

**KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS
COUNCIL OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICERS
MINUTES
MARCH 12, 2025**

Chair Susan Bon called to order the March 12, 2025, meeting of the Council of Chief Academic Officers at 9:16 a.m. The meeting was held virtually through Zoom with an in-person option held 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	Monica Lounsbery, WSU
Brent Thomas, ESU	Susan Bon, PSU	Rusty Monhollon, KBOR (<i>ex officio</i>)
Jill Arensdorf, FHSU	John Fritch, Washburn	

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Monica Lounsbery moved that the minutes of the February 12, 2025, meeting be approved. Jill Arensdorf seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

COUNCIL OF FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENTS UPDATE

Council of Faculty Senate Presidents Chair Norman Philipp provided an update on two bills currently in the legislature. First, he discussed HB 2348, on which the Council of Faculty Senate Presidents has issued an opposition statement. This bill is currently in the House Judiciary Committee. Next, he addressed SB76, the Given Name Act. After researching the matter, it was found that this issue affects less than one percent of students on the Pittsburg State University campus and three percent when including dual enrollment students. Consequently, the Council of Faculty Senate Presidents will likely not act on this matter.

FIRST READING

BBA IN SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Susan Bon introduced Paul Grimes, Dean of the College of Business, and Andy Klenke, Director of the School of Technology at PSU. Paul Grimes shared that the program is proposed in cooperation with the College of Technology and the Industrial Distribution program. Both programs will share the same General Education package and major courses in supply chain and distribution. Students earning the BBA will take the basic business package of courses, and the Industrial Distribution students will take the basic package of technology courses. The programs require adding two new courses, one in business and one in technology.

BS IN INDUSTRIAL DISTRIBUTION

Andy Klenke added that this program will provide students with hands-on learning opportunities and expand job opportunities through collaboration with the School of Business.

MED APPLIED BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS

Dr. Angela Beeler, Psychology Program Coordinator for Wichita State University, shared that this degree would be a total of 36 credit hours, with 21 currently offered. Three new courses will be created without the need for faculty changes. This program will better accommodate students needing a master's degree to sit for their Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) exam. The need for BCBA's has increased both in Kansas and the rest of the nation.

MS IN FORENSIC BIOLOGY

Monica Lounsbery introduced David Eichorn, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at WSU, and Dr. Yumi Suzuki, Interim Program Director for Forensics at WSU. Dr. Suzuki shared that the School of Criminal Justice and the Forensic Science program have experienced substantial growth over the past ten years. WSU anticipates student interest in forensic science, criminal justice, anthropology, biology, and chemistry. Both the Forensic Biology and Forensic Firearms (see below) programs will partner with the ATF Center of Excellence Lab.

MS IN FORENSIC FIREARMS

Dr. Yumi Suzuki shared that this program will have a traditional track, a track for trainees currently working in firearms departments for law enforcement agencies and a firearms examiner track for certified firearms examiners pursuing a graduate degree. A director will be hired to lead the Forensic Biology program and a faculty coordinator for the Forensic Firearms program. Courses will be taught by professionals in their respective fields.

SECOND READING

PHD IN EDUCATION & BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS

Monica Lounsbery stated the title should be corrected to PhD in Education & Behavioral Studies. She introduced Jennifer Friend, Dean of the College of Applied Sciences, and Dr. Philip Mullins, Associate Professor of Counseling at WSU. Dr. Mullins shared that this program will have concentrations in Clinical Mental Health Counselor Education and Educational Psychology. The goal is to prepare graduate students for leadership roles in academia, clinical supervision, and applied research. This is a 60-credit-hour program with 30 core shared credits and 30 specialty credits. The external review found that the program addresses a critical shortage of professionals in these concentrations. Community leaders support the program for its flexibility, research-driven approach, and utilization of existing resources. Monica Lounsbery moved to approve the PhD in Education & Behavioral Studies at WSU. Jill Arensdorf seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

BS IN NUTRITION

Barbara Bichelmeyer provided an overview of the proposal, noting that KSU is working on a complementary program at the KSU Olathe campus. She introduced Stuart Day, Dean of the School of Professional Studies at the University of Kansas, who added that this program will attract students from surrounding states.

Jesse Mendez moved to approve the BS in Nutrition at KU. Brent Thomas seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

OTHER MATTERS

FACULTY & STAFF TUITION PROPOSAL FOLLOW-UP

Norman Philipp shared data regarding the tuition assistance programs at KBOR institutions. He emphasized that while faculty and employee tuition assistance is available at all KBOR institutions, post-master's opportunities are not equal across the state. A unified policy is being proposed to allow faculty and staff to apply tuition assistance benefits to any program of study offered by a KBOR university.

The data shows that utilization of tuition assistance programs is highest at KSU and WSU, with 10 percent and eight percent of faculty and staff utilizing the program, respectively. Other KBOR institutions have a utilization rate of three to four percent. A survey sent to KBOR institution employees indicates increased interest in a KBOR-wide tuition assistance program if implemented within the next 10 years. The majority of those surveyed believe that implementing this program will enhance employee retention and recruitment. A rollout plan is suggested in three phases:

- **Phase One:** Online programs only.
- **Phase Two:** Expand to include hybrid programs.

- **Phase Three:** Expand to include in-person programs.

Two possible financial models are proposed:

- **Scholarship Model:** The employee receives approval, and the employing institution provides the value of its tuition assistance (TA) program to the providing institution.
- **Reimbursement Model:** The employee enrolls in the course and pays tuition. Upon course completion, the employing institution reimburses the value of its TA program to the employee.

Monica Lounsbery expressed appreciation for the effort and the research behind this proposal. Barbara Bichelmeyer suggested clarifying that the employee will pay the difference in tuition between the employing institution and the providing institution. She also suggested considering a cap on credit hours.

FACULTY OF THE YEAR AWARD POLICY UPDATE

Director for Academic Affairs Sam Christy-Dangermond shared an update to the policy revision, in the second sentence of the second paragraph, which now states that “The president or chancellor of each state university and KUMC shall annually identify **one** staff member at each state university and KUMC.” This change will go to Governance and is on the full Board agenda for this month’s meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Susan Bon reminded the group that the next COCAO meeting will be held on April 16 at Pittsburg State University.

ADJOURNMENT

Barbara Bichelmeyer moved that the meeting be adjourned. Monica Lounsbery seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:24 a.m.