

Minutes approved by the Board of Regents at the June 11-12, 2026, meeting.

**BOARD OF REGENTS and its  
ACADEMIC, RESEARCH AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

College of Southern Nevada  
Student Union, Rooms U126-130  
6375 W. Charleston Boulevard, Las Vegas  
Thursday, March 5, 2026

Video Conference Connection from the Meeting Site to:  
System Administration, Reno  
2601 Enterprise Road, Conference Room  
and  
Great Basin College, Elko  
1500 College Parkway, Berg Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Mr. Joseph C. Arrascada, Chair  
Dr. Jeffrey S. Downs, Vice Chair  
Mr. Aaron Bautista  
Ms. Heather Brown  
Mrs. Carol Del Carlo

Other Regents Present: Mr. Byron Brooks, Board Chair  
Ms. Jennifer J. McGrath

Others Present: Mr. Matt McNair, Chancellor  
Ms. Renée Davis, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and  
Student Affairs  
Mr. Chris Nielsen, Special Counsel to the Board  
Ms. Keri D. Nikolajewski, Chief of Staff to the Board of Regents  
Dr. Kumud Acharya, President, DRI  
Dr. J. Kyle Dalpe, President, WNC  
Dr. Amber Donnelly, President, GBC

Faculty senate chairs in attendance: Mr. Oscar Sida, GBC; Dr. El Hachemi Bouali, NSU; Dr. Vera Samburova, DRI; Eric York, WNC; Dr. Jennifer McClendon, UNR; and Dr. Jinger Doe, TMCC. Student body presidents in attendance: Storm Raine, GBC; Brianna Malasaga, TMCC; Kelechi Odunze, UNLV-CSUN; Devin Lopez, UNLV-GPSA; Ratchanya Dev Chinnappan, UNR-GSA; Carmina Aglubat, UNR-ASUN; and Karla Salas Dominguez, WNC.

Chair Joseph C. Arrascada called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. with all members present. Regent Del Carlo led the Pledge of Allegiance and Chair Arrascada provided the Land Acknowledgement.

1. Information Only-Public Comment – The following individuals spoke in support of a College of Veterinary Medicine at UNR (*Agenda Item 14*): Grace McAndrews, Joseph Guild,

1. Information Only-Public Comment – (continued)

Zach Wells, Miriam Dayton, Luna Cannon, Brianna Espana, Jinger Doe, Jennifer McClendon, Carmina Aglubat, Karla Martin, and Atera Frankl.

The following individuals spoke in support of the experimental math program at CSN (*Agenda Item 13*): Jim Matovina, Patrick Villa, and Eric York.

Dr. James Behnke spoke in support of the proposed policy on Intellectual Property (*Agenda Item 9*).

Michael Kagan spoke in opposition to reduced credit baccalaureate programs (*Agenda Item 11*).

The following individuals provided written public comment in support of the Nevada Forest and Woodland Restoration Institute at UNR (*Agenda Item 6*): Robert Shriver, Eugenie MontBlanc, and Stephanie Yelenik.

Adam Della Monica provided written public comment in support of an Associate of Applied Science in Construction Management at TMCC (*Agenda Item 7*).

Dr. James Behnke provided written public comment in support of the proposed *Handbook* revision on Intellectual Property (*Agenda Item 9*).

The following individuals provided written public comment in support of a College of Veterinary Medicine at UNR (*Agenda Item 14*): Makiah Miller, Helen Perez Santiago, Rachelle Jiminez Garcia, Preston Larramendy, Stephanie Arciniega Rueda, Madison Kastner, Rowan Quiroz, Madelyn Torres Felipe, Nicholas VanLue, Jordan Smith, Iain Threadgould, Katherine Threadgould, Esmay Harger, Cassondra Keller, Massimo Menicou, Tracie Helm, Kara Spencer, Abigail Meagher, Emily Nolan, Ilana Lindsley Barry, Gemma Threadgould, Annalise Kirkham, Luna Cannon, Joshua Schermann, Maddie Burris, Monica Valle, Jonathan Reyes, Jonathan Valle, Nathalie Reyes, Jaelyn Curl, Jacquelyn Curl, Maria Valenzuela, Laila Bannister, Jerleen Bryant, Emily Parry, Megan MacKay, Monica Felipe, Samantha Hoover, Zianna Christian, Lupita Torres, Jodie Hoover, Savannah Kennedy, Alexandra Garcia, Gavin Lane, Brooke Kabour, Adriana Valenzuela, Javier Flores, McKenna Owen, Angelina Lopez, Kylie Durski, Grace Torres, Adriana Amaya, Sierra Duran, Jameson Aetheroec, Brittany Dunbeck, Thalia Duggin, Addyson High, Maritza Juarez Torres, Kaylie Berg, Vanya Malhotra, and Marley Snyder.

