

UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND ARTS OF OKLAHOMA

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, February 12, 2026
1727 W. Alabama Avenue, Chickasha, OK 73018

1. **Call to Order:** Chair Diane Ming called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.
2. **Announcement of the Filing of Meeting Notice and Posting of Agenda in Accordance with the Open Meeting Act:** President Hale announced the filing of the meeting notice and posting of agenda was done in accordance with the Open Meeting Act.
3. **Roll Call** was taken. Regents in attendance were Amanda Conley, Diane Ming, Suzanne Reynolds, Cale Walker and Kelly Wilkerson. Regents Chet Hitt and JJ Francais were absent.
4. **The Pledge of Allegiance** was recited by those in attendance.
5. **Introductions:** President Hale introduced and welcomed Kyle Shifflett, deputy general Counsel for the Oklahoma Office of the Attorney General.
6. **Communications to the Board On Upcoming Events and Special Programs:** President Hale shared two upcoming Davis-Waldorf Performing Art Series in February and March, as well as several upcoming athletic games on the schedule. Spring Break is March 16-20, 2026.
7. **Reports from Association Representatives:** Reports were submitted in advance from the Faculty Association, Staff Association, Student Government Association and the Alumni Association.
8. **Discussion and vote to approve/disapprove the minutes of the December 11, 2025, Regular Meeting:** Minutes of the December 11, 2025, regular meeting were presented with no additions or corrections. Regent Reynolds made a motion to accept the minutes as printed; Regent Conley seconded the motion and the motion carried by unanimous vote.
9. **Presentation of Monthly Financial Statements:** Controller David Smith presented the financial statements to the Regents. No action was necessary. See Appendix A, pp. 6-8
10. **Discussion and vote to approve/disapprove the 2024-25 Audit:** The Finance and Audit Committee met earlier in the day to discuss the 2024-25 audit for the University. Upon recommendation from the committee, Regent Walker made a motion to accept the audit. Regent Wilkerson seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.
11. **Discussion and vote to approve/disapprove 2026-27 Housing Rate Adjustment:** The Finance and Audit Committee met prior to the Regents meeting to discuss the Housing Rate Adjustment proposal. Upon recommendation from the committee, Regent Walker made a motion to table this agenda item; Regent Reynolds seconded the motion and the motion carried by unanimous vote.
12. **Discussion and vote to approve/disapprove the proposed Personnel Actions:**
 - a. Appointments:
Debra Barger, effective January 13, 2026; Administrative Assistant - SSS Trio

Haley Green, effective January 20, 2026; NASNTI (Part F) Program Director
Matija Malenovic, effective January 20, 2026; Marketing & Creative Specialist

b. Change in Status:

Lisa Wegener, effective January 5, 2026; Program Coordinator for the Neill-Wint Center for Neurodiversity

Karean Jumper-Barron, effective January 20, 2026; Advisement & Engagement Specialist

c. Resignations

Delton Gordon, effective January 5, 2026; Housing Operations Director

Conner Darnell, effective January 6, 2026; Creative Services & Athletic Marketing Coordinator

Daniel Pool, effective January 23, 2026; Librarian – Emerging Technology Specialist

David Quirk, effective February 2, 2026; VP of External Affairs/Executive Director of USAO Foundations

d. Retirees:

Sharla Bare, effective December 31, 2025; Payroll Accountant

Cathy Perri, effective December 31, 2025; Chief of Staff (Cathy is currently working as a part-time contract employee in a transitional role)

13. Discussion and vote to approve/disapprove academic promotion: The Academic and Administrative Affairs Committee met prior to the Regents' meeting to discuss the promotion of Dr. Tonnia Anderson, Associate Professor of History and American Studies, to full professor. Regent Conley, on behalf of the committee, made a motion to approve the promotion for Dr. Anderson. Regent Wilkerson seconded the motion and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

14. Discussion and vote to approve post-tenure reviews for:

a. Dr. Brenda Brown, (English)

b. Dr. Kevin Crow, (History)

c. Dr. Sean Kelley, (Physical Education)

d. Dr. Zach Simpson, (Philosophy and Religious Studies)

Upon recommendation of the Academic and Administrative Affairs Committee, Regent Conley made the motion to approve the post-tenure reviews for Drs. Brown, Crow, Kelley & Simpson. Regent Wilkerson seconded the motion and the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

15. Discussion and vote to approve/disapprove the Missing Persons Policy: The Policies and Procedures Committee met prior to the Regents meeting to discuss the Missing Persons Policy. Upon recommendation of the committee, Regent Conley made a motion to table the item for further discussion and review. Regent Walker seconded the motion and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

