

WASHBURN UNIVERSITY OF TOPEKA
BOARD OF REGENTS
MINUTES
March 23, 2026

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Dietrick called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. in the Bradbury Thompson Alumni Center on the Washburn University campus.

II. Roll Call

Present were:

Regent Buhler
Regent Dicus
Regent Dietrick
Regent Fisher
Regent Jeffrey
Regent Nave
Regent Romero
Regent Sourk

III. Officer Reports

A. Chair's Report

Chair Dietrick noted with the new committee structure board members have been actively meeting this past month. The Executive and Governance committee will discuss the President's Assessment later in Executive Session. Several Board members will be attending the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) national conference in Denver, Colorado this weekend. It is a two-day conference focused on higher education leadership and governance.

B. President's Report

President Mazachek noted the excitement in honoring faculty today for promotion and tenure and to celebrate their years of service. The university recently named Dr. Crystal Stevens the Dean of the Harmony Hines School of Nursing. Washburn recognized the Nino-Elliott family as Washburn's First-Generation Family of the Year.

President Mazachek shared the Brenneman School of Business maintained its AACSB accreditation for a six-year term, the maximum possible. It is an honor earned only by 6% of the world's business schools. Seven Washburn students presented at the Research Day

at the Capitol led by Dr. Kerry Wynn. The event highlights the work of Kansas undergraduate students. The research project the students selected was on box turtles.

President Mazachek reported the Leadership Challenge event was held earlier this month. This two-day leadership competition had 200 high school and college students participate and over 170 volunteers from Washburn and the Topeka community. Thank you to Dr. Lauren Edelman and her team for this successful event. Over 160 middle and high school students came to campus on February 28 for Kansas History Day. The students competed individually and in groups in various categories such as exhibits, websites, documentaries, and historical papers.

Chair Dietrick noted an item he missed in his report. On March 5 the Board approved the naming of the Sneed Indoor Athletic Facility. The university held an event honoring the Sneed family with the unveiling of their name on the building. Special thanks to the Sneed family.

C. Committee Report(s)

1. Compliance, Audit and Risk Committee

Regent Romero reported the committee received a Cybersecurity report on keeping the university network safe and reminded staff to do their security awareness training. The committee also received updates on campus safety and legislative items, as well as an update on the audit process. The university is currently taking applications for auditors.

2. Finance and Capital Strategies Committee

Regent Sourk shared the committee met today and discussed budget assumptions, what is trending moving into next year, salary programs, capital projects on campus and at Tech North, and tuition. The full budget will be presented at the June board meeting.

3. Executive and Governance Committee

Regent Dietrick noted that on February 12 the board attended the Shared Governance Retreat along with faculty and staff. A consultant from AGB led them in good discussions. The Executive and Governance Committee is excited to discuss the presidential assessment today in Executive Session.

IV. New Business

A. Consent Agenda

Motion by Regent Dicus and second by Regent Sourk to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed.

- 1. Approval of Minutes of the February 5, 2026 Meeting**
- 2. Liquidated Claims Approval – December 2025**
- 3. Liquidated Claims Approval – January 2026**
- 4. Faculty/Staff Personnel Actions**

B. Action Items

1. Tenure and Promotion

Vice President Fritch shared the faculty being recognized today is like a class who provide the backbone of service, teaching, and research for the university. This group publishes in the top journals within their discipline. They are the people leading our academic programs, the Chairs of departments, and the faculty in charge of assessment. Tenure is important for conducting research, allows faculty to teach in innovative and creative ways and gives them the opportunity to study what they wish to study as scholars.

President Mazachek recommends tenure and promotion to Associate Professor to Julie Boydston, Carson Kay, Heather Lassman, and Belinda Eckert; and promotion to Professor to Andrew Herbig, Rhonda Peterson Dealey, Amy Memmer and Lara Rivera.

Motion by Regent Jeffrey and second by Regent Nave to award tenure and promotion to the faculty listed above. Motion passed.

