWorks implementation
- Implemented multi-year catalog



4

FALL 2024

- Adopted and implemented the Graduate Profile - Ten Essential Skills
- Fall 2024 embedded certificates in degree pathways
- KYSU Global launch
 - Growth - from 72 to 650 students - 16 months
 - 67 students graduated in Spring 2026



5

SPRING 2026

SB 185 SIGNED

- Continued comprehensive Academic Program Review
- Proposed Areas of Study in collaboration with CPE
- Proposed programs to: continue, discontinue with teachout, or change
- Alignment with polytechnic vision



Grounded in the Humanities and interdisciplinary studies, Liberal Arts continue to serve as a foundational pillar of Kentucky State University. This commitment is reflected in the University's development of areas of study, which connects the Humanities with Applied Sciences, Engineering, Technology, Natural Sciences, and Health Sciences. By integrating Liberal Arts throughout the curriculum, Kentucky State University helps students build essential skills such as critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, professionalism, and adaptability. This approach prepares graduates to lead, innovate, and make meaningful contributions to the Commonwealth and beyond.



Thorobreds Leading for Impact

Highlights

- Since 2023, closed 10 academic programs
- Proposed meta-major BS in STEM (Chemistry/Mathematics) under consideration
- Since 2023 to 2026, reduced faculty from 112 to 77 - \$1,271,529 savings due to separation
- Payroll Change from FY25 to FY26 decreased by \$4,000,000
- Policy Changes
 - Pending faculty workload unit of measurement change from credit hours taught to student credit hour production (assists with teach-outs and new programs that are/may be low enrolled)
 - Higher bounds for pro-rated adjunct/overload pay increased (full pay of \$2700 per 3 credit hour course or 360-540 SCH)
 - Approximate \$1 Million in tuition revenue is predicted for May, Summer, and Global terms with the updated monitoring of course enrollments



Academic Programs under Areas of Study

Applied Sciences

- Business
- Criminal Justice
- Education
- Psychology
- Sports Analytics
- Social Work

Engineering

- Agricultural & Biological Engineering
- Manufacturing Engineering Technology
- Mathematics

Health Sciences

- Exercise Science
- Health Science
- Nursing
- *Psychology*
- Public Health
- *Social Work*

Academic Programs under Areas of Study

Humanities

- Child Development (non-teaching – teach-out)
- Interdisciplinary Studies (formerly Liberal Studies/Project Graduate)
- Mass Communications & Journalism (includes Digital Media)
- Music and Industry
- Music Education (teach-out)
- Public Policy
- Political Science (teach-out)

Natural Science

- Agriculture
- Aquaculture/Aquatic Science
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Environmental Science and Technology

