

The University of Central Arkansas Board of Trustees convened at 10:00 a.m., February 20, 2026, with the following officers and members present:

Mr. Jim Rankin, Jr. – Chair
Mr. Kelley Erstine – Vice Chair
Ms. Kay Hinkle – Secretary
Mr. Curtis Barnett
Ms. Amy Denton
Dr. Terry Fiddler
Dr. Michael Stanton

MINUTES

The board unanimously approved the minutes of the December 5, 2025, board meeting and the January 27, 2026, teleconference meeting, as submitted upon motion by Amy Denton and second by Terry Fiddler.

REPORTS

President’s Report – President Davis recognized Mason Smith as the recipient of the Bear C.L.A.W.S. award and provided a campus and enrollment update. His report is attached to the original minutes.

Audit & Finance Committee Report – Kay Hinkle, chair of the Audit and Finance Committee, informed the trustees of the business that was discussed by the committee.

ACCESS Compliance Update – Provost Hargis provided an update on the university’s work surrounding the ACCESS Bill. His report is attached to the original minutes.

Financial Update – Jeremy Bruner provided a financial report which is attached to the original minutes.

ACTION AGENDA

Resolution of Appreciation – Michael Stanton

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Kelley Erstine and second by Kay Hinkle:

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION

WHEREAS Michael Stanton of Greenbrier, Arkansas, was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the University of Central Arkansas by the Governor of the State of Arkansas, Asa Hutchinson, in January 2022 for a term of seven years; and

WHEREAS Dr. Stanton graduated from the University of Central Arkansas in 1977;
and

WHEREAS Dr. Stanton served as chair of the Board of Trustees in 2025 and attended many university events and functions in his capacity as chair; and

WHEREAS, during his term as chair of the Board, the university made significant progress by (a) having the second consecutive year of more than 2,000 first-time, first-year students representing 71 Arkansas counties and 20 different states, (b) celebrating reaching 1,300 students benefiting from UCA Commitment in its first two years, (c) maintaining an A2 Stable Moody's rating, (d) opening the UCA Aviation Academy Bill Cope Memorial Hangar, (e) dedicating the Thomas C. Courtway Student Recreation Center, (f) approving the Campus District Loop and Hydronics Refresh Project, (g) raising a record amount during UCA's Day of Giving, (h) completing the initial feasibility study for the future Multipurpose Arena, (i) completing the study for the UCA Innovation Campus, and (j) celebrating conference championships in Men's Golf, Men's and Women's Outdoor Track & Field, and Volleyball; and

WHEREAS Dr. Stanton served with honor and distinction, and because of his leadership, the university had a very successful year in 2025.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the University of Central Arkansas does hereby extend its sincere appreciation and gratitude to Michael Stanton for his service as chair of the Board of Trustees during 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be made a part of the minutes of the University of Central Arkansas Board of Trustees meeting.

Jim Rankin, Jr.
Chair

Kay Hinkle
Secretary

Reimbursement of Expenses for Official Board of Trustees Duties – Board Policy No. 211

Arkansas Code Annotated 25-16-901 et seq. provides that boards and commissions may, during their first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, authorize expense reimbursement for each board member for performing official board duties. The law states that the expense reimbursement must not exceed the rate established by state travel regulations for state employees. The law covers expense reimbursement for all board functions. This action is consistent with Board Policy No. 211, Reimbursement of Expenses for Official Board of Trustees Duties, and Arkansas Code Annotated 6-67-102.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Curtis Barnett and second by Amy Denton:

“BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees approves the following statement concerning reimbursement of expenses for official board duties for 2026:

The UCA Board of Trustees authorizes reimbursement of expenses for each of its members for performance of official board duties, to include attendance at board meetings, fulfillment of board training requirements, and any other official board duties. The expense reimbursement authorized herein must not exceed the rate established by state travel regulations for state employees, including special travel authorization. The board also authorizes the president to approve the reimbursement of travel expenses of board members that are in conformance with this policy.”

**UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS
BOARD POLICY**

Policy

Number: 211

Subject: Reimbursement of Expenses for Official Board of Trustees Duties

Date Adopted: 10/92 Revised: 02/96

The University of Central Arkansas Board of Trustees authorizes reimbursement of expenses for each trustee for performance of official board duties, to include attendance at board meetings, fulfillment of board training requirements, and any other official board duties. The expense reimbursement authorized herein must not exceed the rate established by state travel regulations, including special travel authorization. The board also authorizes the president to approve the reimbursement of travel expenses of board members that are in conformance with this policy.

Extracurricular Camps – Board Policy No. 653

Board Policy No. 653, adopted pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. 6-62-401, authorizes the Board of Trustees to grant permission to employees to conduct, on and in campus facilities, certain outside work for private compensation, which is to be engaged in only after their employment responsibilities to the university have been fully discharged. These camps are designed to bring future students to campus who might decide to enroll as a result of their exposure to university facilities, personnel, and programs.