2. Emeriti

Vice President John Fritch shared the university honors faculty who have made a significant contribution to Washburn University with the Emeritus title.

Dr. Dimitri Nizovtsev, Associate Dean of the Breneman School of Business, joined the economics faculty in 2001 and served for 25 years. He received the School of Business Dicus Excellence in Teaching Award three times, numerous student honors, and earned the Ned Fleming Excellence in Teaching Award in 2015. He is an outstanding advocate for our students.

Dr. Michael Reading joined the faculty in the Education department in 1995 and was promoted to Professor in 2003. He demonstrated excellence in teaching, scholarship and service. As Chair of the Department Assessment and Accreditation Committee, he led all education programs through successful accreditation at both the state and national level.

Dr. Pamela Schmidt joined the School of Business faculty in 2012, was promoted to professor in 2021 and named the William Lyman Dibble Professor. Her main area of teaching was in accounting systems and business data analytics. She was active in research, with publications in many top-tier accounting journals.

Dr. Louella Moore, Professor of Accounting, joined Washburn in 2012 and was named David Mosso Professor in 2022. She taught undergraduate and graduate accounting courses emphasizing applied learning, critical analysis, and ethical reasoning. She has mentored Honor students and received recognition for instructional impact.

Caren Dick is a 1984 graduate of Washburn's School of Nursing. She joined the faculty in 1996 as a pediatric clinical instructor and earned tenure in 2012. Over three decades she taught pediatrics, community health, developed the Family Health course and built strong community partnerships in the Topeka community. She received Washburn's excellence in teaching award in 2002 and the service award in 2009.

Sue Unruh joined the School of Nursing in 2004. She taught numerous courses in the undergraduate and graduate nursing programs. Sue presented lectures regionally, nationally, and internationally on acute care nursing. She received the Ned Fleming Excellence in Teaching Award in 2016.

Georgina Tenny joined Washburn in 2004 as a Lecturer and was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 2018. She has been instrumental in growing the Spanish programs at Washburn through her passionate work with students for 21 years. She taught beginning language classes and spearheaded faculty-led study abroad programs to several countries and mentored the Spanish club.

Lori Fenton, Librarian Technical Services, came to Washburn in 2007 when the library was beginning to transition from a book and print repository to a library serving a modern university learning community by unifying digital resources, literacy instruction, and spaces for learning and reflecting. She was a critical force in that transition for 18 years.

President Mazachek recommends the Board of Regents designate Dr. Dmitri Nizovtsev, Associate Dean Emeritus and Professor; Dr. Michael Rettig, Professor Emeritus; Dr. Pamela Schmidt, Professor Emeritus; Dr. Louella Moore, Professor Emeritus; Caren Dick, Assistant Professor Emeritus; Sue Unruh, Assistant Professor Emeritus; Georgina Tenny, Senior Lecturer Emeritus; Lori Fenton, Librarian Emeritus.

Motion by Regent Sourk and second by Regent Buhler to award Emeriti status to the faculty listed above. Motion passed.

3. Eminentes Universitatis

Vice President John Fritch presented this item. Washburn awards the Eminentes Universitatis designation to long-term employees who meet the following requirements. They have been employed as technical instructors or staff employees for a period of ten years or more; they retire in good standing; and service performed is judged to have been meritorious. Today we have one employee meeting these requirements.

Tara Porter began her career at Washburn in 1999 in the Registrar's Office and then moved to the Education Department as the licensure officer where she was a valuable member for close to 25 years. Her dedication and commitment to Washburn and the Education Department helped many students complete the program and become successful teachers. President Mazachek recommends the Board of Regents bestow the status of Eminentes Universitatis to Tara Porter.

Motion by Regent Romero and second by Regent Nave to award Eminentes Universitatis to Tara Porter. Motion passed.

Regent Sourk left at 4:05 p.m.