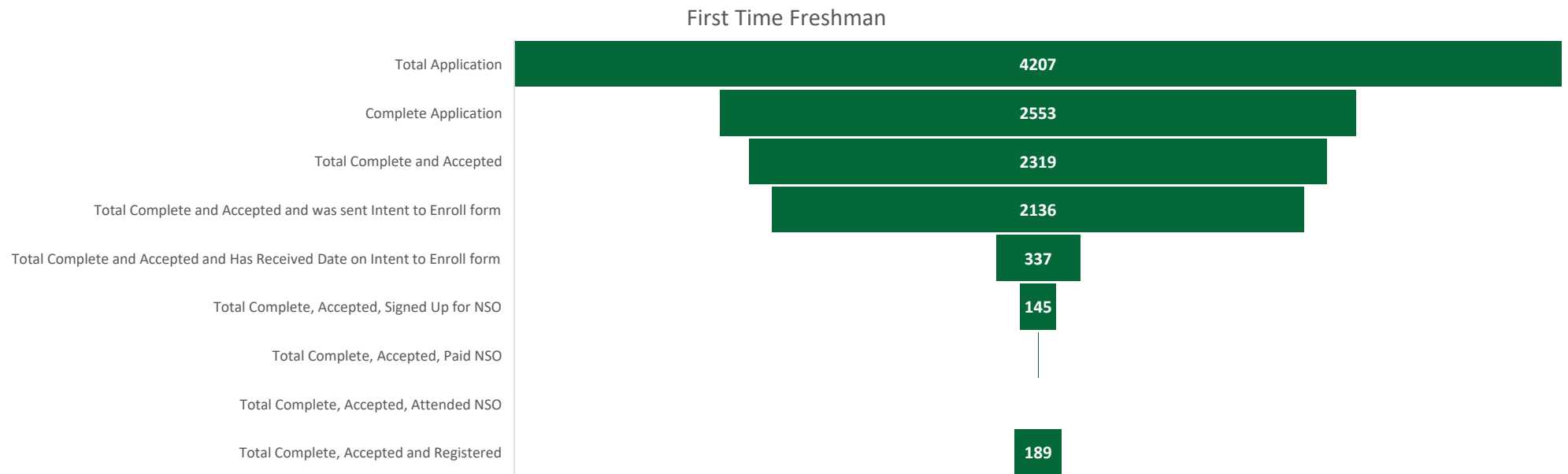
Technology

- Computer Science
- Cybersecurity

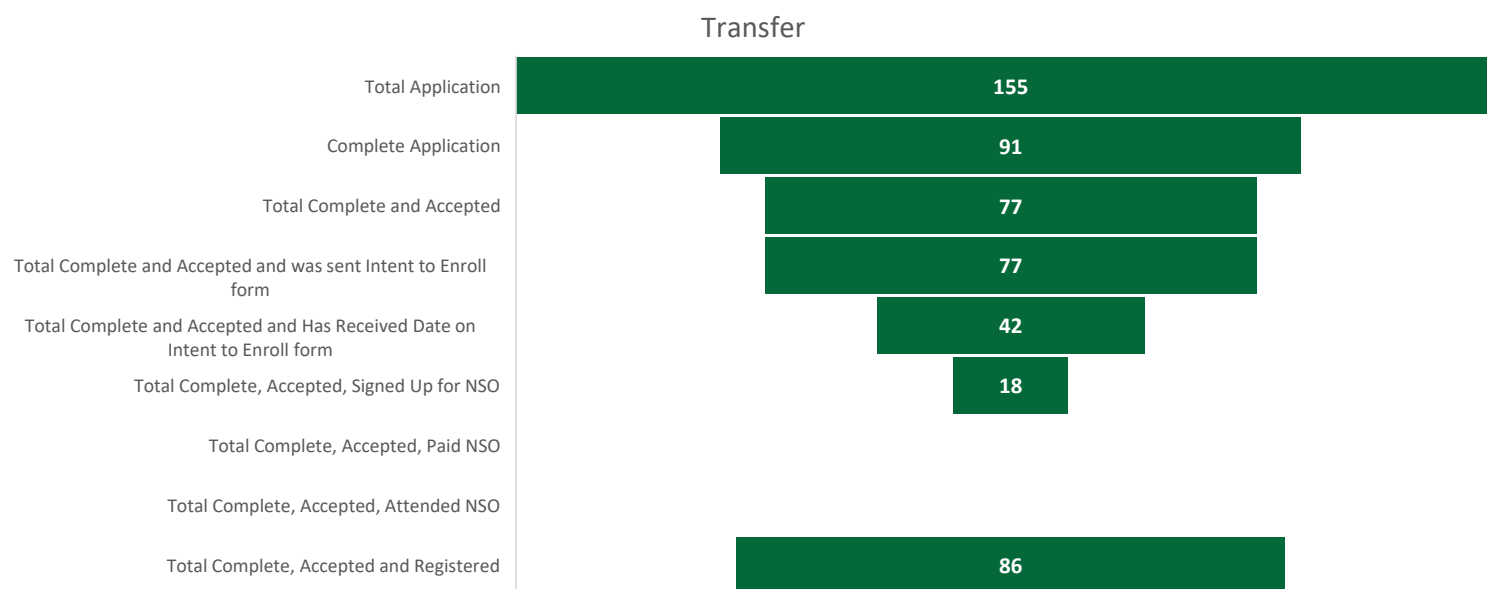


KENTUCKY STATE
UNIVERSITY

First Time Freshman Enrollment Funnel



Transfer Student Enrollment Funnel



Fall 2026 Enrollment Projection

Spring 2026 =	2,873	
Spring to Fall 56% =	1,609	
+ New UG	300	(377 Last Year)
+ Grad and TR	157	
+ New Dual Credit	<u>504</u>	Total 1,000
= Total Fall 2026 =	2,570	