Benjamin Clayton provided written public comment about Campus for Hope and what it means for students experiencing homelessness and struggling financially.

2. Approved-Consent Items – The Committee recommended approval of the consent items.

2a. Approved-Minutes – The Committee recommended approval of the December 4, 2025, meeting minutes (*Ref. ARSA-2a on file in the Board Office*).

2. Approved-Consent Items – (continued)

- 2b. Approved-Program Elimination, A.A.S. Construction Technology, Craft Training: Carpentry Emphasis, WNC – The Committee recommended approval of the elimination of the Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Construction Technology, Craft Training: Carpentry emphasis due to no enrollment (Ref. ARSA-2b on file in the Board Office).
- 2c. Approved-Program Elimination, A.A.S. Construction Technology, Craft Training: Electrical Emphasis, WNC – The Committee recommended approval of the elimination of the Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Construction Technology, Craft Training: Electrical emphasis due to no enrollment (Ref. ARSA-2c on file in the Board Office).
- 2d. Approved-Program Elimination, A.A.S. Construction Technology, Craft Training: Plumbing Emphasis, WNC – The Committee recommended approval of the elimination of the Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Construction Technology, Craft Training: Plumbing emphasis due to no enrollment (Ref. ARSA-2d on file in the Board Office).

Regent Brown moved approval of the consent items.  
Vice Chair Downs seconded. Motion carried.

3. Approved-2026 Regents' Awards – The Committee recommended approval of the following nominations for 2026 Regents' Awards (Ref. ARSA-3 on file in the Board Office):

- a. Nevada Regents' Scholar Award (Sam Lieberman Regents' Award for Student Scholarship)  
Yan Arnaiz, UNLV – Undergraduate  
Alyssa Ayers, WNC  
Richard Chang, UNLV – Graduate  
Elena Chau, UNR – Undergraduate  
Triniti Grance, NSU  
Joseph Warren Ogden, CSN  
Kaycee Shulz, GBC  
Wendy Solorio Ramirez, TMCC  
Lauren Whitenack, UNR - Graduate
- b. Nevada Regents' Outstanding Classified Staff Award  
Melinda Caskey, GBC
- c. Nevada Regents' Creative Activities Award  
Dr. John Patrick Rice, GBC (Community College)  
Dr. Javon Johnson, UNLV (University/DRI)
- d. Nevada Regents' Teaching Award  
Angela Spires, CSN – Tenured/Tenure Track (Community College)

3. Approved-2026 Regents' Awards – (continued)

Dr. MaryKay Orgill, UNLV – Tenured/Tenure Track (University/DRI)  
Kelly Keselica, UNR – Non-Tenured (University/DRI)

e. Nevada Regents' Academic Advisor Award

Denesha Moore, CSN (Community College)  
Monica Moreno, UNLV (Undergraduate - University/DRI)  
Dr. Jenny Ouyang, UNR (Graduate – University/DRI)

f. Nevada Regents' Researcher Award

Dr. Arya Udry, UNLV (Mid-Career)  
Dr. Andrey Khlystov, DRI (Distinguished)  
Dr. Valerie Fridland, UNR (Humanities and Social Sciences)

g. Nevada Regents' Rising Researcher Award (Jason Geddes Rising Researcher Award)

Dr. Scott Allen, UNR  
Dr. Nathan Chellman, DRI  
Dr. Kara Christensen Pacella, UNLV  
Dr. Samantha John, UNLV  
Dr. Holly Martin, NSU  
Dr. Sandhya Narayanan, UNR  
Dr. Katrina Nicholas, NSU  
Dr. Elnaz Seylabi, UNR  
Dr. Shengjie Zhai, UNLV

Chair Arrascada announced the 2026 Regents' Award nominees and recognized their outstanding achievements across the Nevada System of Higher Education.