In order to approve these private camps, the Board must determine that:

- (i) the activity in question involves no conflict of interest with the mission and purpose of the university;
- (ii) the activity proposed will bring to the campus a significant number of persons who are potentially future students who might tend to enroll as a result of their exposure to the university’s facilities and personnel while engaged in this activity; and

- (iii) the activity will, as a part thereof, generate funds to be paid to the university for housing, meals, and for the use of other university resources which will produce significant revenues in support of the auxiliary functions of the university serving enrolled students.

The camps will pay the same costs and fees for use of facilities, housing, food services, and other resources as established by the university for other camps. The exact dates, times, requirements, agreement terms, and policies shall be determined by the administration in accordance with existing university policy. The proposed camps are listed on the following page. These camps are distinct from university-sponsored camps and private camps operated by entities other than employees.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Michael Stanton and second by Kay Hinkle:

“BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees makes the above findings and authorizes the administration to enter into agreements with employees to conduct the private camps listed below on and in campus facilities, effective through June 30, 2027.”

Program	Employees	Facilities
Baseball	Baseball coaching staff	Bear Stadium
Football	Football coaching staff	Estes Stadium and Practice Facility
Men’s Basketball	Basketball coaching staff	Farris Center
Women’s Basketball	Basketball coaching staff	Farris Center
Men’s/Women’s Golf	Golf coaching staff	
Men’s/Women’s Soccer	Soccer coaching staff	Bill Stephens Field
Softball	Softball coaching staff	Farris Field
Volleyball	Volleyball coaching staff	Prince Center
Beach Volleyball	Volleyball coaching staff	Beach Courts and Prince Center

Strength/Conditioning	Strength/Conditioning coaching staff	Indoor Center
ACC Choir Camp	Music faculty and staff	Snow Fine Arts Center
Cheer/Stunt	Cheer/Stunt coaching staff	Farris Center and Prince Center

*Each camp may utilize housing, food services, student health clinic, meeting spaces, Thomas C. Courtway Student Recreation Center, and other campus facilities and resources at applicable rates and subject to university policies.

Property Acquisition – 113 Baridon Street, Conway, Arkansas

Mr. Raymond A. Kordsmeier, Trustee of the Rebecca Sue Thornton Trust, owns the house located at 113 Baridon Street, Conway, Arkansas. The university owns the property on the north side and on the west side. The structure was built in the 1950s and is approximately 2,682 square feet.

The university has a signed an agreement with the owner to purchase the property for \$360,000. The closing of the proposed acquisition is conditioned upon obtaining the approval of the Board of Trustees.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Curtis Barnett and second by Amy Denton:

“BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees approves the transaction described above with Raymond A. Kordsmeier, Trustee of the Rebecca Sue Thornton Trust, for the sale and purchase of a house with a street address of 113 Baridon Street, Conway, Arkansas, and the president and such other officials of the University of Central Arkansas, as the president may from time-to-time designate, are hereby authorized and directed to enter into and execute such other documents, agreements, and instruments as are necessary and required to consummate the foregoing purchase.”

Distinguished Faculty Emeritus Award

The Distinguished Faculty Emeritus/Emerita Committee has unanimously recommended that retired UCA professor, Dr. John Passe-Smith, receive the status of Distinguished Faculty Emeritus. The professor was nominated for the honor by the faculty in his department and has the support of all appropriate academic councils and administrators.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Kelley Erstine and second by Kay Hinkle:

“BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees hereby approves the recommendation that Dr. John Passe-Smith receives the honor of Distinguished Faculty Emeritus.”

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Dr. John Passe-Smith served as a professor of Political Science at the University of Central Arkansas from 1993-2023; and

WHEREAS, Dr. John Passe-Smith has a long, outstanding record of excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service at the university; and

WHEREAS, Dr. John Passe-Smith contributed to the vitality of his department, college, and the university through extensive faculty and student mentorship; and

WHEREAS, Dr. John Passe-Smith exemplified excellence in scholarship, teaching, and service; and

WHEREAS, Dr. John Passe-Smith was unanimously recommended by the tenured faculty of the Department of Government, Public Service, and International Studies; and

WHEREAS, Dr. John Passe-Smith was unanimously recommended to receive the Distinguished Faculty Emeritus Award by the Faculty Emeritus Committee;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the University of Central Arkansas does hereby bestow the honor and status of Distinguished Faculty Emeritus on Dr. John Passe-Smith in recognition of his leadership in and his service to the Department of Government, Public Service, and International Studies at the University of Central Arkansas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be made part of the minutes of the February 20, 2026, University of Central Arkansas Board of Trustees meeting.

Jim Rankin, Jr.
Chair

Kay Hinkle
Secretary

Academic Calendar and Critical Dates – Fall 2026 through Summer 2027 and Fall 2027 through Summer 2028

The administration is proposing changes to the academic calendars covering the periods from fall 2026 through summer 2027 and fall 2027 through summer 2028. The proposed changes include delaying the start of the spring 2027 semester by one week, which requires adjustments to the summer and fall 2027 terms by one week.

