

Washburn University Board of Regents



Jennifer Sourk, Chair
John Dicus
Jake Fisher

Angel Romero, Vice Chair
John Dietrick
Linda Jeffrey

Shelly Buhler
Spencer Duncan
John Nave

Washburn Mission Statement

Washburn creates educational pathways to success for everyone.

Board of Regents Meeting
Oct 15, 2026 3:30 PM - 5:00 PM CDT
Kansas Room, Memorial Union

I Call to Order

II Roll Call

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

III Officer Reports

A Chair's Report

B President's Report

1 Presentation: HLC Quality Improvement Project - Melanie Worsley

C Report(s)

1 Finance and Capital Strategies Committee - Regent Romero

IV New Business

A Consent Agenda

1 Approval of Minutes of the September 10, 2026, Board Meeting

B Action Items

1 Health Plan Renewal - Luther Lee

2 New Program: Digital Media Design, AAS and Cert C - Zach Frank

3 Inactivation of Two Washburn Tech Certificate Programs - Zach Frank

V Informational Item

A Football Locker Room and Team Room Update

VI Next Meeting Date

A Board of Regent Meeting - December 3 , 2026

VII Executive Session

WASHBURN UNIVERSITY OF TOPEKA
BOARD OF REGENTS
MINUTES
September 10, 2026

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Sourk called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. in the Kansas Room of the Memorial Union on the Washburn University campus.

II. Roll Call

Present were:

Regent Buhler
Regent Dicus
Regent Dietrick
Regent Duncan
Regent Fisher
Regent Jeffrey **by Zoom*
Regent Nave
Regent Romero
Regent Sourk

III. Fiscal Year 2026 Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing

Chair Sourk described the process that would be followed and then declared the hearing open for public comment at 3:31 p.m. Chair Sourk asked if anyone present wished to speak at the open hearing. Secretary Fried announced no one had signed up to speak in advance. Chair Sourk opened the hearing at 3:32 p.m. One person, Jack Calcutt, a candidate for Shawnee County Commissioner, registered to speak at 3:33 p.m. and addressed the Board in regard to the rising costs of property taxes. Mr. Calcutt asked the Board to consider another source to raise revenue.

With no one else requesting to speak, the hearing closed at 3:35 p.m. It was moved by Regent Buhler and seconded by Regent Romero to approve the revenue neutral rate published. A roll call vote was taken, and the results were as follows:

Regent Buhler – Yes
Regent Dicus – Yes
Regent Dietrick – Yes
Regent Duncan – Yes
Regent Fisher – Yes
Regent Jeffrey – Yes

Regent Nave – Yes
Regent Romero – Yes
Regent Sourk – Yes

Motion passed.

IV. Fiscal Year 2026 Public Budget Hearing

Chair Sourk described the process that would be followed and then declared the hearing open for public comment at 3:36 p.m. Secretary Fried announced that no one had signed up to speak at the hearing.

Chair Sourk asked if anyone present wanted to make remarks. No one responded. Chair Sourk closed the public hearing at 3:37 p.m. Motion by Regent Nave and second by Regent Dicus to approve the Fiscal Year 2027 public budget. Motion passed.

The regular meeting resumed at 3:37 p.m.

V. Officer Reports

A. Chair's Report

Chair Sourk shared the Board held an all-day Retreat on August 12. Representatives from Core Education Services engaged with the Board and are working towards a strategic planning process. Chair Sourk noted the October Board meeting has been moved to October 15. Board members will attend a reception this afternoon to meet with faculty and staff to discuss the work they have accomplished on Shared Governance.

B. President's Report

President Mazachek reported the campus is off to a roaring start. Students have been on campus for four weeks. They are experiencing record attendance at events, and this is the first class that went to high school uninterrupted by COVID. Fall sports have kicked off and are going great. The President recently hosted new faculty at the Ross House.

President Mazachek shared the enrollment census is tomorrow and will be officially released the end of September. The new Kansas Board of Regents CEO, Dr. Jenn Bonds-Raacke, recently met with the President and toured campus including the Tech campuses. There were great conversations and shared vision.

President Mazachek introduced two important members of her cabinet. Steve Bryant-Collier, Acting Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management. Steve has served Washburn for more than four years and brings nearly 20 years of higher education leadership and administrative experience to the position. Dr. Zach Frank,

Acting Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, joined Washburn in 2011 as director of the Physical Therapist Assistant program. He transitioned to the Master of Health Care Education program in 2018, became associate dean of the School of Applied Studies in 2019, served as acting dean in 2021 and appointed dean in 2022.

