



Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee (BAASC) Meeting

Kansas Board of Regents
Curtis State Office Building at 1000 SW Jackson, Suite 520, Topeka, Kansas,
66612
2026-03-11 10:45 - 12:00 CDT

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Presenters: Sam Christy-Dangermond, Monica Lounsbery

Board policy requires the universities and the Board to maintain a program review cycle and a review process that will allow the universities to demonstrate that they are delivering quality programs consistent with their mission. In June of 2023, the Board approved changes to the KBOR program review process, requiring each state university to review all undergraduate and graduate degree programs on the following schedule. Year one (2025): Kansas State University, the University of Kansas, and the University of Kansas Medical Center; Year two (2026): Wichita State University; Year three (2027): Emporia State University, Fort Hays State University, and Pittsburg State University. This paper reflects WSU's Program Review for 2026. Board Staff recommends acceptance of WSU's Program Review Report and approval of the recommendations.

V. Other Matters

A. AY 2025 Program Review Follow-Up- KSU.....11

Presenters: Sam Christy-Dangermond, Jesse Mendez

Board policy requires that "in cooperation with the universities, the Board will maintain a program review cycle and a review process that will allow the universities to demonstrate that they are delivering quality programs consistent with their mission." In June of 2023, the Board approved changes to the KBOR program review process. For AY 2025, Kansas State University (KSU) was required to review all programs. As a result, the Board approved placing one program on an action plan and two programs to be phased out and merged. KSU is providing information on these programs today, as well as two programs the Board approved to place on action plans from the AY 2024 Program Review. Additional background on this process is included below. Board staff recommend approval of the recommendations.

B. Reduced-Credit Baccalaureate Degree Update

Presenters: Jennifer Bonds-Raacke

C. Building a Future in Corequisite Innovation: A Systemwide Faculty Leadership

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Presenters: Jennifer Bonds-Raacke

D. Academic Affairs Updates

Presenters: Jennifer Bonds-Raacke

VI. Announcements

VII. Adjournment

Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee (BAASC) Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chair Alysia Johnston at 10:45 a.m. on Wednesday, February 11, 2026. The meeting was held at the Board office, Curtis State Office Building, 1000 SW Jackson, Ste. 520, Topeka, Kansas. Proper notice was given according to the law.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Regent Alysia Johnston, Chair
 Regent Pamela Ammar
 Regent Diana Mendoza

Introductions

Vice President for Academic Affairs Jennifer Bonds-Raacke introduced Dr. W. Trey Hill as the new Director for Academic Affairs. Dr. Hill earned his Ph.D. from Kansas State University. He has previously served as a faculty member and department chair at Fort Hays State University as well as Vice Provost and Dean for Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology.

Approval of minutes

Regent Ammar moved to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2026 meeting. Regent Mendoza seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Other Matters

AY 2026 Performance Report & Rubric

Director For Academic Affairs Sam Christy-Dangermond reviewed the AY 2026 Performance Report template, highlighting the five key components: Math Pathways, Corequisite Math support, Corequisite English support, Systemwide placement measures for Math Pathways and English Comp. I, and degree maps. Director Christy-Dangermond reviewed the information requested on the template and explained the evaluation rubric, which awards full, half, or no points based on the completeness of the information provided by institutions..

Regent Ammar asked if the report was new, or if it was replacing a different report. Director Christy-Dangermond clarified that institutions are asked to provide a report every year, but the report aligns with the Board-approved Performance Agreement, and reflects full implementation of the new Math and English initiatives for AY 2027. If an institution receives full points, they are recommended for 100% of any new funding from the legislature.

Regent Mendoza asked if there was a guide to indicate the components required to be listed on the course schedule. Director Christy-Dangermond responded that all requirements for the report are listed in the rubric, but there is no requirement specifying which components must be included in each institution’s course schedule. If any information is missing, Director Christy-Dangermond will work with the institution directly to give them every opportunity to include any missing information from the report.