Fall 2025 to Fall 2026 Change (268) (9%)

Spring 2026 to Fall 2026 Change (303) (11%)



Term to Term Persistence

Transition	Fall Enrollment	Returned in Spring	Return Rate
Fall 2023 → Spring 2024	1,689	1,442	85%
Fall 2024 → Spring 2025	2,163	1,730	80%
Fall 2025 → Spring 2026	2,838	2,095	74%
Average			80%

Transition	Spring Enrollment	Returned in Fall	Return Rate
Spring 2023 → Fall 2023	1,723	993	58%
Spring 2024 → Fall 2024	1,790	1,047	58%
Spring 2025 → Fall 2025	2,274	1,215	53%
Average	1,929	1,085	56%



Spring 2027 Enrollment Projection

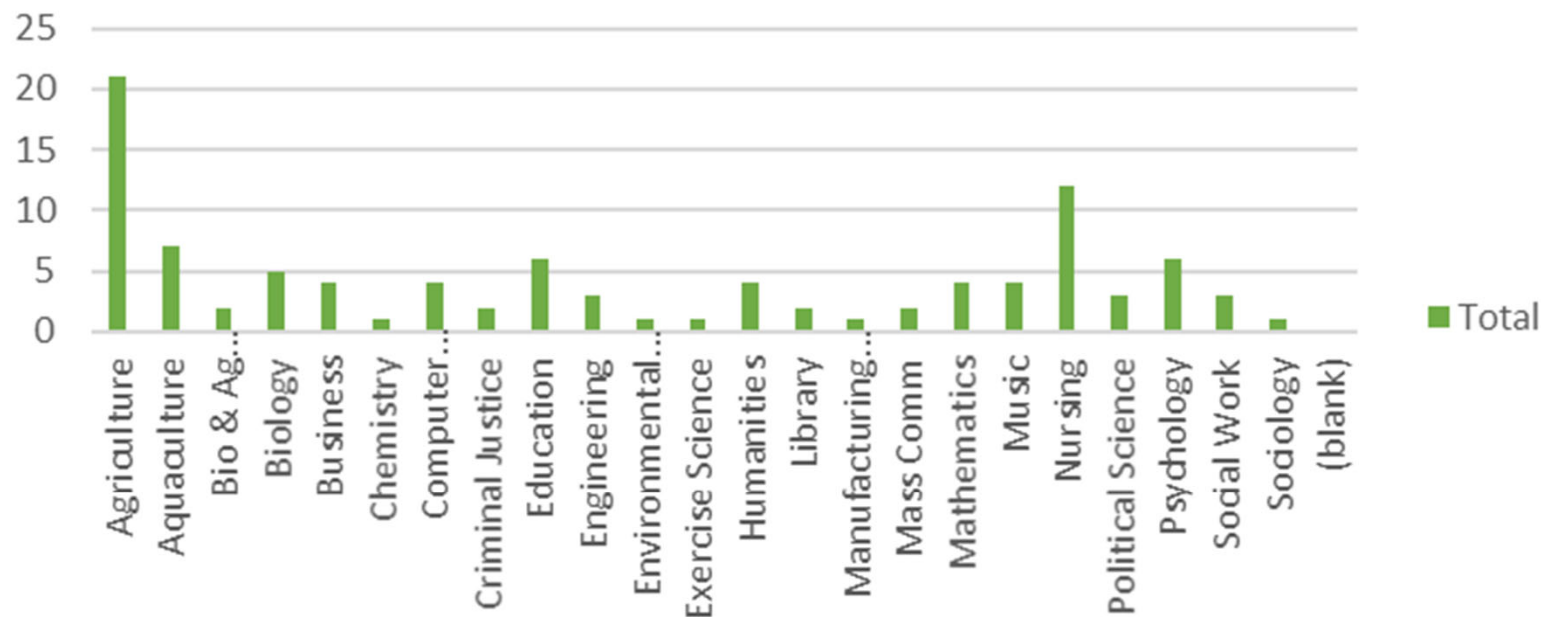
Fall 2026 =	2,570
80% Average =	2,056
+ New and TR	<u>229</u>
= Total Spring 2027	2,285

Spring 2026 to Spring 2027 Change (588) (20%)