4. Cabinetry and Millwork Manufacturing – Certificate A

Vice President Fritch presented this item and noted a Certificate A in Cabinetry and Millwork Manufacturing creates a pathway to gain foundational skills, presents the opportunity to enter the workforce quicker, and meets the workforce demand for cabinet and millwork manufacturing. President Mazachek recommends the Board approve the addition of the Cabinetry and Millwork Manufacturing, Certificate A program.

Motion by Regent Fisher and second by Regent Jeffrey to approve the Certificate A program in Cabinetry and Millwork. Motion passed.

5. Graduate Certificate in Health Science

Vice President Fritch shared this 12-credit Graduate Certificate in Health Science will support organizational healthcare environments. It serves as a stand-alone credential and may also be used as a direct pathway for future completion of the Master of Health Science degree. President Mazachek recommends the Board approve the addition of the Graduate Certificate in Health Science.

Motion by Regent Buhler and second by Regent Romero to approve the Graduate Certificate in Health Science. Motion passed.

6. Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Teaching

Vice President Fritch presented this item and noted this certificate is designed to prepare Criminal Justice graduate students for teaching roles in college and university classrooms. This interdisciplinary certificate equips students with best practices and tools for teaching. Retiring law enforcement officers are interested in this certification. A question was asked if this model could work for other majors and Vice President Fritch acknowledged they are looking into other disciplines. President Mazachek recommends the Board approve the addition of the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Teaching.

Motion by Regent Romero and second by Regent Jeffrey to approve this certificate. Motion passed.

7. M.Ed. in the Science of Literacy

Vice President Fritch presented this item and explained the Master of Education in the Science of Literacy will replace the Master of Education Reading Specialist Program. The courses are sufficiently different therefore it is a new program. It aligns with KBOR which requires all teachers to have course work in science of literacy. President Mazachek recommends the Board approve the addition of the Master of Education in the Science of Literacy.

Motion by Regent Dicus and second by Regent Fisher to approve this program. Motion passed.

8. Graduate Certificate in Science of Literacy

Vice President Fritch shared the Graduate Certificate in the Science of Literacy is designed to provide pre K-12 educators with knowledge and skills in evidence-based literacy instruction. The certificate responds to the demand in this field and provides an accessible pathway for educators without pursuing an additional degree. President Mazachek recommends the Board approve the addition of the Graduate Certificate in the Science of Literacy.

Motion by Regent Nave and second by Regent Jeffrey to approve this certificate. Motion passed.

9. Washburn USW Local 307L-4 Memorandum of Agreement

Vice President Luther Lee presented this item and noted the current Memorandum of Agreement between Washburn University and the United Steel Workers Union expired on January 31, 2026, with an agreed extension until March 26. Luther recognized the work of the negotiating team including Teresa Lee and the Union leadership.

Key items are a new three-year agreement which will expire on January 31, 2029. Changes were made to bolster recruitment and to retain talent in current positions.

They increased the number of senior level designations to the position titles for auto shop mechanic, carpenter, electrician, HVAC mechanic, painter and plumber. Washburn is proposing increases averaging 1.8% in hourly pay for collective bargaining unit positions retroactive to February 1, 2026. President Mazachek recommends the Board approve the new Memorandum of Agreement with the United Steel Workers Union.

Motion by Regent Nave and second by Regent Buhler to approve the Memorandum of Agreement with the United Steel Workers Union. Motion passed.

10. FY27 Housing and Dining Rates

Vice President Luther Lee presented this item and recognized the hard work of Teresa Clouch and Janel Rutherford in researching and compiling the data. Rate increases were influenced by a couple of key factors including operations, utilities and capital projects. Maintaining healthy reserves to support unexpected expenses is also a factor. Washburn pays attention to peer institutions to stay within a fair range. This year the university proposes an average room rate increase of 2.99% and an average meal plan rate increase of 4.12%. President Mazachek recommends the Board approve the 2026-2027 housing and dining rates as provided.