Regent Ammar asked if the provosts had provided input on the rubric. Director Christy-Dangermond responded that the rubrics were designed based on their input from the first year of the three-year agreement and was presented to provosts at the SCOCAO meeting earlier that day. Provosts Barbara Bichelmeyer (University of Kansas,) Jill Arensdorf (Fort Hays State University,) Susan Bon (Pittsburg State University,) and Jesse Mendez (Kansas State University) expressed their support for the rubric as presented.

Regent Mendoza moved to approve the rubric. Regent Ammar seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Academic Affairs Updates

Vice President for Academic Affairs Jennifer Bonds-Raacke highlighted the work of the SGA leaders at Higher Education Day on February 4 and their efforts to align priorities across campuses and to ensure their advocacy was connected to KBOR's broader priorities including financial aid for all students in Kansas. Prior to Higher Education Day, SGA leaders received advocacy training from their institutions and from graduate students at Fort Hays State University.

Next, Vice President Bonds-Raacke shared that Academic Affairs staff at KBOR is working with the Data, Research, and Planning team as well as university CAOs to build a data collection system in alignment with the recently approved workload, tenure, and post-tenure policies.

Vice President Bonds-Raacke also noted that we are concluding the third and final year of the current performance agreement cycle. In the coming months, BAASC will need to discuss a bridge agreement for AY 2027, which would allow the incoming Board president the opportunity to help shape the next three-year cycle. Lastly, Vice President Bonds-Raacke shared that Kansas has been selected to participate in SHEEO's Holistic Advising for Student Success initiative. This work will help to strengthen advising, align efforts with state priorities, and build cross-sector collaboration.

Adjournment

Chair Johnston adjourned the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Receive AY 2026 Wichita State University Program Review Report

Background and History

Per Board policy, Ch. II Section A.5.a.,

In cooperation with the state universities, the Board will maintain a regular program review cycle and process that will allow the universities to demonstrate on an ongoing basis that they are delivering quality programs consistent with their mission. Regular program review is institutionally based and follows the departmental or unit structure of the institution. The Vice President for Academic Affairs shall provide guidelines for Program Review and, as part of the review of institutional reports, will include consideration of the Board-approved minima tables.

In 1997, the Board required state universities to review programs at least once every eight years. As appropriate, universities established their review schedules, typically on an eight-year review cycle and generally aligned with the institutions' accreditation reporting requirements and site visits. Within the last six years, the Board has made revisions to both the program review policy and process.

In June 2018, the Board approved adding a Strategic Program Alignment process to the Program Review Policy, whereby the Board may direct state universities to conduct a strategic program alignment review. Additionally, the policy allowed the Board to direct state universities to evaluate select academic programs outside of the eight-year program review cycle. Between 2018 and 2020, in addition to conducting regular program reviews, the Board asked the six state universities to conduct a strategic program alignment review, which resulted in specific programs that the Board identified for further review. In the spring of 2020, the universities identified eight programs for discontinuance.

Also in the spring of 2020, the Board requested enrollment data on all undergraduate programs at the six state universities. Sixty-nine programs not meeting the minimum enrollment of 25 undergraduate students were identified for the universities to review further. In 2021, in addition to conducting the regular program review, universities reported on these "low-enrollment" programs. Of the 69 programs evaluated during this process, 11 programs were identified to merge and 14 were discontinued.

In February of 2022, the Board commissioned the rpk Group to do an academic portfolio review and an academic resource utilization study. In September of 2022, the Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee (BAASC) agreed to use the rpk Group report (which was submitted to the Board in January of 2023) for reporting year 2023 and temporarily suspended regular program review. That report provided some of the foundation for the current program review framework. Additionally, the university provosts provided suggestions for changes to the program review process in April of 2023. In June of 2023, the Board approved the current program review framework. In 2024, upon a recommendation from BAASC, the Board approved revisions to the academic program review process, including minor changes to program minima and thresholds.