Vice Chair Downs moved approval of the nominations for 2026 Regents' Awards. Regent Brown seconded. Motion carried.

4. Approved-Program Eliminations, WNC – The Committee recommended approval of eliminating the following Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) programs at WNC: Accounting, General Business, and Management (*Refs. ARSA-4a, ARSA-4b and ARSA-4c on file in the Board Office*).

Dr. Dana Ryan, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, WNC, reported a program review identified the three programs as terminal, non-transferrable, and no longer aligned with current workforce expectations. Dr. Ryan noted that the A.A.S. pathway in these areas has become less effective for students, as most related careers require a baccalaureate degree or higher for entry. All currently enrolled students will be supported through individualized advising plans to ensure program completion and applicable transitions over the next six years, until the programs phase out.

4. Approved-Program Eliminations, WNC – (continued)

Vice Chair Downs moved approval of eliminating the following Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) programs at WNC: Accounting, General Business, and Management. Regent Del Carlo seconded. Motion carried.

5. Approved-Organizational Unit Proposals, UNLV – The Committee recommended approval of the following organizational unit proposals at UNLV: Nevada General Curriculum Access Center and Nevada Institute of Cybersecurity (*Refs. ARSA-5a and ARSA-5b on file in the Board Office*).

Dr. Kate Korgan, Acting Executive Vice President and Provost, UNLV, provided a brief overview of the organizational unit proposals.

The Nevada General Curriculum Access Center within the Department of Early Childhood, Multilingual, and Special Education in the College of Education will support Nevada's educators who serve students with extensive needs to create access to the general curriculum across K-12 to adulthood. The work will impact the state's coursework and classrooms in Intellectual Disability and other Developmental Disabilities.

The Nevada Institute of Cybersecurity, a consolidation of the University's academic research, educational programs, community outreach and workforce development activities focused on cybersecurity, will provide for academic and private company partnerships, creating the potential for increased private and local funding. This interdisciplinary institute will aid policymakers, helping them to understand the potential economic impact of cybersecurity risks to Nevada businesses and residents.

Vice Chair Downs moved approval of the Nevada General Curriculum Access Center and Nevada Institute of Cybersecurity at UNLV. Regent Brown seconded. Motion carried.

6. Approved-Organizational Unit Proposal, Nevada Forest and Woodland Restoration Institute, UNR – The Committee recommended approval of the Nevada Forest and Woodland Restoration Institute at UNR. The Institute seeks to lead and inform adaptive ecosystem management for the restoration and conservation of dryland forests and woodlands in Nevada and beyond through cross-sector collaborative efforts to mitigate wildfire severity and improve ecosystem health (*Ref. ARSA-6 on file in the Board Office*).

Dr. Jeffrey Thompson, Executive Vice President and Provost, UNR, explained that the Nevada Forest and Woodland Restoration Institute is a faculty led initiative that will mitigate wildfire severity and bring together faculty from multiple disciplines, including the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources, the College of Science, and Extension, to collaborate with state and federal agencies and local communities. The

6. Approved-Organizational Unit Proposal, Nevada Forest and Woodland Restoration Institute, UNR – (continued)

Institute will be housed at the Little Valley Research Station and will support applied research and cross-sector collaboration to address wildfire risk and promote ecological resilience.

Vice Chair Downs asked clarifying questions regarding the location and accessibility of the Institute. Dr. Thompson confirmed the site is accessible and infrastructure is in place to support research and visits. Regent Del Carlo expressed strong support for the proactive wildfire mitigation efforts across Nevada communities.

Regent Del Carlo moved approval of the Nevada Forest and Woodland Restoration Institute at UNR. Vice Chair Downs seconded. Motion carried.

7. Approved-Program Proposal, A.A.S. Construction Management, TMCC – The Committee recommended approval of an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Construction Management providing students with basic, entry-level skills and understanding of the construction industry as it relates to residential, commercial, and heavy construction markets. The successful student upon completion of this two-year program will possess the necessary knowledge to enter the construction management field (*Ref. ARSA-7 on file in the Board Office*).

