

**KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA
FEBRUARY 26, 2025
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

The Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee (BAASC) will meet virtually via Zoom. You can listen to the meeting at the Board offices, located at 1000 SW Jackson, Suite 520, Topeka, Kansas 66612.

- I. Call to Order** Regent Mendoza, Chair
 - A. Roll Call and Introductions
 - B. Approve Minutes from February 12, 2025 Meeting p. 3

- II. Board Consent Items**
 - No items

- III. Board Discussion Agenda Items**
 - A. BS Data Science Barbara Bichelmeyer, KU p. 5
 - B. Act on Kansas Free Applications Day for AY 2025-2026 Mistie Knox p. 14

- IV. Other Matters**
 - Reduced Credit Baccalaureate Discussion Rusty Monhollon

- V. Announcements**
 - Next BAASC Meeting – March 12, 2025

- VI. Adjournment**

BOARD ACADEMIC AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE

Four Regents serve on the Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee (BAASC), established in 2002. The Regents are appointed annually by the Chair and approved by the Board. BAASC meets virtually approximately two weeks before each Board meeting. The Committee also meets on the morning of the first day of the monthly Board meeting. Membership includes:

- Diana Mendoza, Chair
- Alysia Johnston
- Neelima Parasker
- Kathy Wolfe Moore

Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee

AY 2025 Meeting Schedule

<i>BAASC Academic Year 2024- 2025 Meeting Dates</i>			
Meeting Dates	Location	Time	Agenda Materials Due
September 4, 2024	Virtual Meeting	10:00 a.m.	August 14, 2024
September 18, 2024	Topeka	11:00 a.m.	August 28, 2024
November 6, 2024	Virtual Meeting	10:00 a.m.	October 16, 2024
November 20, 2024	Kansas State University	11:00 a.m.	October 30, 2024
December 4, 2024	Virtual Meeting	10:00 a.m.	November 13, 2024
December 18, 2024	Topeka	11:00 a.m.	November 25, 2024
January 2, 2025	Virtual Meeting	10:00 a.m.	December 11, 2024
January 15, 2025	Topeka	11:00 a.m.	December 24, 2024
January 29, 2025	Topeka	11:00 a.m.	January 8, 2025
February 12, 2025	Topeka	11:00 a.m.	January 22, 2025
February 26, 2025	Virtual Meeting	10:00 a.m.	February 5, 2025
March 12, 2025	Topeka	11:00 a.m.	February 19, 2025
April 2, 2025	Virtual Meeting	10:00 a.m.	March 12, 2025
April 16, 2025	Pittsburg State University	11:00 a.m.	March 26, 2025
April 30, 2025	Virtual Meeting	10:00 a.m.	April 9, 2025
May 14, 2025	Topeka	11:00 a.m.	April 23, 2025
May 28, 2025	Virtual Meeting	10:00 a.m.	May 7, 2025
June 11, 2025	Topeka	11:00 a.m.	May 21, 2025

Please note that virtual meeting times are 10:00 a.m. and Board Day meetings are 11:00 a.m., unless otherwise noted.

**KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS
BOARD ACADEMIC AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 12, 2025**

Chair Diana Mendoza called the February 12, 2025, Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. The meeting was held via Zoom.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Regent Diana Mendoza, Chair
 Regent Alysia Johnston
 Regent Kathy Wolfe Moore

INTRODUCTIONS

Regent Mendoza introduced and welcomed Regent Wolfe Moore to the committee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regent Johnston moved that the minutes of the January 29, 2025, meeting be approved. Following the second of Regent Mendoza, the motion carried unanimously.

BOARD CONSENT ITEMS

Vice President for Academic Affairs Rusty Monhollon shared that the issue paper that went to the Board for the Program Review Metrics had an edit that inadvertently omitted a crucial phrase that was included in the issue paper approved by BAASC on November 6. Vice President Monhollon requested the committee confirm their intent and approval to include the phrase in the clarification to be presented to the Board in March. This clarification will change the phrase “Excluding from the five-year post-baccalaureate wage metric students who immediately pursue graduate studies upon completion of a bachelor’s degree” to “Students who pursue graduate study immediately can be included in the Talent Pipeline Metric. Additionally, these students should not be included in the wage metric five years post-baccalaureate.” Regent Johnston moved to approve this clarification. Following the second of Regent Mendoza, the motion carried unanimously.

