

**KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS STANDING COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA
JUNE 11, 2025
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

The Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee (BAASC) will meet in the Kathy Rupp Conference Room, located in the Curtis State Office Building at 1000 SW Jackson St, Suite 520, Topeka, Kansas 66612. To the extent possible, a virtual option will be provided to accommodate those who prefer not to attend in person.

- I. Call to Order** Regent Mendoza, Chair
 - A. Roll Call and Introductions
 - B. Approve Minutes from May 28, 2025 Meeting p. 3

- II. Board Consent Items**
 - Receive Report and Recommendations on Board Goal #5 Rusty Monhollon
 - (Alternative Credentials) p. 6

- III. Board Discussion Agenda Items**
 - No items

- IV. Other Matters**
 - A. AAS in Food & Feed Manufacturing Update Jesse Mendez, KSU
 - B. Academic Affairs Updates Academic Affairs Staff

- V. Announcements**
 - Next BAASC Meeting – September 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
MAY 28, 2025**

Regent Diana Mendoza called the May 28, 2025, Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was held via Zoom.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Regent Diana Mendoza
 Regent Alysia Johnston
 Regent Neelima Parasker

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regent Parasker moved that the minutes of the May 14, 2025, meeting be approved. Regent Johnston seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

BOARD CONSENT ITEMS

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL AAS IN FOOD AND FEED MANUFACTURING - KSU

Vice Provost Margaret Mohr-Schroeder introduced Dr. Dan Moser, Associate Dean for Academic Programs in the College of Agriculture. Dr. Moser provided an overview of the proposed program, emphasizing that it addresses a national shortage in the field. He noted that the program would be unique within Kansas and the surrounding region, with only three other land-grant universities nationwide offering similar programs. Provost Mendez acknowledged that while KBOR policy generally discourages four-year institutions from offering associate degrees, KSU was specifically approached by industry leaders to develop and deliver this program in response to workforce needs.

Regent Johnston expressed interest in seeing collaboration with the state's community colleges. She inquired whether stackable credentials could be developed using credits from community colleges in related fields. Dr. Moser responded that equivalent courses had not yet been evaluated but affirmed KSU's openness to discussions on transfer pathways. Regents Parasker and Mendoza echoed the importance of collaboration with community colleges to better serve students. Regent Mendoza proposed tabling the proposal until the fall to allow time for such collaboration and the development of an action plan. Regent Johnston moved to table the proposal until September, with a plan to collaborate with the community college sector and to include an update on progress to be provided at the June 11 meeting. She recommended direct outreach to institutions such as Cowley County Community College, noting that their historic knowledge could be invaluable. She also suggested exploring a stackable "one-plus-one" model, which could benefit both students and industry while aligning with KBOR's goals. Regent Parasker seconded the motion, clarifying that the intent was not to delay progress with industry partners but to ensure a thoughtful and collaborative approach that could serve as a model that can be referenced for future proposals. The motion carried.

Vice President for Academic Affairs Rusty Monhollon acknowledged that while such proposals from universities are rare, they are addressed, though discouraged, under current KBOR policy. He suggested this might be an opportunity to review and potentially revise that section of the policy to provide clearer guidance and avoid delays of future requests. Regent Mendoza agreed and requested that the academic affairs staff begin reviewing the relevant policy language. Regent Johnston concurred, noting that such revisions would help streamline the process and provide clarity for similar proposals in the future.

