

Purdue new university FAQs

Q. What is the transaction and how will it work?

A. Purdue University will acquire Kaplan University (KU) and create a new global public university—yet to be named—that will continue KU’s mission of providing outstanding career oriented higher education to adult learners. This is a revolutionary initiative that will allow the institution to grow as a public university under the control of a world-class institution while still utilizing Kaplan’s resources and expertise. Kaplan will enter into a long-term Transition and Operations Support Agreement with Purdue under which Kaplan will provide products and services to the new university to ensure it continues to effectively serve students long into the future. Students will continue to enjoy the same faculty, curriculum, resources and mode of learning they’ve known under KU. Kaplan University faculty and academic employees will become part of the new university, except for the School of Professional and Continuing Education (PACE) – which is not part of this transaction. To ensure the success of the new university, Kaplan has committed to provide non-academic support to the new university through a long-term agreement, to benefit from Kaplan’s nearly two decades of experience in supporting students in an online environment.

Today, KU serves 32,000 students, many of whom are working adults seeking to further their careers. Our students are supported by caring and experienced faculty, academic staff and administration. This will not change. Our commitment to our students’ success has provided the unique ability to take this exciting next step.

Q. What will the new university consist of?

A. The new university will initially consist of seven schools and colleges that now comprise Kaplan University (not PACE), which together offer more than 100 diplomas, certificates, associates, bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees, as well as 15 campus and learning center locations. This new university will carry the Purdue name, while conveying its distinct identity and purpose. The current full-time and adjunct faculty and staff at KU — about 3,000 employees — will transfer over to the new university. Curriculum, course material, tutorials, library content, student records, student advising, career services, alumni clubs and organizations will all transition to the new university. Most significantly, all current KU students (approximately 32,000) at the time of the changeover will seamlessly transition to the new university upon completion of the transaction. They will receive their degrees from the new university, once the school is established.

Q. What is the purpose of the acquisition?

A. The purpose is to expand educational opportunities to more students, especially those with limited access.

As Indiana’s only land-grant university, Purdue takes very seriously its commitment to expanding access to higher education. This acquisition enables Purdue to serve a much broader, non-traditional population of adult learners who are balancing work and family responsibilities with their desire to further their education and acquire important skills for the workplace. Serving this population will require a set of online program offerings and technical capabilities that the Purdue system currently lacks. Were Purdue to attempt to develop such capabilities on its own, it would take many years and significant financial resources.

Instead, President Daniels and the Purdue Board of Trustees have opted to acquire the institutional and physical assets of Kaplan University, an institution with world-class online capabilities, student support systems and a student focused culture that is consistent with Purdue’s.

Q. How will the new university be named?

A. There is a precedent for this in the Purdue system which currently has three campuses—Purdue West Lafayette, IPFW and Purdue Northwest. Each university has a distinct mission and serves different types of students. The new university will similarly carry the Purdue name, while creating its own distinct identity.

Q. Beyond the Transition and Operations Support Agreement, will Kaplan provide services to the new university?

A. At Purdue’s request, Kaplan may provide services such as international student recruiting, test preparation, professional education or other programs subject to separate agreement on terms.

Q. Will the new university require state tax dollars?

A. While financial aid will be available to students, the university will be self-sufficient and will not require an appropriation from the state.

Q. What is the timeframe for finalizing this transfer of KU’s academic programs to a separate non-profit institution—the new university?

A. Once all regulatory and accreditor approvals are received, the definitive agreement will become effective. It is expected to take about six to seven months for the transaction to close.

Q. What are the financial terms underlying this agreement?

A. The transaction will not require an upfront purchase price. Rather, as consideration for Kaplan University’s institutional assets, the new university will enter into a long-term transition and support agreement, with a buy-out option after year six. The agreement will also provide certain financial guarantees by Kaplan for the new university to ensure it is able to continue to meet its mission to serve adult learners.

Q. Who will be on the board of the new university?

A. The new university’s board will include five members from the Purdue University Board of Trustees and one member from the current Kaplan University Board of Trustees.

Q: What does this mean for KU students?

A. The transition for students should be seamless. They will continue to enjoy the same classes, faculty and support services that they currently rely on. All present services offered to KU students will continue to be offered by the new university. Upon graduation, they will receive a degree from the new university.

Q. Will there be program changes to the new university?

A. This is a change of control and not a change in the institution itself, and we do not have any plans to change the programmatic mix initially. Like any university, the programming mix will evolve over time as we evaluate which programs are best suited to meet the needs of our students and the communities we serve. We believe there are areas of expertise within Purdue that will be helpful as new programmatic areas are considered.