BOARD DISCUSSION AGENDA ITEMS

RECEIVE ANNUAL REPORT ON APPLY KANSAS APPLICATION CAMPAIGN, RECEIVE REPORT ON KANSAS FREE APPLICATIONS DAY, AND ACT ON KANSAS FREE APPLICATION DAY FOR 2025-2026 ACADEMIC YEAR

Associate Director of Academic Affairs Mistie Knox presented the Apply Kansas Application Campaign annual report. She reported that 89% of Kansas school districts participated in Apply Kansas for 2024, with 22,818 applications submitted. She also shared the report on Kansas Free Applications Day, noting that applications submitted during the Apply Free Days increased by 76% from 2023 to 2024, totaling 17,471 applications. Associate Director Knox proposed continuing Apply Free Days for the 2025 academic year. While this initiative is generally supported, there was a consensus to gather more data on the institutional costs for Apply Free Days. Regent Johnston made a motion to approve continuing to pilot the program with input from the provosts and increased data as it is received. Regent Mendoza moved to table this decision until the next meeting and requested the provosts gather information related to this initiative from their institutions. Regent Johnston rescinded her previous motion and seconded Regent Mendoza’s motion. The motion carried unanimously. Associate Director Knox will share the recommendation to table the decision until March with the Board.

OTHER MATTERS

FIRST 15 UPDATE

Vice President for Academic Affairs Rusty Monhollon shared that the working group met on January 21 and February 6. Although there was hope to pilot the program with English Composition I, discussions about funding, need, coverage, and other concerns brought the decision to a standstill. The group has requested further data to address the concerns raised at the February meeting before moving forward. Once the requested data is gathered, another meeting will be scheduled.

REDUCED CREDIT BACHELOR'S DEGREE

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

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATES

Vice President Monhollon shared that the Complete College America (CCA) Alliance Launch event held on February 11 at Washburn University had about 115 attendees. There was great feedback about the group discussions held at the event, and Regent Mendoza and a few provosts expressed excitement about beginning work with CCA in the future.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next BAASC meeting will be held virtually on February 26.

ADJOURNMENT

Regent Johnston moved that the meeting be adjourned. Following the second of Regent Mendoza, the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:19 p.m.

Program Approval

Summary

Universities may apply for approval of new academic programs following the guidelines in the Kansas Board of Regents Policy Manual. The University of Kansas has submitted an application for approval and the proposing academic unit has responded to all of the requirements of the program approval process.

I. General Information

A. Institution

University of Kansas

B. Program Identification

Degree Level: Bachelor's
Program Title: Data Science
Degree to be Offered: Bachelor of Science in Data Science
Responsible Department or Unit: Psychology
CIP Code: 30.0601
Modality: Face-to-Face
Proposed Implementation Date: Fall 2025

Total Number of Semester Credit Hours for the Degree: 120

II. Clinical Sites: Does this program require the use of Clinical Sites? No

III. Justification

The Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Data Science is aimed at students who are interested in pursuing careers in data science or related fields. The B.S. in Data Science degree is a multidisciplinary undergraduate program that will provide students training in mathematics, computation, and statistics; data collection, management, description, and analysis; communication and project management; ethics; problem solving; and decision making.

The program objective is consistent with a Data Science degree curriculum: to prepare students for a 21st century workforce where data analysis is critical to the functioning of society, business, and education. Upon completion of this major, students will gain technical capabilities, enhanced critical and analytical thinking skills, a well-developed skillset for coding, programming, managing, and interpreting data sets, as well as effective writing, communication, and collaborative working skills.

The combination of social science and data science distinguishes the Data Science degree in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Naive approaches to artificial intelligence and data science replicate the biases present in society (AI Multiple, n.d.). Algorithms are only as good as the training data and assumptions used in the models. The Data Science degree combines data science methods with a social science perspective on the data-generating process. The grounding in social science prepares students with the insights needed to interpret the vast amounts of data being created by social processes, government, political processes, communication, and economic activity. As a result, the Data Science degree will produce well-rounded graduates with technological savvy, preparing them for a labor market that increasingly relies on skills that cannot be replaced by ChatGPT.