Count of Area

Number FTE by Area



Area ▼

Academic Program Areas of Study

MAJOR	PROJECTED FALL 2026 HEADCOUNT	PROJECTED SPRING 2027 ENROLLMENT	TOTAL NET REVENUE	FT FACULTY	ADJUNCT	NET
Agriculture, Food and Environment**	53	43.4	\$262,342.96	\$428,217.67		(\$165,874.71)
Aquaculture and Aquatic Sciences**	15	18	\$89,806.20	\$96,318.00		(\$6,511.80)
Biology	38	31.4	\$188,865.16	\$407,890.20		(\$219,025.04)
Business Administration	354	366.2	\$1,959,952.28	\$501,675.38		\$1,458,276.90
Chemistry*	6	4.8	\$29,391.12	\$78,000.26		(\$48,609.14)
Child Development & Family Relations	42	34.6	\$208,459.24	\$118,300.00		\$90,159.24
Computer Science	72	95.6	\$456,106.64	\$527,104.99		(\$70,998.35)
Criminal Justice	88	76.4	\$447,398.16	\$237,837.76		\$209,560.40
Cybersecurity	8	7.4	\$41,909.56			\$41,909.56
Elementary Education & Teaching	26	20.8	\$127,361.52	\$607,604.59		(\$480,243.07)
English Language & Literature (Humanities)	0	0	\$0.00	\$442,407.77		(\$442,407.77)
Entrepreneurship Cert	1	0.8	\$4,898.52			\$4,898.52
Exercise Science	66	53.8	\$326,023.72	\$88,527.85		\$237,495.87

Academic Program Areas of Study

MAJOR	PROJECTED FALL 2026 HEADCOUNT	PROJECTED SPRING 2027 ENROLLMENT	TOTAL NET REVENUE	FT FACULTY	ADJUNCT	NET
Fine/Studio Arts*	0	0	\$0.00			\$0.00
Interdisciplinary Studies (Liberal Studies/Project Grad)	81	64.8	\$396,780.12		0	\$396,780.12
Manufacturing Engineering Technology**	25	21	\$125,184.40	\$370,999.63		(\$245,815.23)
Mass Communications & Journalism	15	13	\$76,199.20	\$233,227.22		(\$157,028.02)
Mathematics*	2	1.6	\$9,797.04	\$288,410.88		(\$278,613.84)
Music and Industry	6	4.8	\$29,391.12	\$188,500.57		(\$159,109.45)
Music Education*	2	1.6	\$9,797.04			\$9,797.04
Nursing AAS	322	264.6	\$1,596,373.24	\$950,313.44		\$646,059.80
Political Science*	12	9.6	\$58,782.24	\$237,634.31		(\$178,852.07)
Psychology	117	112.6	\$624,833.44	\$558,569.09		\$66,264.35
Social Sciences*	0	0	\$0.00	\$91,000.08		(\$91,000.08)
Social Work	88	84.4	\$469,169.36	\$166,182.89		\$302,986.47