VI. New Business

A. Consent Agenda

- 1. Approval of Minutes of the August 11, 2026 Special Meeting**
- 2. Approval of the Minutes of the August 12, 2026 Board Retreat Meeting**
- 3. Liquidated Claims – May 2026**
- 4. Liquidated Claims – June 2026**
- 5. Liquidated Claims – July 2026**

Motion by Regent Romero, and second by Regent Dietrick to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed.

B. Action Items

1. Eminentes Universitatis

Dr. Zach Frank, Acting Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, noted Washburn University awards the Eminentes Universitatis designation to long-term employees who meet the following requirements: employed as a technical instructor, staff employee or equivalent for a period of ten years or more; and retire in good standing. The University will recognize two employees today.

Debra Mikulka began at Washburn on September 1, 2010, as a grant facilitator. She held several different grant related positions during her time with Washburn, including Project Director for the statewide KanTRAIN grant which was nationally recognized. She later served as the Director of Sponsored Projects, and was instrumental in facilitating the advancement of Washburn's sponsored projects. Ms. Mikulka retired on June 30, 2026.

Loren Ferre, Director of Athletics, shared Ron Wessel started with Washburn as the equipment manager for Athletics on January 4, 1980. For over 46 years he worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure the student athletes and coaches were ready to play. Ron had a positive impact on the student athlete experience. This was highlighted when a former student athlete provided a gift for the conference room within the Sneed Indoor Practice facility to be officially named the Ron Wessel Conference Room. Mr. Wessel retired on June 30, 2026.

Motion by Regent Nave, and second by Regent Dicus to bestow the status of Eminentes Universitatis to Debra Mikulka and Ron Wessel. Motion passed.

2. Strategic Planning Engagement – Core Education

President Mazachek introduced two Core Education items. The President has been working closely with Core Education Services PBC to develop the next strategic direction for Washburn. Core Education services will assist the president in leading a comprehensive strategic planning process from September 2026 through June 2027, with a final plan being presented to the Board for adoption in June 2027. The plan will establish the University's major priorities, initiatives, and investments for the next three years, as well as a three-year implementation roadmap.

President Mazachek shared the engagement will include an environmental scan and market analysis, university community engagement, and a strategic plan development. This engagement will extend from the anticipated start date in September 2026 through June 2027. The total professional fee for the engagement is \$330,000. Washburn will also reimburse travel expenses approved in advance.

Motion by Regent Romero, and second by Regent Dietrick to authorize the President to enter into an agreement with Core Education Services for the strategic planning project in an amount not to exceed \$330,000.

3. Core Education Advisory Services for Enrollment

President Mazachek reported Washburn University has experienced enrollment growth for the past four years and continues to focus on strengthening enrollment and improving the student experience. The tuition revenue accounts for approximately 60% of Washburn University's revenues, and enrollment drives nearly all revenue sources for Washburn Tech. Core Education Services will provide immediate operational and implementation support through the Fall 2027 enrollment cycle. They will also help develop a comprehensive three-to-five-year enrollment strategy. The engagement is organized around two workstreams that combine assessment, strategy, implementation support, and internal capacity-building.

The President shared Core's Senior Vice President of Business Model Transformation will serve as Acting Chief Revenue Officer and will report directly to the President. It will provide executive leadership and coordination for functions that affect enrollment growth and net tuition revenue, including recruitment strategies, financial aid assistance, pricing strategies, marketing investment and performances, and retention initiatives. The agreement will run from the effective date through August 2027. Assuming 12 months of monthly services, the base contract amount will not exceed \$405,000, plus reasonable and necessary travel expenses.

Motion by Regent Dietrick, and second Regent Romero to authorize the President to enter into an agreement with Core Education Services PBC for the enrollment

management transformation project with a base amount not to exceed \$405,000. Motion passed.

4. Renewal of Casualty Insurance

Vice President Luther Lee presented this item and thanked Mark Wilkerson and Sarah Van Ryn with IMA as well as Chris Herera, Washburn Safety Director, for their hard work. They worked with our current market provider on the proposed package. The coverage will run from October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027.