This proposed degree advances current work at the University of Kansas funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF). The NSF provided funding for the Kansas Data Science Consortium (KDSC) and a mission to enhance the data science capacity of the workforce in Kansas. Faculty and staff in the KDSC contributed to the

curriculum design for the proposed degree. Part of the consortium’s work has been to integrate data science into the curriculum across high school, community college, and baccalaureate programs. The curriculum in this major will articulate with courses that exist or will be proposed at community colleges in Kansas to create pathways into the B.S. degree program. Additionally, should this major be approved, work is underway to develop 2+2 agreements to facilitate seamless transfer between community college data science programs and the B.S. in Data Science at the University of Kansas. Current community college partners include data science faculty at Johnson County Community College and Butler Community College.

IV. Program Demand

Market Analysis

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2023), there were 169,000 jobs in data science in 2022, and the expected growth in data science jobs between 2022 and 2032 is 35%. The growth rate in data science jobs is more than three times higher than for other occupations. Data scientists earn an average of \$104,000 per year. According to Lightcast there were 496,000 unique data science job postings between January 2021 and December 2022. Most data scientists have a bachelor's degree.

Five years ago, a bachelor’s degree in data science was nearly nonexistent. Currently, over fifty institutions across the country are offering a data science major. In the last year alone, more than a dozen new data science bachelor's degree programs have been launched, reflecting the demand for graduates with a data science skillset.

There are no public universities/colleges in the state of Kansas that offer a B.S. degree with the same CIP Code. The curriculum in this proposal has been developed in collaboration with faculty at UC Berkeley, using their data science bachelor’s program as a model. Berkeley’s bachelor’s program was founded in 2015; within five years it had 900 undergraduate majors, including double majors, and 450 minors. More than 6,000 of the 45,000 Berkeley students take a data science course each year.

In Fall 2022, KU’s Psychology department began offering an undergraduate certificate in data science. It enrolled twelve students. In the fall 2024 semester, the number of students has increased to 52.

V. Projected Enrollment for the Initial Three Years of the Program

Year	Total Headcount Per Year		Total Sem Credit Hrs Per Year	
	Full- Time	Part-Time	Full- Time	Part-Time
Implementation	5	0	150	0
Year 2	10	0	300	0
Year 3	20	0	600	0

Conservative projections are based on interest in the current undergraduate data science certificate, and the demand trends in the field of data science. Many of these students will double-major as the design of the program facilitates students studying data science and another major in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, thus enhancing the interest in data science and strengthening majors across campus.

VI. Employment

There are a variety of employment opportunities for students who study for a Bachelor of Science in Data Science. The Lightcast (2022) market analysis report requested by the University of Kansas shows that the target occupations for data science graduates are those listed below:

Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists

Management Analysts
 Financial Managers
 Postsecondary Teachers
 Financial and Investment Analysts
 Computer Programmers
 Financial Risk Specialists
 Data Scientists
 Statisticians
 Mathematical Science Occupations, All Other

Combined, these occupations accounted for 1.69 million jobs in 2019. Between 2019 and 2021, there were 237,143 job openings for these occupations. Across these occupations, the number of jobs grew by 4.8 percent.

The median earnings across these occupations ranges from \$30 per hour to \$60 per hour. For all occupations included in the analysis, the median earnings are \$42.45 per hour and \$88.3k per year.

VII. Admission and Curriculum

A. Admission Criteria

Qualified Admission criteria are used, as this program does not have separate admission requirements.

B. Curriculum

Year 1: Fall

SCH = Semester Credit Hours

Course #	Course Name	SCH=15
PSYC 199	Data I	3
EECS 138	Introduction to Computing	3
	KBOR Core English (SGE)	3
MATH 101	College Algebra (KBOR Core Math (SGE))	3
	KBOR Core Arts and Humanities (SGE)	3

Year 1: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH=15
PSYC 399	Data II	3
MATH 115	Calculus I	3
	KBOR Core English (SGE)	3
	KBOR Core Communications (SGE)	3
	KBOR Core Arts and Humanities (SGE)	3

Year 2: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH 16-17
MATH 365	Elementary Statistics	3
MATH 116	Calculus II	3
	KBOR Core Social and Behavioral Sciences (SGE)	3
	KBOR Core Natural and Physical Sciences (SGE)	4-5
	KBOR Core Institutionally Designated Global Culture (SGE)	3

Year 2: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH=14
MATH 290	Elementary Linear Algebra	2

PSYC 500	Intermediate Statistics	3
	KBOR Core Social and Behavioral Sciences (SGE)	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree Hours	3
	KBOR Core Institutionally Designated U.S. Culture (SGE)	3