Current Program Review Framework

AY 2024

The current Program Review Framework covers AY 2024 through AY 2028. **For AY 2024 only**, Board staff identified all undergraduate programs at all state universities that were more than five years old that missed the threshold on two or more of the metrics below:

- a) Student Demand: 25 or more junior and senior majors (four-year average);
- b) Degree Production: 10 or more graduates (four-year average);

- c) Talent Pipeline: 51 percent or more of graduates working in the region after graduation (four-year average); and
- d) Student Return on Investment: 2022 Five-Year Post-Graduation Median Salary \$38,050 or more (280 percent or more of 2022 poverty level).

The universities were required to review any program missing the minimum mark on at least two of the four criteria, and provide a recommendation to do one of the following: phase out the program; merge the program; or place the undergraduate program on an action plan and review and monitor the program for no longer than three years. Ultimately, 31 programs were reviewed, with 19 being put on an action plan, three being merged with other programs, and two being phased out. Seven programs were placed on an action plan with a proviso stipulating that at least three of the four metrics must be met by July 1, 2027. The Board also required an update on these seven programs after one and a half to two years, which occurred in December of 2025.

AY 2025 – AY 2028

Below is the Program Review Framework for AY 2025 through AY 2028.

a. Purpose of Academic Program Review

- i. Ensure that state university makes appropriate adjustments based on student demand, capacity of programs, employment demand, student return on investment, and costs;
- ii. Assign responsibility for regular academic program review to institutions and make process responsive and meaningful;
- iii. Identify opportunities for program growth as well as for program elimination;
- iv. Strengthen system as a whole by providing KBOR-coordinated consultation for program development, alignment, and collaborations;
- v. Simplify and align reporting burden so it better addresses needs for academic program review from campuses, KBOR, and external stakeholders;
- vi. Provide stories Regents and State officials need in clear ways that can be messaged beyond KBOR to support higher education in Kansas;
- vii. Recognize and celebrate success of institutions, programs, faculty/staff, and students; and
- viii. Demonstrate alignment with the Board’s Strategic Plan.

b. Regular Academic Program Review Policies and Procedures for AY 25-28

- i. Each university shall establish and publish clearly defined policies and procedures to review all its academic degree programs.
- ii. At minimum, university academic program review policies and procedures must analyze and assess:
 - (1) Market demand for the program;
 - (2) Student demand, student accessibility, and student return on investment;
 - (3) Centrality of the program to fulfilling the mission and the role of the institution;
 - (4) The quality of the program as assessed by its curriculum and impact on students;
 - (5) The service the program provides to the discipline, the university, and beyond; and
 - (6) The program’s cost-effectiveness.

c. Regular Academic Program Review Report for AY 25-28

- i. The documentation from each university during its review year shall include:
 - (1) A copy of the state university’s academic program review policies and procedures; and
 - (2) The information detailed in the Academic Program Review Guidance Sheet (**see Section e**), most of which will be provided by Board staff.

- ii. A verbal report from each university during its academic program review year shall include:
 - (1) A description of the academic program review process; and
 - (2) Examples of how the academic program review process was successful and where opportunities for improvement exist.

d. Regular Academic Program Review Cycle AY 25-28

- i. Effective AY 25, the following academic program review cycle shall apply:
 - (1) **Year One: The University of Kansas and Kansas State University submits the required academic program review report and presents the report to the Board.**
 - (2) Year Two: Wichita State University submits the required academic program review report and presents the report to the Board.
 - (3) Year Three: Emporia State University, Fort Hays State University, and Pittsburg State University submits the academic program review report and presents the report to the Board.
 - (4) Year Four: The Board of Academic Affairs Standing Committee will evaluate the effectiveness of the academic program review system.
 - (5) One year after its regular review, the university will provide an update on the status of each action phase-out plan, merger plan, or action plan.

e. Academic Program Review Guidance (AY 25-28) (directly below)

Academic Affairs staff developed the Guidance below to provide guidelines aligned with specific elements in the Board’s strategic plan, *Building a Future*.