Academic Program Areas of Study

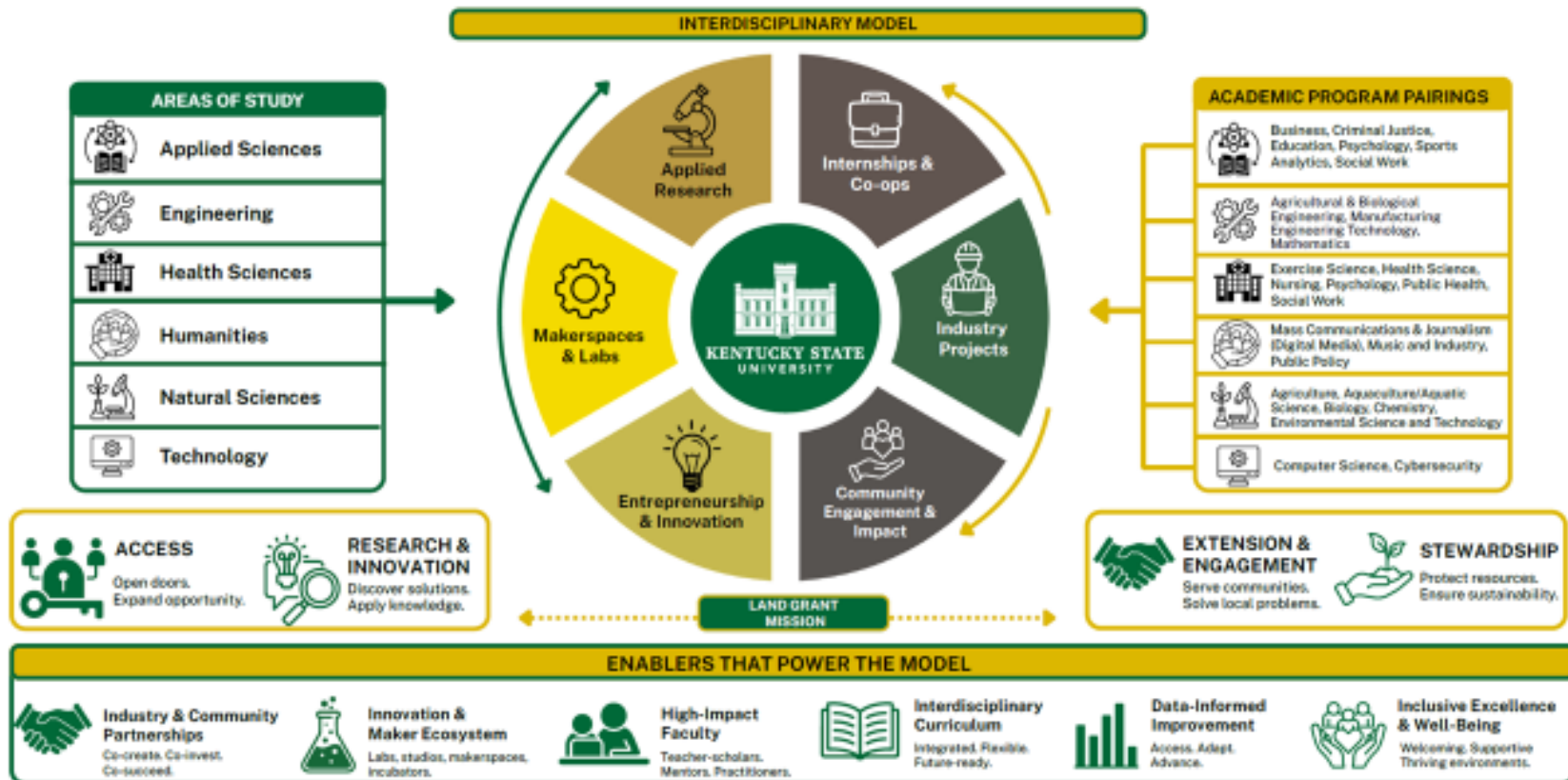
MAJOR	PROJECTED FALL 2026 HEADCOUNT	PROJECTED SPRING 2027 ENROLLMENT	TOTAL NET REVENUE	FT FACULTY	ADJUNCT	NET
Undeclared Major	31	24.8	\$151,854.12			\$151,854.12
Non-Degree (Dual Credit)	1000	800	\$733,320.00	\$169,000.00		\$564,320.00
Environmental Science and Technology	45	58	\$280,304.20	\$21,493.79		\$258,810.41
Behavioral Sciences	1	0.8	\$4,898.52	0		\$4,898.52
DNP	40	50	\$244,926.00			\$244,926.00
Biology and Agricultural Engineering	6	9.8	\$42,998.12	0		\$42,998.12
Special Education with Learning and Behavior Disorders	8	10.4	\$50,073.76			\$50,073.76
Total Enrollment	2570	2285				\$0.00
Adjuncts					\$1,000,000	(\$1,00,000)
Total			\$9,047,197.00	\$6,809,216.37	\$1,000,000	\$1,237,980.63



KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY

MISSION STATEMENT : Provide transformative educational experiences to prepare graduates for making meaningful contributions to society. Kentucky State University is a public, research-comprehensive, historically black, 1890 land grant institution.

VISION STATEMENT: Foster Innovation and Inspire Leaders to Advance the Commonwealth and the World.



ONE UNIVERSITY • MANY PARTNERS • LIMITLESS IMPACT

Thank you

- Questions?
- Feedback
- Clarification