Year 3: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH=15
PSYC 599	Data III	3
	Domain of Application: Course numbered 300-699 from ABSC, COMS, ECON, MATH, POLS, PSYC, or SOC	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree Hours	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree Hours	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree Hours	3

Year 3: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH=15
PSYC 612	Data IV	3
	Domain of Application : Course numbered 300-699 from ABSC, COMS, ECON, MATH, POLS, PSYC, or SOC	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree Hours	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree Hours	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree/Junior-Senior Hours	3

Year 4: Fall

Course #	Course Name	SCH=15
	Domain of Application Course numbered 300-699 from ABSC, COMS, ECON, MATH, POLS, PSYC, or SOC	6
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree/Junior-Senior Hours	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree/Junior-Senior Hours	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree/Junior-Senior Hours	3

Year 4: Spring

Course #	Course Name	SCH=15
PSYC 699	Community Data Lab	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree/Junior-Senior Hours	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree/Junior-Senior Hours	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree/Junior-Senior Hours	3
	Second Area of Study/Elective/Degree/Junior-Senior Hours	3

Total Number of Semester Credit Hours 120

VIII. Core Faculty

Note: * Next to Faculty Name Denotes Director of the Program, if applicable
 FTE: 1.0 FTE = Full-Time Equivalency Devoted to Program

Faculty Name	Rank	Highest Degree	Tenure Track Y/N	Academic Area of Specialization	FTE to Proposed Program
William Duncan	Assistant	PhD	N	Economics	1.0

	Research Professor				
Michael Branicky	Professor	ScD	Y	Computer Science	0.5
Jeff Girard	Assistant Professor	PhD	Y	Psychology	0.5
Donna Ginther	Professor	PhD	Y	Economics	0.10
Ben Allen	Assistant Professor	PhD	Y	Psychology	0.10
Hossein Saiedian	Professor	PhD	Y	Computer Science	0.10
Clayton Webb	Associate Professor	PhD	Y	Political Science	0.20
Math, Varies				Mathematics	0.30

Number of graduate assistants assigned to this program 2

IX. Expenditure and Funding Sources

A. EXPENDITURES	First FY	Second FY	Third FY
Personnel – Reassigned or Existing Positions			
Faculty	\$59,319	\$104,977	\$149,057
Administrators (<i>other than instruction time</i>)	\$18,819	\$19,195	\$19,579
Graduate Assistants	\$20,000	\$20,400	\$20,808
Support Staff for Administration (<i>e.g., secretarial</i>)	0	0	0
Fringe Benefits (<i>total for all groups</i>)	\$26,924	\$41,694	\$55,961
Other Personnel Costs	0	0	0
Total Existing Personnel Costs – Reassigned or Existing	\$125,062	\$186,266	\$245,405
Personnel – New Positions			
Faculty	0	0	\$42,500
Administrators (<i>other than instruction time</i>)	0	0	0
Graduate Assistants	0	0	0
Support Staff for Administration (<i>e.g., secretarial</i>)	0	0	0
Fringe Benefits (<i>total for all groups</i>)	0	0	\$13,600
Other Personnel Costs	0	0	0
Total Existing Personnel Costs – New Positions	0	0	\$56,100
Start-up Costs - One-Time Expenses			
Library/learning resources	0	0	0
Equipment/Technology	0	0	0
Physical Facilities: Construction or Renovation	0	0	0
Other: Marketing	\$3,000	0	0
Total Start-up Costs	\$3,000	\$0	\$0

Operating Costs – Recurring Expenses			
Supplies/Expenses	5,000	5,000	5,000
Library/learning resources	2,000	2,000	2,000
Equipment/Technology	10,000	10,000	10,000
Travel	12,000	12,000	12,000
Other	6,000	6,000	6,000
Total Operating Costs	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
GRAND TOTAL COSTS	\\$163,062	\$221,266	\$336,505

B. FUNDING SOURCES <i>(projected as appropriate)</i>	Current	First FY (New)	Second FY (New)	Third FY (New)
Tuition / State Funds	0	\$90,126	\$180,252	\$360,504
Student Fees	0	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$6,000
Other Sources (grant)	\$496,152	\$445,119	\$491,300	0
GRAND TOTAL FUNDING	\$496,152	\$536,745	\$674,552	\$366,504
C. Projected Surplus/Deficit (+/-) (Grand Total Funding <i>minus</i> Grand Total Costs)		\$373,683	\$453,286	\$29,999

X. Expenditures and Funding Sources Explanations

A. Expenditures

Personnel – Reassigned or Existing Positions

The personnel that already teach courses at the University of Kansas that will be in the Bachelor of Science in Data Science include faculty who teach in the undergraduate data science certificate as well as faculty teaching math and computer science coursework that will be required of students in the program.

