

KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS
Council of Chief Academic Officers
MINUTES
December 17, 2025

The December 17, 2025, meeting of the Council of Chief Academic Officers was called to order by Chair Brent Thomas at 9:33 a.m. The meeting was held in the Curtis State Office Building, 1000 S.W. Jackson, Suite 530, Topeka. *Proper notice was given according to law.*

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jesse Mendez, KSU	Barbara Bichelmeyer, KU	John Fritch, Washburn
Brent Thomas, ESU	Dawn Shew (for Robert Klein,) KUMC	Monica Lounsberry, WSU
Jill Arensdorf, FHSU	Susan Bon, PSU	Rusty Monhollon, KBOR (<i>ex officio</i>)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Susan Bon moved to approve the minutes from the November 19, 2025, meeting. Barbara Bichelmeyer seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Council of Faculty Senate President's Update

Dr. Rochelle Rowley, Emporia State University's faculty senate president and Council of Faculty Senate Presidents (CoFSP) Chair, shared that the Council of Faculty Senate Presidents has been working on evaluating the International Baccalaureate program cut scores. They have also collaborated with faculty to provide the Board with a response to the proposed policy changes on tenure, post-tenure review, and workload.

First Reading

BS in Financial Forensics and Fraud Investigation

Jill Arensdorf, Provost at Fort Hays State University, introduced Jessica Heronemus-Claiborn, Instructor of Accounting at FHSU, who shared that this proposal brings together the Criminal Justice and Accounting programs to create a new degree path that is responsive to workforce needs. She highlighted the 27 hours of electives that allow students to tailor this degree toward their unique interests.

Second Readings

BS in Applied & Interdisciplinary Studies

Jesse Mendez, Provost at Kansas State University, introduced Dr. Ben Wolfe, CEO of KSU Olathe and Dean of the College of Applied and Professional Studies. Dr. Wolfe shared that this proposal is designed to serve students who are transferring with an AA, AS, AAS, or AGS. He noted concerns from KU regarding this proposal. KU's concerns and KSU's response can be found in the agenda packet. KSU Olathe will not be seeking JCERTA approval as this is an online program and is not limited to students in Johnson County.

Barbara Bichelmeyer, Provost at the University of Kansas, expressed appreciation for KSU's willingness to work with KU to follow the established collaborative approval process. She noted that KU no longer objects to this proposal.

Jill Arensdorf moved to approve the proposal. Susan Bon seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

BS in Pharmaceutical & Biomedical Science

Barbara Bichelmeyer, Provost at the University of Kansas, shared that this proposal prepares students for careers in the pharmaceutical, biomedical, and healthcare industries utilizing existing courses and faculty. KU has not received any concerns regarding the proposal.

Jesse Mendez moved to approve the proposal. Jill Arensdorf seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Other Matters

Minor in Statistics

Brent Thomas, Provost for Emporia State University, introduced Dr. Tim Burnett, Dean of the School of Science and Mathematics at ESU. Dr. Burnett shared that ESU currently offers a statistics concentration; however, students have expressed the need for additional statistics and data science coursework. This proposal would meet student and workforce need.

Jesse Mendez moved to approve the proposal. Jill Arensdorf seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

TOEFL iBT Scoring Update

Provost Barbara Bichelmeyer shared that the TOEFL iBT exam is for faculty and teaching assistants whose first language is not English. She introduced Roberta Pokphanh, Associate Vice Provost for International Affairs at KU, to discuss the recommendation for a new cut score. Dr. Pokphanh shared that the current test is scored from 0 to 30, with a 22 demonstrating English Proficiency. The new scoring system will run from 1 to 6 in .5 increments. The director of the Intensive English program recommends a 4.5 as a cut score, which correlates to a 23 or above. Vice President Monhollon suggested an endorsement from COCAO to be taken to BAASC and the full Board.

Discuss Opportunities (new degree programs, partnerships, strategic initiatives, etc.) that Universities are Considering or Planning to Pursue in the Future

Susan Bon, Provost at Pittsburg State University, shared that PSU anticipates having a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education Unified program proposal in the Spring.

Provost Barbara Bichelmeyer shared that KU is working on a BS in Human Biology proposal.

Adjournment

Chair Brent Thomas adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m.