Vice President Lee introduced Sarah Van Ryn, Account Executive with IMA to provide a 2026-2027 insurance market update. She shared workers' compensation continues to be stable in 2026. The property market continues to indicate more positive results. The market results continue to show increase in auto rates. The general liability is more stable than auto but with strong safety protocols and procedures required on tougher exposures. The primary umbrella coverage has seen large rate increases because of higher auto legal settlements.

Motion by Regent Dicus, and second by Regent Nave to approve the renewal of casualty insurance coverage for \$677,913 for fiscal year 2027.

5. Resolution for Authorization of Kansas Municipal Investment Pool Transactions

Vice President Luther Lee reported the university periodically utilizes the State of Kansas Municipal Investment Pool as an alternative to bank deposits. The account must be initiated and authorized by employees designated and approved by the Board. The resolution will allow a new employee, Robynn Barney, to have reconciliation of the account.

Motion by Regent Romero, and second by Regent Dietrick to adopt the attached resolution.

VII. Next Meeting Date

A. Board of Regent Meeting – October 15, 2026

VII. Executive Session

Chair Sourk moved the regular session of this meeting to be recessed immediately following a 5-minute break into executive session for 15 minutes to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel. The subject of the executive session will be to discuss situations involving one or more Washburn employees and to protect the privacy of the employee or employees involved. The Chair invited President Mazachek to attend the executive session. Seconded by Regent Duncan. Motion passed.

Executive Session began 4:29 p.m.

Open Session resumed 4:45 p.m.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Regent Romero and seconded by Regent Fisher. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned 4:50 p.m.

Washburn University Board of Regents

SUBJECT: Health Plan Renewal

DESCRIPTION:

Washburn has reviewed the past utilization history of our health plans (medical, prescription and dental) provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas (BCBSKS). Washburn's medical plan is a non-grandfathered, self-funded plan and the dental plan is also self-funded.

Overall, the cost of health care services continues to rise. The cost of our health care benefit does not just include the amount of claims paid; it also includes administrative costs, including fixed costs and stop-loss factors, needed for BCBSKS to properly administer and manage the plans on our behalf. These administrative costs, while still competitively priced, continue to rise.

BCBSKS estimates our increased medical, prescription, and dental claims utilization will increase 8.4% (\$1,186,647) in 2027. Approximately 88% of plan funding comes from Washburn, with employees funding the remaining 12%. As we are a self-funded plan, Washburn maintains a health plan reserve amount large enough to pay for all claims incurred during a plan year. This reserve amount is decreasing due to our increased utilization and thus we need to make plan premium adjustments in order to maintain adequate funding for future claims payment.

While Washburn has been able to hold the employee portion of the health insurance premiums relatively flat for active employees over the last nine years, with a modest increase in employee only medical premiums in 2025, we will need to implement an increase to all medical plan coverages for 2027. Even with the medical plan coverage increase, we continue to remain competitive in our employee insurance premium costs, as benchmarked with key competitors in our local community. There is no increase needed for the dental plan premiums for 2027.

The attached premium sheets identify the employee premium amounts, by plan, as well as those amounts paid by Washburn to continue the support of health plan premiums. The cost for continuing medical plan benefits for non-active employees will increase 8% due to projected claims utilization. Married couples, who both work at Washburn and are benefit eligible, will continue to have the opportunity to cover a dependent child/ren. In those circumstances, the married individual in the higher premium tier will continue to be the primary insurer for covering child/ren.

Washburn will continue to monitor the health plan utilization and our employee wellness program to determine if future changes are necessary.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The FY27 Benefit budget contains sufficient funds to cover the University's portion of the premiums.

RECOMMENDATION:

President Mazachek recommends Board of Regents approval to renew Washburn's Employee Health Plan for one-year, effective January 1, 2027.