Families Will Include Data for Each Major		
Affordability		
Metric	Source of Data	Metric Minima
Percentage of Full-Time Junior and Senior Majors that Enrolled in at least 30 Hours Per Year or Graduated	KBOR	not established
Maximum Number of Transfer Credit Hours that Apply Toward the Baccalaureate Program from Two-Year Colleges ¹	Universities provide list of courses and total hours	not established
Success		
Metric	Source of Data	Metric Minima
Number of Junior and Senior Majors, Master's Majors, and Doctoral Majors to Gauge Student Demand	KBOR	Junior/Seniors: 25 Master's: 12 Doctoral: 5
Undergraduate Median Wage Data 5 Years After Graduation to Measure Student Return on Investment	KBOR	\$42,160

Completion		
Metric	Source of Data	Metric Minima
Number of Undergraduate Completions, Master's Completions, and Doctoral Completions	KBOR	Undergraduates: 10 Master's: 5 Doctoral: 2
Junior Graduation Rate ²	KBOR	not established
Businesses		
Talent Pipeline		
Metric	Source of Data	Metric Minima
Percentage of Undergraduate Degree Completers Employed in the Region Within One Year for Each Major	KBOR	51 percent
Meeting Workforce Needs		
Metric	Source of Data	Metric Minima
Each State University provides a brief narrative articulating how multiple programs meet critical Kansas economic needs through workforce development and/or research.	University	n/a

As indicated in the Academic Program Review Guidance above, the metrics in bold have approved minima that are set forth below in items a through d. The remaining metrics, the percentage of full-time junior and senior majors who enrolled in at least 30 hours per year or graduated, the maximum number of transfer credit hours that apply toward the baccalaureate program from two-year colleges, and the junior graduation rate are all new metrics for this Program Review cycle. Since this data has not been reviewed before across all institutions, minima have not been established. However, for the metric on the maximum number of hours from two-year colleges that apply toward a baccalaureate program, consideration should be given to the fact that Board policy requires a minimum of 60 credit hours for an associate degree (Ch. III.A.9.b.ii.). When fewer than 60 hours are listed for a program, there is a potential for lost credit for associate degree graduates who transfer to the given baccalaureate program.

Approved Minima

a. Criteria for Number of Majors

- i. Baccalaureate programs should have an annual average of 25 or more junior, senior, and 5th year majors, computed over the most recent four-year period
- ii. Master’s programs should have an annual average of 12 or more majors, computed over the most recent four-year period
- iii. Doctoral programs should have an annual average of five or more majors, computed over the most recent four-year period
- iv. Programs offered at both the master’s and doctoral levels may be reviewed as a single program
- v. Interdisciplinary programs without a formal departmental or administrative structure are exempted from minimum requirements

b. Criteria for Number of Completions (Graduates)

- i. Baccalaureate programs should have an annual average of 10 or more graduates, computed over the most recent four-year period
- ii. Master’s programs should have an annual average of five or more graduates, computed over the most recent four-year period
- iii. Doctoral programs should have an annual average of two or more graduates, computed over the most recent four-year period
- iv. Programs offered at both the master’s and doctoral levels may be reviewed as a single program
- v. Interdisciplinary programs without a formal departmental or administrative structure are exempted from minimum requirements

c. Student Return on Investment – Baccalaureate Degrees

- i. 2024 Five-Year Post-Graduation Median Salary is \$42,160 or more (280% or more of the 2024 federal poverty level)
- ii. Students who immediately pursue graduate studies immediately after graduating with a baccalaureate degree are excluded from this metric

d. Talent Pipeline – Baccalaureate Degrees

- i. Of the students who graduated, 51% or more are employed in the Region within one year (four-year average) OR enter graduate school upon graduation³

Wichita State University Program Review – AY 2026

Wichita State University reviewed data provided by Board staff for each of its 129 programs. That data is linked [here](#). The total number of programs listed here and within WSU’s narrative may vary based on the fact that the numbers listed above combine all bachelor degree options for a major, counting a BA and a BS as one, whereas the institution may count the BA and BS for the same major as separate programs. Programs that have not existed the requisite five years to establish minima can be excluded from Program Review. Those programs are shown in gray font in the data spreadsheet linked above.

