

**KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS
BOARD ACADEMIC AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 3, 2025**

Regent Alysia Johnston called the September 3, 2025, Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. The meeting was held via Zoom.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Regent Alysia Johnston, Chair
 Regent Diana Mendoza

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regent Mendoza moved that the minutes of the June 11, 2025, meeting be approved. Regent Johnston seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

BOARD CONSENT ITEMS

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL MS IN COMPUTATIONAL BIOLOGY - KU

Provost Barbara Bichelmeyer presented the proposal for a Master of Science in Computational Biology at the University of Kansas. KU currently offers a doctoral program in this field, which lacks a corresponding master's degree. Professor Joanna Slusky provided an overview, emphasizing the interdisciplinary nature of computational biology and its applications in pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and biotechnology. She noted the program's integration of artificial intelligence and its alignment with industry needs. The proposed master's would serve students who complete coursework but opt not to pursue a PhD. Following the discussion, Regent Mendoza moved to approve the program. Regent Johnston seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL AAS IN FOOD & FEED MANUFACTURING - KSU

Provost Jesse Mendez introduced Dr. Dan Moser, Associate Dean for Academic Programs, College of Agriculture, Kansas State University. Dr. Moser described the development of an articulation agreement with Cowley Community College, enabling students to transfer certificate credits toward an Associate of Applied Science degree. President Michelle Schoon of Cowley College provided additional context, noting differences in technical and general education requirements between the institutions. Regent Johnston moved to approve the program and recommended it be placed on the full Board's discussion agenda due to its unique nature. Regent Mendoza seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

REQUEST TO CHANGE ACCREDITATION POLICY

Director of Academic Affairs Sam Christy-Dangermond presented proposed changes to the Board's accreditation policy to align with Kansas statutes (Senate Bill 78). The revisions allow institutions to pursue accreditation from any agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The committee discussed implications for institutional flexibility and future accrediting bodies. Regent Johnston moved to approve the policy change. Regent Mendoza seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

RECEIVE PROGRAM ACCREDITATION REPORT

Director Christy-Dangermond provided a summary of the program accreditation report, covering institutional and program-level accreditations across Kansas state universities. Highlights included the number of accredited programs at each institution and the role of the KBOR program inventory database in maintaining accreditation data. Regent Johnston moved to accept the report. Regent Mendoza seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

OTHER MATTERS**REDUCED-CREDIT BACCALAUREATE DEGREE**

Vice President for Academic Affairs Rusty Monhollon initiated a discussion regarding the emerging trend of reduced-credit baccalaureate degrees, which typically require fewer than the standard 120 credit hours. He noted that Kansas State University had submitted a proposal for such a degree in Uncrewed Aircraft Systems, intended for delivery at the Salina campus. However, the current Board policy defines a baccalaureate degree as requiring at least 120 credit hours, and no specific policy exists to accommodate reduced-credit baccalaureate degrees. Vice President Monhollon emphasized that while the proposed degree remains a baccalaureate in nature, the absence of a formal policy presents challenges for approval. He recommended that the Board first address the policy implications before considering the proposal. Regent Mendoza expressed interest in exploring the concept further, citing similar developments in other states. The Committee raised questions about the implications of waiving the existing policy and the potential impact on institutions. Regent Johnston agreed that the proposal from Kansas State was strong but emphasized the importance of establishing a policy framework before moving forward. Provost Mendez expressed concern over losing an opportunity to get ahead of other states and requested that the proposal be allowed to proceed to COCAO on September 17 for a First Reading. Following the discussion, Regent Johnston moved to recommend that Academic Affairs staff develop a policy to address reduced-credit baccalaureate degrees and in the meantime, push the request to waive the current policy for KSU's program proposal to the full Board on September 17. Regent Mendoza seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

TENURE, POST-TENURE, AND WORKLOAD POLICIES

Vice President Monhollon provided an update on the Board's ongoing review of tenure, post-tenure, and workload policies, a process initiated earlier this year at the direction of BAASC. He noted that the topic was discussed at the July Board retreat, where there was consensus around strengthening these policies to protect and preserve tenure across Kansas institutions. Following the retreat, Vice President Monhollon convened meetings with provosts and faculty senate presidents from each university and the medical center to gather input. Based on these conversations, staff prioritized revisions to the workload policy as a foundational step. A revised draft was developed using research from comparable systems and included elements commonly found in other states' policies, along with new provisions aimed at reinforcing the Board's commitment to tenure. The first draft was circulated to provosts for feedback, and a second version was sent to both provosts and faculty senate presidents on August 22. Feedback is expected by September 5. Vice President Monhollon shared that a joint meeting with provosts and faculty senate presidents is scheduled for September 17 to review the revised draft and assess readiness for broader consideration. The updated policy could be presented to BAASC at its September 30 virtual meeting, with the Board potentially considering it at its November meeting.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATES

Vice President Monhollon requested that this item be tabled until the September 17 meeting due to the time constraints of this meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next BAASC meeting will be held on September 17, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

Regent Johnston moved that the meeting be adjourned. Regent Mendoza seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.