Additionally, there are personnel supported by the National Science Foundation (NSF) Kansas Data Science Consortium (KDSC) grant. These include one faculty member teaching core classes in the data science certificate which will also be in the major, two graduate students, and a project coordinator.

Personnel – New Positions

As enrollments increase, there will be a need for additional faculty. We have applied for a Data Science Center grant from the National Science Foundation that, if successful, would provide funding for an additional faculty member. If it is not successful, we anticipate that we will need university resources to hire a new FTE faculty member in the third year of the major.

As the number of majors increases, we anticipate that this will provide some additional administrative burden on

academic advisors and allocate 0.25 FTEs for that work in the third year of the major.

Start-up Costs – One-Time Expenses

One-time start-up costs for marketing can be covered by the KDSC NSF grant.

Operating Costs – Recurring Expenses

The recurring expenses for the program include travel, supplies, library and learning resources, equipment and technology, as well as other costs. Based on expenditures during the first two years of the KDSC grant, we anticipate needing \$5,000 in supplies, \$2,000 for library and learning resources, \$10,000 for equipment and technology, \$12,000 for travel, and \$5,000 for other expenses. The library and learning resources budget support the data science program's efforts to maintain a repository of data science materials on a public-facing platform. The equipment and technology budget supports access to licensed software for faculty and students, which is common to data science coursework. The travel budget supports faculty and students attending an annual data science conference in Kansas to showcase work on community partner sponsored projects.

B. Revenue: Funding Sources

Roughly 61.5% of KU students are in-state and 38.5% are out-of-state students. Tuition revenue was calculated by first allocating SCH into in-state and out-of-state and then using a weighted tuition average of \$600.84 per credit hour. Those SCH numbers were then multiplied by the student credit hour generated each year. Student fees include a \$10 College of Liberal Arts & Sciences student fee.

In the other category of revenue, we account for funding that we have received from the National Science Foundation to support the work of the Kansas Data Science Consortium at the University of Kansas.

We have also applied for an additional award at the National Science Foundation through the Data Science Center solicitation. This proposal was submitted in June 2024 and a decision on the proposal is expected in December 2024. If successful, this award would provide additional resources for the University of Kansas to allocate to the development of the data science major.

C. Projected Surplus/Deficit

There are significant budget surpluses in the first and second year as a result of NSF grant funding (other sources) that is available to help cover expenses for the major. The surplus goes down to roughly \$30,000 in year three when the grant ends, plus additional faculty is needed for the program. The surplus would grow in year 4 as we have additional students to offset the additional faculty support added in year 3.

XI. References

AI Multiple. (n.d.). *Bias in AI: What it is, types, Examples & 6 ways to fix it*. Retrieved December 16, 2024, from <https://research.aimultiple.com/ai-bias/>.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. Industry and occupational employment projections overview and highlights, 2022-32. October 2023. Online. Accessed 9/1/2024.

Lightcast Report. Program Overview; Data Analytics. Lightcast Q4 2022 Data Set. November 2022.

University of Kansas BS in Data Science (CIP 30.0601) Program & Employment Analysis

1. Market-Share Figures

There are no other programs in the state that share the same Classification of Instructional Program code (30.0601) as this proposed program.