A question was asked if they got feedback from student organizations. Teresa Clouch noted the information was shared with WSGA and through the Director of Residential Living speaking with the students. It was also asked how housing contracts are trending for the fall. Currently contracts are up from last year.

Motion by Regent Dicus and second by Regent Romero to approve the housing and dining rates. Motion passed.

11. FY27 Capital Requests

Vice President Luther Lee presented this item and noted this is the annual process where the Board approves the list of proposed capital projects planned for the upcoming year. He recognized the hard work of Eric Just and John Haverty working with staff across campus to understand the needs and Rhonda Thornburg for compiling the numbers. These expenses are funded by the Debt Retirement and Construction Fund.

The Chief Information Officer and the Assistant Vice President of Facilities work with units across campus to evaluate needs and establish priorities which are then reviewed by Cabinet and the President. Expenditures are still subject to purchasing rules and Board approval. President Mazachek recommends approval of project expenditures for FY27 to include \$3.8 million in capital expenditures,

\$343,000 for equipment, and \$844,000 for technology, for a total of \$5 million to be funded by FY26 revenues.

Motion by Regent Jeffrey and second by Regent Buhler to approve the FY 27 Capital Requests. Motion passed.

12. FY26 Washburn Tech Capital Expenditures

Vice President Luther Lee reported each year the Board approves the proposed capital maintenance, equipment, and technology equipment projects from the Capital Outlay Fund for Washburn Tech. The proposed list will be funded from the current FY26 Capital Outlay State Aid and Washburn Tech matching funds. Total budget for capital expenditures is \$984,690 comprised of \$492,345 from Capital Outlay State Aid and \$492,345 from required matching funds. President Mazachek recommends the Board approve the proposed FY26 capital expenditures for Washburn Tech.

Motion by Regent Romero and second by Regent Dicus to approve the Washburn Tech capital expenditures. Motion passed.

13. Ratification of Approved NMR Spectrometer Purchase

Vice President Luther Lee presented this item and shared on February 11, 2026, the Chemistry department expressed an urgent need to purchase a Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) Spectrometer to replace their Varian NMR, which was purchased in November 2007 and was no longer operational. The university obtained quotes from multiple vendors, but timing constraints did not allow for a formal RFP process. The quote from Bruker Biospin Corporation totaled \$285,505, which was \$163,000 less than the most comparable quotes received.

Emergency authorization of this purchase was requested, and the purchase was approved by President Mazachek upon consultation with and support from Board Chair Dietrick. The purchase of \$285,505 was funded by an allocation of \$250,00 from the Kansas Idea Network of Biomedical Research Excellence, with the remaining \$35,505 coming from identified university funds. President Mazachek recommends the Board ratify the approved purchase of the NMR Spectrometer.

Motion by Regent Fisher and second by Regent Jeffrey to ratify the approved purchase of the NMR Spectrometer. Motion passed.

C. Information Item(s)

1. Addition of Roof Deck to Advisor's Excel Hall

Eric Just, Assistant Vice President Facilities Services, shared during construction of the Advisors Excell Hall project, the idea of a roof deck on the south side of the

building was considered. The roof deck would go on the second floor above the classrooms. The Foundation has identified donors to fully fund the additional scope up to a maximum budget of \$500,000. The total project budget will increase to \$43,000,000.

V. Next Meeting Date

A. Board of Regent Meeting – May 7, 2026

VI. Executive Session

Chair Dietrick moved the regular session of this meeting to be recessed immediately following a 5-minute break into executive session for 20 minutes to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel. The open meeting shall resume at 5:08 p.m. in the same room. The subject of this executive session will be for performance assessment of the President. Regent Nave seconded the motion. Motion passed at 4:43 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 5:10 p.m.

VII. Adjournment

Regent Dicus moved the meeting to be adjourned and was seconded by Regent Fisher. The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Marc Fried
Secretary, Board of Regents