WSU has provided the required components of the written report set forth in sections c and e above: 1) academic program review policies and procedures; 2) maximum number of transfer credit hours from two-year colleges that apply toward each baccalaureate program; and 3) a description of how multiple programs meet Kansas’s economic needs through workforce development and/or research. Items one and three are included in the written report WSU has provided. WSU’s written report is linked [here](#). WSU also included comments regarding programs not meeting minima in the report. Item two is included with WSU’s program data in the spreadsheet linked above.

Wichita State University Program Review – AY 2024 -- Updates

WSU has provided updates on the five programs identified for some type of action in AY 2024 Program Review in the written report (pages 22-24). Four programs were put on action plans, and one program was phased out as an individual program and merged with another program. WSU is not changing those recommendations at this time. **In AY 2027, all programs identified to be placed on action plans in the AY 2024 Program Review, if they were not already discontinued or merged, will be revisited.**

Program	AY 2024 Board-Approved Action	AY 2027 Program Review
BS Forensic Science & Technology	Action Plan	WSU provides update on program
BA/BS Geology	Action Plan	WSU provides update on program
BA Philosophy	Action Plan	WSU provides update on program

BA/BS Physics	Action Plan	WSU provides update on program
BA Women’s Studies	Merged with Field Major	Merge complete

Recommendations

WSU was asked to list any programs identified to phase out, merge, or put on an action plan as a result of this year’s program review. WSU identified three master’s programs for action plans during this review. Those programs are listed below. Board staff recommends approval of these recommendations.

Program	Current WSU Recommendation
MS Nursing Science	Action Plan
MS Physical Sciences, General	Action Plan
MA Sociology	Action Plan

End Notes

¹ It is understood that the maximum number of transfer credit hours from two-year colleges that apply toward the baccalaureate degree will vary among programs. This is intended to understand common practices and differences among programs.

² Percentage of full-time undergraduate junior majors in the Fall of a given year that graduated within three years with a baccalaureate degree in any major (e.g., Fall 2020 psychology juniors who graduated with a baccalaureate degree in any major by Spring 2023.)

³ Change to include graduate school in this metric approved by Board on 3/12/25.

Receive AY 2025 Program Review Follow-up Report - KSU

Background and History

Per Board policy, Ch. II Section A.5.a.,

In cooperation with the state universities, the Board will maintain a regular program review cycle and process that will allow the universities to demonstrate on an ongoing basis that they are delivering quality programs consistent with their mission. Regular program review is institutionally based and follows the departmental or unit structure of the institution. The Vice President for Academic Affairs shall provide guidelines for Program Review and, as part of the review of institutional reports, will include consideration of the Board-approved minima tables.

In June of 2023, the Board approved the current program review framework. Part of the current program review framework includes the requirement that one year after its regular review, each university will provide an update on the status of each action phase-out plan, merger plan, or action plan. In AY 2025, Kansas State University reviewed 219 programs. Of those programs, KSU merged two programs and placed one on an action plan. Those programs are listed below.

Program	AY 2025 Board Action	Current KSU Recommendation
MS in Apparel & Textiles (Fashion Studies)	Action Plan	KSU Recommends Discontinuation
BA/BS in Ethnic Studies	Phase out/Merge	Phase out/Merge Completed
BA/BS in Women’s Studies	Phase out/Merge	Phase out/Merge Completed

Additionally, KSU placed two programs on action plans as a result of AY 2024 Program Review.

Program	AY 2024 Board Action	Current KSU Recommendation
BA/BS Geography	Action Plan	Merge with Geology and Geographic Information Systems & Technology programs
BA/BM Music	Action Plan	Remove from Action Plan

KSU has provided a follow-up report to update BAASC on the above programs, which follows this issue paper.

Recommendations

Board staff recommends approval of the above recommendations in the “Current KSU Recommendation” column.