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL BS IN NUCLEAR ENGINEERING AND REQUEST TO EXCEED 120 HOURS
- KSU**

Provost Jesse Mendez introduced Dr. Amir Bahadori, the director of the Nuclear Engineering Program, who provided an overview of the proposal. This program would be the only nuclear program in the state of Kansas. KSU already has qualified faculty and is equipped to offer such a program. Regent Parasker expressed concern that the GPA admissions criteria seemed low for this type of program. Dr. Bahadori shared that the admissions criteria for this program are identical to those for the other programs at the College of Engineering. He also shared that there is an alternative transfer degree path for students who start this program and decide it is not the right fit for them, with minimal loss of invested time. Regent Johnston moved to approve the BS in Nuclear Engineering and request to exceed the 120 hours at KSU. Regent Parasker seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

BOARD DISCUSSION AGENDA ITEMS

KU, KUMC, & KSU ANNUAL PROGRAM REVIEW

Vice President for Academic Affairs Rusty Monhollon stated that he had no additional information to share but emphasized the importance of allowing ample time for discussion of the program reviews. He provided a brief recap of the recommendations presented at the previous meeting. Institutions were instructed to consolidate all bachelor's degree options under a single major for the purposes of this review. Dr. Monhollon reminded the committee that this year's review process was new for both KBOR staff and the institutions. He commended the institutions for effectively addressing all questions posed by KBOR. He highlighted that, in addition to participating in the KBOR review process, institutions are also required to maintain a clear and consistent internal review process. He expressed confidence that each institution had established thorough internal reviews and effectively communicated those processes in their presentations. Dr. Monhollon noted that the primary focus of the Board's forthcoming recommendations would be on programs identified by the institutions for one of the following actions: phase-out, merger, or placement on an action plan. He invited the committee to offer any additional comments or recommendations to be included in the information presented to the Board.

Regent Johnston wanted to ensure that the request made at the last meeting to have KU review administrative efficiencies, particularly for the low-enrolled programs, would be included in the recommendation to the Board. Provost Bichelmeyer clarified that her understanding of this request was to look for opportunities for potential mergers or reorganizations that would create academic or administrative efficiencies, or research synergies, not to solely focus on the low-enrolled program if they could be included in other programming as well, with a report, presented in December, on what actions would be taken. Regent Johnston made a motion to refer the Annual Program Review recommendations for KU, KUMC, and KSU to the full Board at the next meeting, including the review of administrative efficiencies in December 2025. Regent Parasker seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

CHANGES TO QUALIFIED ADMISSIONS - KSU

Jesse Mendez introduced Vice Provost for Enrollment Management Karen Goos, who shared an overview of the proposed changes to qualified admissions. The guaranteed options for freshmen would include a minimum 3.0 high school GPA, regardless of test score, or with no test score, or a minimum of 21 on the ACT and a minimum 2.5 high school GPA. This requested change is expected to help maintain competitiveness, grow enrollment, and sustain retention and completion rates. Regent Parasker moved to approve the changes to qualified admissions at KSU. Regent Johnston seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

OTHER MATTERS

FIRST 15

Vice President for Academic Affairs Rusty Monhollon shared that the First 15 workgroup has met to begin creating a low-cost model, as mentioned at the April 16 meeting. Additionally, data on the cost of dual or concurrent enrollment courses by institution is being compiled, with a submission deadline of May 30. The workgroup will review this data and use it as a tool to assist with building the low-cost model for the First 15 initiative.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATES

Vice President for Academic Affairs Rusty Monhollon shared that KBOR received a request for proposals to participate in the Rural Talent Development and Attraction Laboratory. This is a joint effort of SHEEO, KBOR, and the Alliance for Research on Regional Colleges. Five states are being selected to participate in this four-year project. The primary goal is to develop at least four sub-baccalaureate pathways in rural communities that will help build rural talent and attract economic growth. Kansas was selected as one of the participating states in this initiative. KBOR will partner with leaders from the community and technical colleges, as well as representatives from the Department of Labor, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Education.

TENURE POLICY

Regent Mendoza stated that she would like to initiate a review of the tenure policy in preparation for future discussions surrounding a recent bill that had been presented. She requested that the academic affairs staff review KBOR policy for any areas of potential improvement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next BAASC meeting will be held on June 11, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

Regent Parasker moved that the meeting be adjourned. Regent Mendoza seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

Summary

The Board asked the Council of Institutional Researchers (CIRO) to gather recommendations regarding a framework and definitions for reporting of industry-recognized credentials. The CIRO conveys recommendations outlined below.

