

164.295 Programs of state and comprehensive universities -- Criteria for submission of proposal for new doctoral programs -- Review of proposals for new doctoral programs -- Appropriations.

- (1) The six (6) state comprehensive universities:
 - (a) Shall provide, upon approval of the Council on Postsecondary Education, associate and baccalaureate programs of instruction;
 - (b) Shall provide, upon approval of the Council on Postsecondary Education, graduate programs of instruction in education, business, and the arts and sciences, specialist degrees, and programs beyond the master's-degree level to meet the requirements for teachers, school leaders, and other certified personnel; and
 - (c) Shall provide research and service programs directly related to the needs of their primary geographical areas.
- (2) A comprehensive university may provide, upon approval of the Council on Postsecondary Education:
 - (a) Programs of a community college nature in their own community comparable to those listed for the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, as provided in KRS 164.580; and
 - (b) Doctoral programs, including but not limited to Doctor of Philosophy degree programs, advanced practice doctoral degree programs, and doctoral degree programs for professional practice and licensure.
- (3) In order to be eligible to submit a proposal for a new doctoral program to the Council on Postsecondary Education, a comprehensive university shall maintain:
 - (a) A first to second year retention rate in at least two (2) of the last three (3) years:
 1. In the seventy-fifth percentile of all comprehensive universities nationally; or
 2. In the eightieth percentile of all comprehensive universities within states that are members of the Southern Regional Education Board;
 - (b) A six (6) year graduate rate for bachelor's degrees in at least two (2) of the last three (3) years:
 1. In the seventy-fifth percentile of all comprehensive universities nationally; or
 2. In the eightieth percentile of all comprehensive universities within states that are members of the Southern Regional Education Board; and
 - (c) 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.
- (4) (a) If a comprehensive university is seeking to offer a new doctoral program which may require additional general fund appropriations for capital or operating expenses beyond the university's regular appropriations, the university shall submit a proposal to the Council on Postsecondary Education for review and evaluation. The council's review shall include but not be

limited to:

1. The proposed program's alignment with the mission and goals of the comprehensive university;
 2. The statewide or regional need the proposed program seeks to fill and how the comprehensive university, through the offering of this program, would fill this need;
 3. Student demand for the proposed program;
 4. Employer demand for the proposed program, including any potential industry partners;
 5. Utilization of current institutional resources to deliver the proposed program and how the program would complement existing program offerings and not shift resources away from those existing programs;
 6. A five (5) year budgetary analysis of the proposed program, including program costs, funding sources projected to support the program, and the amount of general fund appropriations needed for capital or operating expenses;
 7. The proposed program curriculum;
 8. Any specialized accreditation or licensure requirements for the proposed program and analysis of how those would be met;
 9. Admission and graduation requirements for the proposed program; and
 10. Administrative oversight to ensure the quality of the proposed program.
- (b) Any specialized resources needed by the council to evaluate a comprehensive university's proposal for a new doctoral program submitted in accordance with paragraph (a) of this subsection shall be funded by the comprehensive university.
- (c) A proposal submitted in accordance with paragraph (a) of this subsection shall be submitted no later than January 1 of an odd-numbered year for consideration in the council's budget request for the next biennial budget in accordance with KRS 164.020(10) and 164.7915.
- (5) The Council on Postsecondary Education shall review each proposal submitted in accordance with subsection (4)(a) of this section and shall make a recommendation to the General Assembly on the viability of the proposed program. The recommendation:
- (a) Shall identify whether a general fund appropriation should be made to fund capital or operations for the proposed program amount. If the council recommends a general fund appropriation, the recommendation shall include a proposed amount for the general fund appropriation; and
 - (b) May provide recommendations regarding alternative options to meet any statewide or regional needs identified by the comprehensive university in its proposal.
- (6) If the General Assembly appropriates funds for a doctoral program proposed in accordance with subsection (4)(a) of this section:
- (a) The comprehensive university shall submit the program approval request to

the council for regular review and approval. The Council on Postsecondary Education may:

1. Provide conditional approval of the program to permit the institution to begin the process of programmatic accreditation as required for professional practice; and
 2. Condition final approval upon obtaining full programmatic accreditation, as applicable; and
- (b) The Council on Postsecondary Education shall review the doctoral program at least once every five (5) years to ensure continued efficacy, productivity, and quality and in conjunction with KRS 164.020(16).
- (7) A comprehensive university seeking to offer a new doctoral degree program that certifies that the new doctoral degree program will not require additional general fund appropriations for capital or operating expenses beyond the regular appropriations shall submit a proposal to the Council on Postsecondary Education for review and approval through a process developed by the council in accordance with KRS 164.020(15). In developing its process, the council shall consider the elements set forth in subsection (4)(a) of this section, as applicable.
- (8) A comprehensive university shall not describe itself in official publications or in marketing materials as a research university or research institution unless designated as such by a nationally recognized authority for the classification of research universities. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as precluding a comprehensive university from conducting basic, applied, or translational research.

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History: Amended 2025 Ky. Acts ch. 33, sec. 2, effective June 27, 2025. -- Amended 2017 Ky. Acts ch. 51, sec. 1, effective June 29, 2017. -- Amended 2012 Ky. Acts ch. 29, sec. 1, effective July 12, 2012. -- Amended 2011 Ky. Acts ch. 94, sec. 1, effective June 8, 2011. -- Amended 2010 Ky. Acts ch. 80, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2010. -- Amended 1997 (1st Extra. Sess.) Ky. Acts ch. 1, sec. 95, effective May 30, 1997. -- Amended 1978 Ky. Acts ch. 155, sec. 109, effective June 17, 1978. -- Amended 1976 Ky. Acts ch. 8, sec. 3. -- Amended 1972 Ky. Acts ch. 39, sec. 5. -- Created 1966 Ky. Acts ch. 6, sec. 5.