Kansas State University Program Review Spring 2026 Annual Report

College	Program Title	CIP Code	CIP Code Description	Degree(s)	Action
Arts & Sciences	Social Transformation Studies	5.02	Ethnic Studies	Bachelor	Merge
Arts & Sciences	Social Transformation Studies	5.0207	Women's Studies	Bachelor	Merge
Arts & Sciences	Music, Theatre and Dance	50.0901	Music, General	BA and BM	Action Plan
Arts & Sciences	GEOGRAPHY AND GEOSPATIAL SCIENCES	45.0701	GEOGRAPHY.	BA and BS	Action Plan
Health & Human Sciences	Interior Design and Fashion Studies	19.0901	Apparel and Textiles	Masters	Action Plan – Move to Close

Gender, Women, and Sexuality and American Ethnic Studies – Final Report

Per the prior action plans, the Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies degree program **merged with** the American Ethnic Studies degree program to form the Social Transformation Studies degree program. No new students were allowed to declare Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies or American Ethnic Studies degree program after Fall of 2022. Junior and senior level students currently pursuing either of the programs were allowed to complete those BA/BS degrees. Freshmen and sophomore students were transitioned into the newly created Social Transformation Studies degree program. We ensured their current and previous coursework transferred seamlessly into the new degree program.

Currently Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies degree program has 1 student remaining, and the teach out plan continues to be followed. American Ethnic Studies degree program has matriculated all students through and is fully closed out. Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies and American Ethnic Studies degree programs have been formally closed within the university.

Bachelor of Arts in Music/Bachelor of Music – Action Plan Update

Kansas State University’s School of Music, Theatre, and Dance offers two distinct undergraduate music degrees under the same CIP code: a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Music (a liberal arts degree) and a Bachelor of Music (BM) degree (a professional degree in performance). These degrees are accredited by our specialized accreditor, the National Association of Schools of Music.

Graduates within these degrees pursue a wide range of careers - graduate study, performance, collaborative piano, studio teaching, higher education, arts administration, technical fields, and entrepreneurship, often across multiple concurrent roles. Our recent alumni include performers and creators who have worked on Broadway, in Hollywood, with Disney, in film and television, at major universities, and in international orchestras; several have earned significant recognition, including Grammy and Emmy awards. Because many of these careers are freelance or contract-based and geographically mobile, traditional metrics of salary or in-state employment may not fully capture the early career success of our graduates.

Current Trends

Enrollment in both degrees has increased during the review period. The School itself has experienced significant growth—more than 60 percent since 2022. The BA in Music **grew from 10 students in Spring 2021 to 32 students** in the most recent academic year, while the BM in Music **increased from 48 to 66 students**. This growth reflects curricular changes that emphasize professional preparation, applied experience, and clearer post-graduation pathways.

To further strengthen career readiness, we launched an accelerated 4+1 BA/MBA program in Music Business during the first year of this review period. This **five-year pathway currently enrolls 14 students**, and the first cohort will be graduating this year. By integrating music and business coursework, the program prepares students for entrepreneurial and leadership roles in the music industry.

Addressing Career Pathways and Industry

Internships and applied experiences are now embedded throughout the curriculum. BA and BM students, including those in the BA/MBA pathway, have completed internships at

McCain Auditorium, the Manhattan Arts Center, with regional arts presenters and music industry businesses. Several interns have continued employment beyond the required term. Students pursuing sacred music complete church-based internships focused on conducting, performing, and music leadership. Church interns frequently continue with these organizations in professional positions after graduation. Performance majors also engage in touring ensembles, collaborative piano, and private studio teaching, gaining applied professional experience while preparing for graduate programs.

