

**KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS
COUNCIL OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICERS
MINUTES
MAY 14, 2025**

The May 14, 2025, meeting of Council of Chief Academic Officers was called to order by chair Susan Bon at 9:10 a.m. The meeting was held virtually through Zoom, with an in-person option available in Suite 530, located in the Curtis State Office Building, 1000 S.W. Jackson, Topeka, KS 66612

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jill Arensdorf moved that the minutes of the April 16, 2025, meeting be approved. Monica Lounsbery seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

COUNCIL OF FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENTS UPDATE

Council of Faculty Senate Presidents Chair Norman Philipp provided an update on the Tuition Assistance Program proposal. Data on projected funding is still being compiled to provide clarity as requested by COBO and COCAO. The specific numbers being reviewed are the projected number of seats and the projected dollar value per campus. An update will be presented in June and potentially at the start of the new academic year. Currently, six out of seven institutions will submit nominees for the Faculty and Staff of the Year Award. One institution is still finalizing its criteria and should submit nominees for AY26.

FIRST READING

MS IN COMPUTATIONAL BIOLOGY - KU

Barbara Bichelmeyer shared an overview of the proposal for an MS in Computational Biology. KU offers a doctoral program in Computational Biology. This doctoral program is the only program in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences with no corresponding master's program as a stair-step. She introduced Professor Joanna Slusky, who provided an overview of the program. She shared that this program would offer students a broader range of options in this growing field.

BS IN STATISTICS – KU

Barbara Bichelmeyer introduced Department Chair of Mathematics Mat Johnson, who shared an overview of the proposal for the BS in Statistics. This program is expected to give students an explicitly marketable interdisciplinary degree that will enable them to advertise their specialized skillset to potential employers more than a general mathematics degree.

SECOND READING

AAS IN FEED AND FOOD MANUFACTURING - KSU

Jesse Mendez introduced Dr. Dan Moser, Associate Dean for Academic Programs for the College of Agriculture. Dr. Moser provided an overview of the proposal, stating that this program will address a national shortage in this field. The program would be unique to Kansas and the surrounding area, as only three other land-grant universities offer similar programs nationally. Barbara Bichelmeyer moved to approve the AAS in Feed and Food Manufacturing at KSU. Brent Thomas seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

BS IN NUCLEAR ENGINEERING - KSU

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. Jill Arensdorf moved to approve the BS in Nuclear Engineering at KSU. Barbara Bichelmeyer seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

OTHER MATTERS**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.

REQUEST TO CHANGE NAME OF BA IN PERFORMING ARTS TO BA IN MUSIC - FHSU

Jill Arensdorf shared an overview of the request to change the BA in Performing Arts name to a BA in Music. The theatre concentration was formally discontinued in Fall 2024. The change would also align with the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). Barbara Bichelmeyer moved to approve the name change request. Jesse Mendez seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSS OPPORTUNITIES THAT UNIVERSITIES ARE CONSIDERING OR PLANNING TO PURSUE IN THE FUTURE

Barbara Bichelmeyer shared that KU has several degree proposals being considered that may be presented to the council in the fall, including a BS in Human Biology, a BA/BGS in Intelligence and National Security Studies, a BS in Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences, a BS in Sports Psychology and Wellness, an MS in Sustainable Buildings, an MA in Historic Preservation, and an MSE in Transformative Education.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Susan Bon provided a reminder that the next COCAO meeting will be held on June 11.

ADJOURNMENT

Jill Arensdorf moved that the meeting be adjourned. Jesse Mendez seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:34 a.m.