Dr. Melissa Deadmond, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs, TMCC, provided a brief overview of the proposal. The program is designed to provide students with foundational skills in construction methods: blueprint reading, cost estimating, scheduling, and job site safety. The proposal represents the final step in separating the former A.A.S. in Architecture and Construction into two programs: the A.A.S. in Architectural Design and the A.A.S. in Construction Management, allowing more focused pathways to meet industry needs. The program was recommended by the Construction Management Advisory Board in Spring 2025.

Regent Brown moved approval of the A.A.S. in Construction Management at TMCC. Regent Del Carlo seconded. Motion carried.

8. Approved-Program Elimination and Proposal, WNC – The Committee recommended approval of eliminating the Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Mechatronics and Electronics and adding an A.A.S. in Technology, Mechatronics and Electronics emphasis at WNC (*Refs. ARSA-8a and ARSA-8b on file in the Board Office*).

Dr. Dana Ryan, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, WNC, provided a brief overview of the proposed program elimination and new program.

8. Approved-Program Elimination and Proposal, WNC – *(continued)*

The A.A.S. in Mechatronics and Electronics will become an emphasis under the A.A.S. in Technology, which will better reflect industry needs. The new degree will align with other emphases of the A.A.S. Technology and will have two avenues of entry through stackable credentials, motivating students to continue their education to complete their degree.

Vice Chair Downs moved approval of eliminating the A.A.S. in Mechatronics and adding an A.A.S. in Technology, Mechatronics and Electronics emphasis at WNC. Regent Brown seconded. Motion carried.

9. Information Only-Handbook Revision, Intellectual Property – Ms. Renée Davis, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, presented proposed revisions to Board policy (*Title 4, Chapter 12, Sections 2 and 8*) delineating the distribution of Net Income received from Intellectual Property, updating the division of such between the inventor, academic department or unit, institution, and the institutional Proof of Concept Fund (*Ref. ARSA-9 on file in the Board Office*).

Ms. Davis explained that the current distribution model provides 60 percent to the inventor, 25 percent to the academic unit, and 15 percent to the institution. The proposed revision would provide 40 percent to the inventor, 25 percent to the academic unit, 15 percent to an institutional central fund, and 20 percent to an institutional Proof of Concept Fund. The intent of the revision is to better align NSHE policy with national norms and support early-stage innovation and commercialization through dedicated funding.

Regent Brown recommended revisiting the proposed distribution model. Vice Chair Downs noted the value of seeking additional input, especially from faculty and research institutions, as well as the need to further develop the proposal before introducing it for possible action on a future agenda.

10. Approved-Handbook Revision, NSHE Policy on Instructional Materials – The Committee recommended approval of a revision to Board policy (*Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 29*) concerning Instructional Materials (*Ref. ARSA-10 on file in the Board Office*).

Dr. Terina Caserto, Director of Policy, provided a brief overview of the proposed policy revision intended to align with Assembly Bill 345 passed during the 2025 Legislative Session, which requires institutions to define and designate courses utilizing Open Educational Resources (OER), low-cost, and no-cost instructional materials within course registration systems. The proposed changes establish standardized definitions for instructional material cost categories, including “no cost” (zero cost) and “low cost” (not exceeding \$40), and require that qualifying courses be clearly identified in course schedules. The policy maintains faculty authority in selecting instructional materials while promoting affordability, transparency, and access for students.

10. Approved-Handbook Revision, NSHE Policy on Instructional Materials – (continued)

Committee members expressed strong support for the proposal and discussed the widespread adoption of OER across NSHE institutions. Institutional leaders shared examples of implementation efforts and reported significant cost savings to students.

Regent Del Carlo moved approval of the proposed *Handbook* revision as presented. Regent Brown seconded. Motion carried.

11. Information Only-Time-To-Degree Innovation in Baccalaureate Programs – Ms. Renée Davis, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, presented information on reduced credit baccalaureate programs, the innovation and characteristics of such programs, and the national landscape through the lens of accreditors, systems, and institutions. Additionally, Weber State University Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation Gail Niklason presented information on Weber State's 90-credit baccalaureate strategies, challenges, and perspectives (*Ref. ARSA-11 on file in the Board Office*).

Ms. Davis explained that reduced credit baccalaureates are being explored nationally as an option for certain programs, often with a workforce focus. She emphasized that the 90-credit programs are not intended to replace traditional 120-credit bachelor's degrees and are not for all majors.