PLAN	WU Base Plan				WU Buy-Up Plan			
	Single	Employee + Child/ren	Employee + Spouse	Family	Single	Employee + Child/ren	Employee + Spouse	Family
Salary > \$62,001 (Tier C)								
CY 2026 Employee Total	\$ 50.00	\$ 287.69	\$ 350.09	\$ 724.91	\$ 109.44	\$ 382.55	\$ 451.77	\$ 871.24
CY 2026 Washburn Total	<u>731.12</u>	<u>1,243.37</u>	<u>1,238.32</u>	<u>1,592.92</u>	<u>687.36</u>	<u>1,178.42</u>	<u>1,167.72</u>	<u>1,501.42</u>
CY 2026 Total Premium	<u>781.12</u>	<u>1,531.06</u>	<u>1,588.41</u>	<u>2,317.83</u>	<u>796.80</u>	<u>1,560.97</u>	<u>1,619.49</u>	<u>2,372.66</u>
CY 2027 Employee Total	\$ 65.00	\$ 302.69	\$ 365.09	\$ 739.91	\$ 124.44	\$ 397.55	\$ 466.77	\$ 886.24
CY 2027 Washburn Total	778.61	1,350.85	1,350.39	1,763.35	736.10	1,288.30	1,282.28	1,676.23
CY 2027 Total Premium	843.61	1,653.54	1,715.48	2,503.26	860.54	1,685.85	1,749.05	2,562.47
Salary \$45,001 - \$62,000 (Tier B)								
CY 2026 Employee Total	\$ 10.00	\$ 196.46	\$ 243.50	\$ 473.26	\$ 69.44	\$ 308.50	\$ 356.84	\$ 644.35
CY 2026 Washburn Total	<u>771.12</u>	<u>1,334.60</u>	<u>1,344.91</u>	<u>1,844.57</u>	<u>727.36</u>	<u>1,252.47</u>	<u>1,262.65</u>	<u>1,728.31</u>
CY 2026 Total Premium	<u>781.12</u>	<u>1,531.06</u>	<u>1,588.41</u>	<u>2,317.83</u>	<u>796.80</u>	<u>1,560.97</u>	<u>1,619.49</u>	<u>2,372.66</u>
CY 2027 Employee Total	\$ 20.00	\$ 206.46	\$ 253.50	\$ 483.26	\$ 79.44	\$ 318.50	\$ 366.84	\$ 654.35
CY 2027 Washburn Total	823.61	1,447.08	1,461.98	2,020.00	781.10	1,367.35	1,382.21	1,908.12
CY 2027 Total Premium	843.61	1,653.54	1,715.48	2,503.26	860.54	1,685.85	1,749.05	2,562.47
Salary <= \$45,000 (Tier A)								
CY 2026 Employee Total	\$ 5.00	\$ 115.82	\$ 145.93	\$ 246.06	\$ 64.44	\$ 227.80	\$ 259.35	\$ 417.34
CY 2026 Washburn Total	<u>776.12</u>	<u>1,415.24</u>	<u>1,442.48</u>	<u>2,071.77</u>	<u>732.36</u>	<u>1,333.17</u>	<u>1,360.14</u>	<u>1,955.32</u>
CY 2026 Total Premium	<u>781.12</u>	<u>1,531.06</u>	<u>1,588.41</u>	<u>2,317.83</u>	<u>796.80</u>	<u>1,560.97</u>	<u>1,619.49</u>	<u>2,372.66</u>
CY 2027 Employee Total	\$ 10.00	\$ 120.82	\$ 150.93	\$ 251.06	\$ 69.44	\$ 232.80	\$ 264.35	\$ 422.34
CY 2027 Washburn Total	833.61	1,532.72	1,564.55	2,252.20	791.10	1,453.05	1,484.70	2,140.13
CY 2027 Total Premium	843.61	1,653.54	1,715.48	2,503.26	860.54	1,685.85	1,749.05	2,562.47
PLAN	WU High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP)							
	Single	Employee + Child/ren	Employee + Spouse	Family				
HDHP - All Tiers								
CY 2026 Employee Total	\$ -	\$ 170.84	\$ 211.74	\$ 411.53				
CY 2026 Washburn Total	<u>781.12</u>	<u>1,360.22</u>	<u>1,376.67</u>	<u>1,906.30</u>				
CY 2026 Total Premium	<u>781.12</u>	<u>1,531.06</u>	<u>1,588.41</u>	<u>2,317.83</u>				
CY 2027 Employee Total	\$ 5.00	\$ 175.84	\$ 216.74	\$ 416.53				
CY 2027 Washburn Total	838.61	1,477.70	1,498.74	2,086.73				
CY 2027 Total Premium	843.61	1,653.54	1,715.48	2,503.26				
With Employer Contribution to:								
Health Savings Account	\$ 50.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00	\$ 100.00				