16. Discussion and vote to approve/disapprove Reemployment of Administrators:

Regent Conley, on behalf of the Academic and administrative Affairs Committee, made a motion to approve the Reemployment of Administrators for the University. Regent Wilkerson seconded the motion and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Proposed Title	Administrator
Vice President for Business and Finance/CFO	Brian Maddy
Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Life	Sheppard McConnell
Chief of Staff and Director of Governmental Relations, Grants and Contracts	Cathy Perri
Executive Director of the Division of Professional Studies, and INTERIM Vice President of Academic Affairs	Tony Hutchison
Executive Director of the Division of Professional Studies	Tony Hutchison
Vice President and Director of Athletics	Mike Ross
Chief Human Resources Officer	Angela Harris
Director of Information Technology Services	Adeel Siddiqui

17. President's Report: President Hale's updates to the Regents included:

- Update from the OK State Regents for Higher Education
- Legislative and federal funding updates
- Enrollment Management report
- General campus updates
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Update from the OK State Regents for Higher Education

- Governor Stitt's executive order 2026-07 relating to tenure
- Prioritization of 90-hour degree programs
- Proposed legislation specific to higher education
- New Funding Formula
 - Current funding formula was adopted in 2012 and only used to drive new funds (\$29M in FY24)
 - New formula very data driven using metrics based on available, reliable and consistent data; responsive to EO 2026-08.
 - Provide rationale for increased/decreased funding

Legislative Update

- OSRHE requesting a 5.5% increase in appropriations
- Bills we are following that have a financial impact for us:
 - Expansion of Oklahoma's Promise
 - Stabilizing property insurance rates
 - Enhancing campus safety and security
 - Concurrent enrollment

- Hiring of J. Russell Consulting to raise the profile of USAO (Foundation funded)

Office of Grants and Special Initiatives

- January meeting with U.S. House Appropriations Chair Tom Cole regarding a request pending with the Department of Transportation
- TRIO SSS is fully staffed, and student applications are live
- NASNTI Coordinator for Accessibility Support and Equity developed the Institutional Impact of Accessibility Accommodations Report which showed 550% increase over a five-year period in student accommodation need and its broader institutional implications

Enrollment Management

- Expansion of Online and Flexible Modalities
- Strategic Course Cross-Listing for Marketability
- Designated Concurrent Specialists for Personalized Outreach
- Junior Day Changes
 - Transitioning from one large-scale event to four events in spring
 - Reducing event expenditures/increasing high touch engagement
 - Smaller cohorts allow for direct faculty interaction and tailored campus tours

Fundraising

- Total cash in the door as of 2/12: \$2,972,855
 - 377 donors/734 gifts
 - 146% ahead compared to FY24
 - Growth not counting the \$2M gift = 19.5% behind
 - Friends of the Green and Gold = \$12,200 from 6 donors
- Reorganization of the Advancement Office
- Homecoming plans underway
 - Honorees to be announced before Spring Break
 - Introduction of first "Family Weekend" festivities
 - Campus oval to be named "Feaver Commons"

18. Discussion and possible action to enter into Executive Session pursuant to 25 O.S. § 307(B)(1) to discuss (a) the reemployment of President Kayla Hale.

19. Vote to Enter into Executive Session: Regent Reynolds made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss the reemployment of President Hale. Regent Conley seconded the motion and the motion carried by unanimous vote. Executive session was entered at 1:47 p.m.

20. Vote to Exit Executive Session: Regent Wilkerson made a motion to exit executive session, and Regent Walker seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote, and executive session was ended at 2:37 p.m.

21. Possible discussion and vote regarding matters discussed in executive session: The reemployment of President Kayla Hale: Regent Walker made a motion to extend the contract and reemploy President Hale for the following year. Regent Wilkerson seconded the motion and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

The board discussed additional compensation for President Hale in conjunction with the positive review and contract renewal. Regent Walker made a motion to approve a one-time stipend consisting of 7% of the Presidents current salary payable in Fiscal Year 2026-27. Regent Conley seconded the motion and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

- 22. Time and Place of Next Meeting** was announced by Chair Diane Ming: April 9, 2026, 1:00 p.m., USAO, Student Center, Regents Room, 1727 W. Alabama Ave., Chickasha, Oklahoma 73018.
- 23. Discussion and vote to adjourn:** Having no other business, Regent Reynolds made a motion to adjourn. Regent Conley seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote and the meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.