Ms. Davis shared that national conversations on reduced credit baccalaureate programs are advancing through accreditors, state systems and institutions. Accreditors, including the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, have created pathways for reviewing exceptions, and GBC is developing a Bachelor of Applied Science proposal to be considered at a future meeting.

Dr. Gail Niklason, Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation, Weber State University, presented information on Weber State's implementation of 90-credit bachelor's degrees. She described their model as an effort to improve affordability, reduce time-to-degree, and strengthen workforce alignment.

The Committee discussed the implications of reduced credit baccalaureate degrees, including general education, distinction between the traditional 120-credit degree and the 90-credit degree, transferability, graduate school acceptance, and accreditation. Regent Del Carlo asked about accreditor recognition and whether such degrees would be accepted across different accrediting regions and graduate programs. Regent Brown expressed support for continued exploration of the changes, and shared potential benefits of reducing both cost and time-to-degree for students, particularly those seeking a direct path into the workforce.

12. Information Only-Systemwide General Education Requirements – Ms. Renée Davis, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, provided an overview of

12. Information Only-Systemwide General Education Requirements – (continued)

challenges and opportunities associated with NSHE’s general education approach, including transfer alignment, course applicability, and student progression (*Ref. ARSA-12 on file in the Board Office*).

Ms. Davis noted that growing participation by Nevada students in dual and concurrent enrollment has increased the need for easier transfer between all NSHE institutions. She shared examples from other states that have implemented systemwide general education frameworks, including structured core requirements that transfer as a unified block across institutions. She explained that while NSHE institutions share some common requirements, variability still exists across institutions in areas such as social sciences, humanities, and fine arts, as well as in capstone expectations.

Regents Brown and Del Carlo expressed support for further exploration of a unified general education framework across NSHE.

13. Approved-Experimental Math Program Proposal, CSN – The Committee recommended approval of a temporary exemption from the co-requisite program to offer an experimental math program at CSN, as provided in the Board of Regents *Handbook (Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1)* (*Refs. ARSA-13a and ARSA-13b on file in the Board Office*).

Dr. James McCoy, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs, CSN, introduced Alok Pandey, Professor of Mathematics, who provided an overview of the proposed experimental math program. Mr. Pandey shared data indicating low pass rates in Math 126 and emphasized the need for an early-intervention approach. He discussed the proposed “parachute course,” outlining its structure, implementation timeline, curriculum, and CSN’s institutional investment. The pilot program is designed to support underperforming students while maintaining their academic progress, allowing students who are struggling in their gateway math course to transition into the parachute course as an intervention. The pilot will run from Fall 2026 through Spring 2028.

Regent Del Carlo expressed strong support for the program and said she looks forward to hearing about its success. Vice Chair Downs expressed interest in reviewing Systemwide data and inquired about program funding.

Vice Chair Downs moved approval of a temporary exemption from the co-requisite program to offer an experimental math program at CSN. Regent Bautista seconded. Motion carried.

14. Information Only-Proposed College of Veterinary Medicine, UNR – Executive Vice President and Provost Jeffrey Thompson presented preliminary information on a proposed College of Veterinary Medicine (*Ref. ARSA-14 on file in the Board Office*).

14. Information Only-Proposed College of Veterinary Medicine, UNR – (continued)

Dr. Thompson highlighted the statewide need for a College of Veterinary Medicine due to a shortage of veterinarians, particularly in rural areas, and the lack of an in-state veterinary program. The presentation included findings from a feasibility study demonstrating strong demand, stakeholder support, and a viable path forward, as well as an overview of potential program models, including a community-based distributed clinical training approach. Dr. Thompson outlined planning efforts, a conceptual timeline targeting provisional accreditation by 2028, and a funding model combining state investment, tuition, and philanthropic support.

Committee members expressed strong support for the proposal, highlighting the importance of keeping Nevada students in-state, partnership options, and the shortage of veterinarians in Nevada.

15. Information Only-New Business – Regent Brown requested additional options be included in the proposed revision to the Intellectual Property policy, including a unified tech transfer office and different breakdowns for how the distribution could be allocated.

16. Information Only-Public Comment – None.

The meeting adjourned at 12:42 p.m.

Prepared by: Catherine Riley  
Special Assistant and Coordinator to the Board of Regents

Submitted for approval by: Keri D. Nikolajewski  
Chief of Staff to the Board of Regents