Background

The CIRO, along with a subcommittee made up of university experts in the fields of alternative credentials and continuing education, convened nine times to better understand the landscape of alternative credentials across the nation and in the State of Kansas. University experts are involved in organizations such as 1EdTech, the Higher Education Contributing Member Leadership Network, the TrustEd Credential Coalition, the Online and Professional Education Association (UPCEA), the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) to advance effective use of innovative technologies to support teaching and learning, closely aligned with the emerging field of alternative credentials. A list of CIRO members and other representatives involved in the work of Board Goal #5 can be found in Appendix A. The Board thanks participants for their service and contributions to this discussion.

CIRO discussion topics included national efforts, existing frameworks and credentialing software, definitions used by national organizations and credentialing partners, current state of university offerings, and plans for identification and organization of credentials on each campus.

While several national organizations are working toward defining alternative credentials and deploying frameworks to accommodate data sharing without restrictive definitions, the landscape remains fluid at best. Therefore, the CIRO focused specifically on the Board goal for reporting industry-recognized credentials and the types of offerings delivered by Kansas public universities. Since the term “industry-recognized” is often used by two-year technical programs and may not apply in the same way to university offerings, the CIRO recommends that the scope and term used in the definitions be “workforce aligned” rather than “industry-recognized.” Given the diverse array of alternative credentials being delivered on Kansas public university campuses, the definitions were purposefully designed to be broad enough to encompass variations in delivery, yet specific to workforce alignment. The recommended statewide definitions can be found in Appendix B. Moreover, the universities collectively offer alternative credentials both for credit and non-credit. The recommended definitions will not restrict credentials to one or another, but each credential must be workforce aligned. The statewide definitions also do not prohibit each university from developing more specific definitions that encompass the work of the institution.

The current state of university alternative credentials inventory is disparate and siloed information systems do not connect with each other. Five of the seven Kansas public universities offer alternative credentials that fall under the recommended definitions. Several universities have already been making plans for how to better organize and connect systems on their campuses. Each institution submitted a document describing its current state and any such plans. These documents can be found in Appendix C.

Recommendations

- Adopt statewide definitions found in Appendix B and designate the Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee (BAASC) to accept any staff suggested changes as the alternative credential field expands.
- Provide time for university personnel to organize on each campus to identify an inventory of alternative credentials. A grassroots effort on each campus is needed for the system to collect a comprehensive inventory.
- Examine software systems and existing frameworks that may help connect universities’ siloed credentialing systems and ensure interoperability of systems.
- Engage private, not for profit, funders to defray the costs for connecting university systems.

- Consider pilot institutions or phased in approaches to developing a comprehensive collection of alternative credentials.
- Designate a committee of university subject matter experts in the fields of alternative credentials along with provosts' academic designees to oversee progress on alternative credential recommendations and address any policy decisions. The committee may bring in chief data officers or information technology officers as needed to accomplish its work.

Timeline: Two Years

The CIRO and Other Designees thank the Board for its focus on the field of alternative credentials in a time when postsecondary institutions must be nimble to compete and fuel the needs of the Kansas workforce and economy.

Appendix A – CIROs and Other Representatives

CIROs

- Tammy Higgins (CIRO Chair), Director of Institutional Research, Pittsburg State University
- Erin Sullivan (CIRO Co-Chair), Assistant Registrar for Institutional Effectiveness, Pittsburg State University
- Gwen Bohling, Director of Official Reporting, University of Kansas
- Cynthia Farrier, Director of Data, Research and Planning, Kansas Board of Regents
- Jolanna Kord, former Assistant Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, Emporia State University
- Kristi Mills, Director of Data and Institutional Effectiveness, Fort Hays State University
- Kameron Neal, Associate Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Data Management and Analytics, Emporia State University
- Bin Ning, Associate Provost and Chief Data Officer, Kansas State University
- Matt Schuette, Director of Institutional Research and Academic Analytics, University of Kansas Medical Center
- Christa Smith, Executive Director of Strategic Analysis, Research and Reporting, Washburn University
- David Wright, Chief Data Officer, Wichita State University