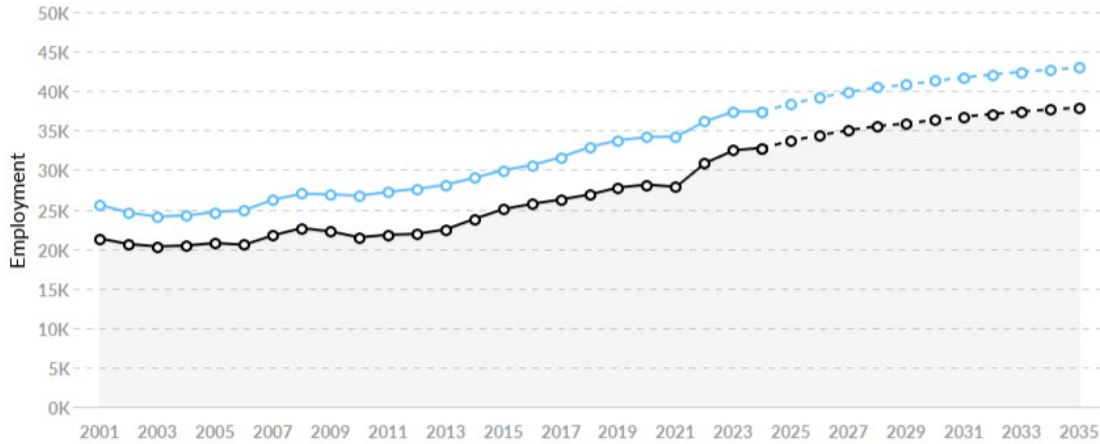
There are seven “target occupations” as identified by Lightcast for this program of study.

- Software Developers
- Computer Systems Analysts
- Network & Computer Systems Administrators
- Computer & Information Systems Managers
- Computer Occupations, All Other
- Architectural & Engineering Managers
- Engineers, All Other

2. State & National Projections for Employment Linked to the Proposed Degree Program through 2035

Regional Employment Is Lower Than the National Average

An average area of this size typically has 37,405* jobs, while there are 32,492 here. This lower than average supply of jobs may make it more difficult for workers in this field to find employment in your area.

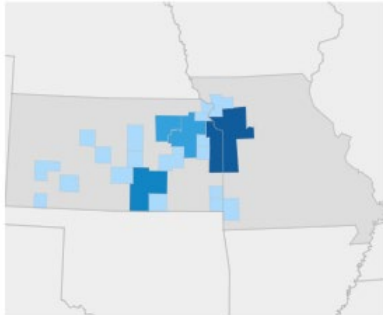


Region	2023 Jobs	2024 Jobs	Change	% Change
● Kansas	32,492	32,799	306	0.9%
● National Average	37,405	37,444	39	0.1%

*National average values are derived by taking the national value for your occupations and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and Kansas. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

3. Kansas Geographical Information on Projected Employment Linked to the Degree Program Proposal

Regional Breakdown

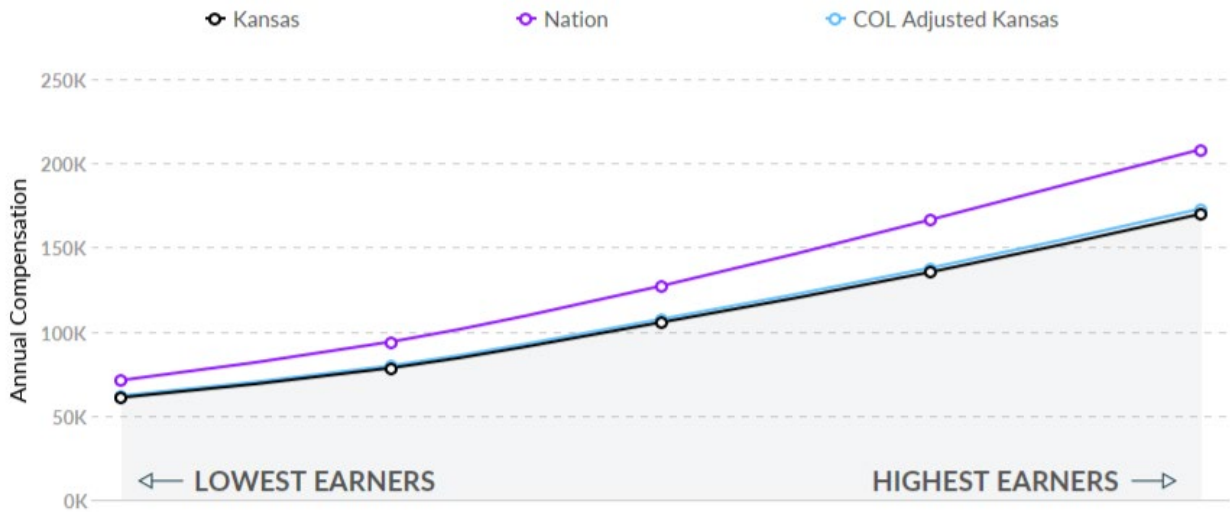


MSA	2023 Jobs
Kansas City, MO-KS	30,784
Wichita, KS	4,847
Topeka, KS	2,506
Manhattan, KS	1,182
Lawrence, KS	890

4. 2023 Regional & National Employment Wage Information Linked to the Degree Program Proposal

Regional Compensation Is 17% Lower Than National Compensation

For your occupations, the 2023 median wage in Kansas is \$105,392, while the national median wage is \$127,022.