School of Music, Theatre, and Dance Internship Census - Academic Year 24-25

Category	Total	Type	Student type
Paid student internships	78	Extracurricular	mostly MTD majors/minors
Summer internships	30	Extracurricular	MTD majors and non-majors
Church music internships	25	Extracurricular	mostly MTD majors/minors
Student ensemble leadership	45	Extracurricular	MTD majors and non-majors
Dance Area Internships	15	Curricular	non-majors
Student Teaching Internships	10	Curricular	MTD majors
Music Area Internships	169	Curricular	mostly MTD majors
Theatre Area Internships	121	Curricular	mostly MTD majors
TOTAL	493		

We have also integrated business and entrepreneurial courses into the curriculum. All music majors are required to take at least one Music Business course, where they learn that sustainable arts careers often rely on multiple income streams rather than a single job. Students explore and develop complementary professional activities—such as performing, composing, working in arts administration or digital marketing, teaching privately, repairing instruments, or providing recording and sound services. Many students even start small businesses (graphic design, recording/engineering services, private studios, etc.) while still in school. While any single component of these multi-faceted careers might not fit traditional placement or salary metrics, together they create strong and even lucrative career paths.

One recent focus of growth is in instrument repair. Our band instrument repair courses give students hands-on experience alongside professional technicians, providing tens of thousands of dollars' worth of instrument repairs to Kansas school districts at no cost. Several students have secured full-time jobs in instrument repair while still enrolled in school. Others pursue specialized training in reed making through business partnerships. As the home of one of the region's largest music education programs by enrollment, K-

State plays a central role in supporting this industry by improving the maintenance and availability of instruments in school programs across the state.

Looking ahead, our partnership with Manhattan’s new Wareham Hall performance venue will expand paid internship opportunities beginning in 2027. Students will have guaranteed positions in lighting, sound, stage management, and venue operations at the \$40-million facility, gaining professional experience in a working venue and deepening regional industry connections.

Summary

Rising enrollments, positive early career outcomes, the launch of the BA/MBA program, and expanded internship and technical training opportunities all demonstrate our progress. While traditional salary and placement metrics do not fully capture success in freelance or geographically mobile careers, our emphasis on applied experiences, entrepreneurship, and industry partnerships enable more students to build sustainable careers and contribute to the cultural and economic life of Kansas. **Given the significant progress on the action plan, we recommend removing this program from KBOR’s action plan list.**

Geography – Action Plan Update

K-State is actively progressing on the action plan to **merge the Department of Geography and Geospatial Sciences with the Department of Geology to form the new School of Earth and Environment**. As part of this transition, the administration of the interdisciplinary Environmental Science undergraduate program, currently housed within the College of Arts & Science’s dean’s office, will also move into the new school. The merger includes consolidating three undergraduate degrees—Geology, Geography, and Geographic Information Systems and Technology—into a **single interdisciplinary program tentatively titled Earth Science and Society**. This restructuring will create efficiencies through shared and cross-listed courses, broaden student preparation with integrated training in geography, geology, geospatial techniques, and field methods, and expand opportunities for specialized pathways in physical or social science and advanced geospatial skills. The new school will also maintain the pathway option for training to stand for Professional Geologists Licensure exam according to Associate of State Boards of Geology standards. Professional Licensure is needed to practice as a Geologist in the state of Kansas, as well as ~35 other states, per the State Board of Technical Professions.

Current Trends and Need

Kansas faces ongoing workforce needs in geosciences, environmental quality, water resources, and GIS/remote sensing, all areas experiencing documented shortages of licensed geologists and environmental specialists. The state's natural resource challenges, including those addressed through the [Kansas Water Institute](#), require professionals who understand both physical Earth systems and human-environment interactions. The merger supports this need by integrating geology, geography, environmental science, and geospatial training into a unified academic structure that prepares students for interdisciplinary roles, including those requiring Professional Geologists Licensure across Kansas and 35 other states. As the state's land-grant university, K-State is positioned to meet these workforce demands through a modernized program that enhances visibility, strengthens recruitment, and equips graduates with the comprehensive scientific and technical skills essential to Kansas' environmental and geoscience sectors.