Other Institutional Representatives

- Stacy Cordell, Assistant Vice Provost for Professional Programs, University of Kansas
- Gina Crabtree, University Registrar and Director of Enrollment Services, Wichita State University
- Andrew Cutright, Director of University Assessment, Fort Hays State University
- Irene Han, Senior Institutional Research Analyst, Emporia State University
- Joshua Huston, Institutional Research and Assessment Analyst, Washburn University
- Kaley Klaus, Interim Director for Professional and Continuing Education, Fort Hays State University
- Kimberly Moore, Executive Director of Workforce, Professional and Community Education, Wichita State University
- Sheila Markowitz, Assistant Vice President for Student Success, Emporia State University
- Jo Maseberg Tomlinson, Executive Director of Strategic Program Development, Kansas State University
- Jeni McRay, Assistant Provost of Internationalization and Strategic Initiatives, Fort Hays State University
- Melinda Roelfs, Assistant Vice President, Pittsburg State University
- Mary Shivley, Dean of the Honors College and Assistant Director of Admissions, Emporia State University
- Jerald Spotswood, Vice Provost, Emporia State University

Additional Kansas Board of Regents Staff Representatives

- Elaine Frisbie, Vice President for Finance and Administration, KBOR
- Nathan Snyder, Associate Director of Data, Research and Planning, KBOR
- Katie Geier, Project Specialist, KBOR

Appendix B – Definitions

The CIRO, charged with Board Goal #5 involving Alternative Credentials issued by the Universities, formed a subcommittee to draft high level definitions. In particular, the subcommittee was asked to define *Alternative Credentials* and *Industry-Recognized*, as well as the types of alternative credentials that may be reported at the system level.

Below are the recommended definitions. One important distinction is to use the term *workforce aligned* rather than *Industry Recognized Credentials (IRC)* to better encompass the work being done by the universities and not to conflict with similar definitions of IRC, which is used by the Postsecondary Technical Education Authority (TEA) for technical program approval.

Alternative Credentials

Alternative Credentials comprise microcredentials, badges, and continuing education learning. The credentials are verifiable, workforce aligned and earned through a higher education institution. Curricula are led by university-approved subject-matter experts and may include components of credit and noncredit offerings. These credentials do not include traditional postsecondary degrees, technical certificates, or Systemwide General Education endorsements, such as those approved through the Kansas Board of Regents. Learning is focused on skills or competencies that are directly linked to career growth, career change, or professional development.

Workforce Aligned Credentials

A credential that is sought or accepted by employers within the industry or businesses involved. These credentials are accepted, preferred, or required for screening, hiring, retention or advancement purposes and are verifiable by employers due to the credibility of the issuing postsecondary institution.

Continuing Education Learning

Continuing Education Learning programs are designed for professionals who are required to maintain their licenses or certifications, such as doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers, engineers, and others. This learning can be measured in a variety of ways depending on the industry or the licensing organization.

Microcredentials and/or Badges

Microcredentials and/or badges focus on learners' needs, skills, and/or career goals, and are developed and endorsed by the university. They are awarded based on demonstrated skill or competency in a specific area within a shorter or more flexible time period than a traditional degree. These credentials can be either stand-alone or stackable and may require an assessment for awarding of the credential.

Open Badges

Open Badges are types of badges that describe a method for packaging information about a single recognition or achievement, such as an earned microcredential, skill, competency, or degree. An Open Badge displays a visual token and has a defined metadata structure that verifies outcomes and achievements earned by recipients and can be shared electronically.