PLAN	WU Base Plan				WU Buy-Up Plan			
	Single	Employee + Child/ren	Employee + Spouse	Family	Single	Employee + Child/ren	Employee + Spouse	Family
Part-time								
CY 2026 Employee Total	\$ ~~116.52~~	\$ ~~359.61~~	\$ ~~437.61~~	\$ ~~906.14~~	\$ ~~128.70~~	\$ ~~478.18~~	\$ ~~564.71~~	\$ ~~1,089.05~~
CY 2026 Washburn Total	~~664.60~~	~~\$ 1,171.45~~	~~\$ 1,150.80~~	~~\$ 1,411.69~~	~~\$ 668.10~~	~~\$ 1,082.79~~	~~\$ 1,054.78~~	~~\$ 1,283.61~~
CY 2026 Total Premium	~~781.12~~	~~1,531.06~~	~~1,588.41~~	~~2,317.83~~	~~796.80~~	~~1,560.97~~	~~1,619.49~~	~~2,372.66~~
CY 2027 Employee Total	\$ 131.52	\$ 374.61	\$ 452.61	\$ 921.14	\$ 143.70	\$ 493.18	\$ 579.71	\$ 1,104.05
CY 2027 Washburn Total	712.09	1,278.93	1,262.87	1,582.12	716.84	1,192.67	1,169.34	1,458.42
CY 2027 Total Premium	843.61	1,653.54	1,715.48	2,503.26	860.54	1,685.85	1,749.05	2,562.47

PLAN	WU High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP)			
	Single	Employee + Child/ren	Employee + Spouse	Family
HDHP - Part-time				
CY 2026 Employee Total	\$ ~~92.62~~	\$ ~~312.70~~	\$ ~~380.53~~	\$ ~~787.95~~
CY 2026 Washburn Total	~~688.50~~	~~\$ 1,218.36~~	~~\$ 1,207.88~~	~~\$ 1,529.88~~
CY 2026 Total Premium	~~781.12~~	~~1,531.06~~	~~1,588.41~~	~~2,317.83~~
CY 2027 Employee Total	\$ 97.62	\$ 317.70	\$ 385.53	\$ 792.95
CY 2027 Washburn Total	745.99	1,335.84	1,329.95	1,710.31
CY 2027 Total Premium	843.61	1,653.54	1,715.48	2,503.26

With Employer Contribution to:

Health Savings Account	\$ 25.00	\$ 37.50	\$ 37.50	\$ 50.00
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Washburn University Board of Regents

SUBJECT: New Washburn Institute of Technology Programs: Digital Media Design – Certificate C and Associate of Applied Science (AAS)

DESCRIPTION:

Washburn Tech proposes a new Certificate C and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Digital Media Design. The Certificate C will consist of 49 credit hours of coursework that emphasizes use of design project software, web design, content management systems, and interactive media. Students who complete the Certificate C can choose to complete general education courses to earn an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects about 13,600 openings annually for web developers and digital interface designers from 2025–2035, and approximately 16,000 annual openings for graphic designers. Kansas-specific employment data demonstrates an ongoing demand for professionals with digital media design competencies, and additional demand information was communicated by Washburn Tech advisory committee members and local business partners.

These programs are proposed as replacements to the current Graphics Technology Certificate A, in response to current labor market needs and changes in state funding priorities. The Digital Media Design programs are planned to begin in Fall 2027, pending approval by TEA and KBOR.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

RECOMMENDATION:

President Mazachek recommends the Board of Regents approve the addition of the Washburn Tech Digital Media Design, Certificate C and Associate of Applied Science (AAS).

Washburn University Board of Regents

SUBJECT: Inactivation of Two Washburn Tech Certificate Programs

DESCRIPTION:

Washburn Tech is proposing the inactivation of two certificate programs:

1. Graphics Technology, Certificate A

In response to labor market needs and state funding changes, Washburn Tech is no longer offering the Graphic Technology program. The certificate and associated courses will be realigned for incorporation into a new proposed Digital Media Design program, which is presented as a separate agenda item.

2. Commercial & Heavy Construction, Certificate B

This program has not been offered for many years due to lack of instructor and necessary equipment. The high cost of obtaining current industry-grade equipment, along with ongoing maintenance expenses, makes this program financially unviable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

RECOMMENDATION:

President Mazachek recommends the Board of Regents approve the inactivation of the two Washburn Tech certificate programs.