Actions Taken During the Review Period

Implementation efforts are well underway. A steering committee and task groups representing both units are coordinating governance structures, identity and communications, finances, and curriculum development. Faculty have held two unit-wide retreats and multiple working sessions to develop a shared mission, and the merger remains on schedule for a **Spring 2026 submission to Faculty Senate**, with the unit-level consolidation currently under review by the College Committee on Planning. Curriculum proposals for the new degree are ahead of the original timeline and will move forward this spring 2026.

Enrollment trends are positive, with both units doubling the number of incoming majors over the last two years. Campus partners in Environmental Science have expressed interest in affiliated faculty status, and the units are exploring co-teaching and cross-listing opportunities that will strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration. This merger aligns with state workforce needs in areas such as water resources, environmental quality, geoscience professions, and GIS/remote sensing—fields in which Kansas faces documented shortages.

Summary

The merger of Geography, Geospatial Sciences, and Geology into the new School of Earth and Environment represents significant forward progress on the action plan and directly

supports statewide workforce needs in geoscience, environmental quality, water resources, and GIS/remote sensing. It consolidates related academic programs into a modernized structure that improves efficiency, strengthens interdisciplinary training, and preserves essential pathways such as preparation for Professional Geologists Licensure. Enrollment growth, strong campus partnerships, and accelerated curriculum development further demonstrate momentum. As the state’s land-grant university, K-State is positioned to meet these needs through a unified academic structure that enhances visibility, student recruitment, and the preparation of a skilled environmental and geoscience workforce.

Interior Design and Fashion Studies – Action Plan Update

Kansas State University’s School of Consumer Sciences within the College of Health and Human Sciences offers a Master of Science in Fashion Studies (Apparel and Textiles), including a BS/MS accelerated pathway. As part of the ongoing program review and action plan, the department has continued to evaluate enrollment trends, degree alignment, and workforce needs within the discipline. During the 2025 Program Review cycle, the program was identified as needing to create an action plan. As a first step to setting up an action plan, the program requested an in-depth market report.

Current Trends and Program Viability

National and national market data show limited demand for master’s-level preparation in this field. Master’s degrees account for only 3.0% of 2024 completions in CIP 19.0901, and just 2.3% across five related CIP codes, with most learners pursuing bachelor’s or associate degrees. Over the past decade, master’s completions in this CIP declined 3.7%, and related codes declined 44.2%, signaling reduced learner interest. K-State’s outcomes reflect these trends: the program awarded seven MS degrees over the past three years, below the national median, and ranks 11th of 15 institutions in this CIP (3.3% market share). Labor-market projections similarly indicate limited growth, with the Fashion Designer occupation expected to grow only 2.3% through 2035, and nearly half of jobs concentrated in New York and California. Collectively, these indicators demonstrate structural barriers to enrollment, market competitiveness, and long-term program viability.

Actions Taken During the Review Period

After analyzing the program review feedback, the market report, and hosting a program level discussion, the program has decided to discontinue the MS in Fashion Studies.

- The program will bring forward a proposal to discontinue the MS in Fashion Studies as well as the related BS/MS accelerated program during Spring 2026 semester. This will include a teach out plan for the 1 student currently enrolled in the program.
- Once approved by Faculty Senate, the request for discontinuing the program will be submitted to KBOR for consideration.
- The program will continue to review the market analysis to explore opportunities related to circularity, which may inform future micro-credentials or workforce-aligned offerings.
- During this period, faculty are also exploring the development of graduate certificates to meet identified industry needs in the Kansas City region, where demand is more closely tied to specialized skills than to full master's-level preparation.

Summary

The School of Consumer Sciences has made substantial progress on its action plan, transitioning to a recommendation of program closure. National and institutional data continue to affirm limited demand for a master's degree in Fashion Studies, prompting the program to move forward with program discontinuance. Faculty governance processes are in motion, teach-out plans are being prepared, and opportunities for certificate-based or specialized training in the region are being evaluated. These actions reflect K-State's commitment to ensuring program relevance, maintaining responsible stewardship of academic resources, and aligning offerings with evolving workforce needs.