5. Minimum Education Breakdown for Jobs Posted January 2024 – September 2024

Minimum Education Breakdown

Minimum Education Level	Unique Postings (minimum)	Unique Postings (max advertised)	% of Total (minimum)
High school or GED	1,019	0	7%
Associate's degree	918	86	6%
Bachelor's degree	8,195	1,077	55%
Master's degree	321	1,823	2%
Ph.D. or professional degree	51	245	0%

6. References

Lightcast. (n.d.). *Program Overview*. Retrieved February 17, 2025, from https://analyst.lightcast.io/analyst/?t=4mbDT#h=2PyJIV13jQcXsN8xhcUIRhhllc&page=program_market_demand&vertical=standard&nation=us

Lightcast. (n.d.). *Occupation Overview*. Retrieved February 17, 2025, from https://analyst.lightcast.io/analyst/?t=4mbDT#h=2O85-RRfUiKd.ifm.BAfs8E8yIX&page=occupation_snapshot&vertical=standard&nation=us

Lightcast. (n.d.). *Job Posting Analytics*. Retrieved February 17, 2025, from https://analyst.lightcast.io/analyst/?t=4mbDT#h=WQxrilsq~8WSc6lP9vdun-fTpZ&page=postings_report&vertical=standard&nation=us

Summary

Kansas Free Application Days has been piloted over the past two years, allowing Kansas residents of all ages and income levels to submit general undergraduate admission applications to all Kansas public institutions for free. The events were held on November 7-9, 2023, and October 7-9, 2024. Private colleges were also invited to participate in the campaign. Aggregate data will be presented to determine whether Kansas Free Application Days will remain a pilot program or become an established initiative.

Background

The Kansas Free Application Days initiative aligns with the "Building a Future" strategic plan and the goals of the Kansas Board of Regents. This initiative aims to support Kansas families by removing barriers that prevent students from pursuing post-secondary education, thereby increasing access to higher education, especially for underserved populations.

The primary objective of the Kansas Free Application Days program is to boost college-going and FAFSA completion rates in Kansas. By eliminating application fees, the program helps residents take the first step towards continuing their education, ultimately increasing the number of students who complete their programs and enter the workforce with a degree or competitive skills.

Over the past two years, Kansas Free Application Days has been piloted, allowing residents of all ages and income levels to submit general undergraduate admission applications to all Kansas public institutions for free. The events were held on November 7-9, 2023, and October 7-9, 2024.

Data on the applications received during the 2023 and 2024 free application days, the growth observed, and the Apply Free Days 2023 yield data based on aggregate collection will be reported.

The Board approved the pilot proposal in July 2023, with the first event held from November 7-9, 2023. The initiative continued in 2024 with events from October 7-9, 2024.

Data Collection

Data collection for the Kansas Free Application Days (AFD) will be conducted in two phases: a unit record collection through KHEDS and an aggregate collection.

The unit record collection through KHEDS will include applications from AFD 2023 and enrollments, providing more precise information tied to student records. This data will be finalized in September 2025 and available in October 2025.

The aggregate collection will capture AFD application activity from November 7-9, 2023, as well as aggregate application, admission, and enrollment data for the 2024 calendar year terms (SP24, SU24, FA24). Yield will be calculated for each sector, by term, as reported by the institutions. The aggregate collection is available in this report.

Public institutions excluded from the aggregate data include Labette Community College, Dodge City Community College, and Kansas City Kansas Community College.

Staff Recommendation

October is designated College Application Month for Kansas, and it is recommended that the Kansas Free Application Days align with this month.

The decision on whether the Kansas Free Application Days should continue as a pilot program or transition to an established opportunity is deferred to the Board. If the Board decides to continue with the three-day initiative for 2025, stakeholder feedback has been assessed, and Board staff recommends for approval.