The administration requests the authority to make minor adjustments in the calendar as necessary.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Michael Stanton and second by Amy Denton:

“BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees hereby approves the attached schedules, which include the academic calendars and critical dates, and authorizes the administration to make minor adjustments as necessary.”

Academic Calendar 2026-2027

FALL SEMESTER 2026

August 16-19, Sunday – Wednesday	Welcome Week
August 17, Monday	Opening Freshman Convocation
August 20, Thursday	Instruction Begins (day and evening classes)
September 7, Monday	Labor Day Holiday (university closed)
October 15-18, Thursday – Sunday	Fall Break
November 25, Wednesday	Thanksgiving Break (no classes – university offices open)
November 26-29, Thursday – Sunday	Thanksgiving Holiday (university closed)
December 4, Friday	Study Day
December 5, Saturday	Final Examinations
December 7-10, Monday – Thursday	Final Examinations
December 10, Thursday	Winter Commencement: Graduate Ceremony
December 11, Friday	Winter Commencement: Undergraduate Ceremonies

WINTER INTERSESSION

December 14, Monday	Instruction Begins for Winter Intersession
December 31, Thursday	Final Examinations for Winter Intersession

SPRING SEMESTER 2027

January 14, Thursday	Instruction Begins (day and evening classes)
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January 18, Monday	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday (university closed)
March 21-28, Sunday – Sunday	Spring Break
April 30, Friday	Study Day
May 1, Saturday	Final Examinations
May 2-6, Monday – Thursday	Final Examinations
May 6, Thursday	Spring Commencement: Graduate Ceremony
May 7, Friday	Spring Commencement: Undergraduate Ceremonies

SUMMER 2027

May 17, Monday	Instruction Begins for May Intersession and 13-Week Summer Session classes
May 31, Monday	Memorial Day Holiday (university closed)
June 4, Friday	Final Examinations for May Intersession classes
June 7, Monday	Instruction begins for 1 st Five-Week Summer Session and 10-Week Summer Session classes
July 5, Monday	Independence Day Holiday Observed (university closed)
July 9, Friday	Final Examinations for 1 st Five-Week Summer Session
July 12, Monday	Instruction begins 2 nd Five-Week Summer Session classes
August 13, Friday	Final Examinations for 13-Week Summer Session classes, 10-Week Summer Session classes, and 2 nd Five-Week Summer Session classes
August 14, Saturday	Graduate Summer Commencement Ceremonies

Academic Calendar 2027-2028

FALL SEMESTER 2027

August 22-25, Sunday – Wednesday	Welcome Week
August 23, Monday	Opening Freshman Convocation

August 26, Thursday	Instruction Begins (day and evening classes)
September 6, Monday	Labor Day Holiday (university closed)
October 21-24, Thursday – Sunday	Fall Break
November 24, Wednesday	Thanksgiving Break (no classes – university offices open)
November 25-28, Thursday – Sunday	Thanksgiving Holiday (university closed)
December 10, Friday	Study Day
December 11, Saturday	Final Examinations
December 13-16, Monday – Thursday	Final Examinations
December 16, Thursday	Winter Commencement: Graduate Ceremony
December 17, Friday	Winter Commencement: Undergraduate Ceremonies

WINTER INTERSESSION

December 20, Monday	Instruction Begins for Winter Intercession
January 7, Friday	Final Examinations for Winter Intercession

SPRING SEMESTER 2028

January 13, Thursday	Instruction Begins (day and evening classes)
January 17, Monday	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday (university closed)
March 19-26, Sunday – Sunday	Spring Break
April 28, Friday	Study Day
April 29, Saturday	Final Examinations
May 1-4, Monday – Thursday	Final Examinations
May 4, Thursday	Spring Commencement: Graduate Ceremony
May 5, Friday	Spring Commencement: Undergraduate Ceremonies

SUMMER 2028

May 15, Monday	Instruction Begins for May Intercession and 13-Week Summer Session classes
May 29, Monday	Memorial Day Holiday (university closed)

June 2, Friday	Final Examinations for May Intersession classes
June 5, Monday	Instruction begins for 1 st Five-Week Summer Session and 10-Week Summer Session classes
July 4, Tuesday	Independence Day Holiday Observed (university closed)
July 7, Friday	Final Examinations for 1 st Five-Week Summer Session
July 10, Monday	Instruction begins 2 nd Five-Week Summer Session classes
August 11, Friday	Final Examinations for 13-Week Summer Session classes, 10-Week Summer Session classes, and 2 nd Five-Week Summer Session classes
August 12, Saturday	Graduate Summer Commencement Ceremonies

NOTIFICATIONS/DELETIONS

Notification: New BA in Applied Economics and Deletion of the BA in Economics

The Department of Economics, Finance, Insurance and Risk Management is replacing the BA in Economics with a new BA in Applied Economics using existing coursework drawn from other programs in Economics, Finance, Insurance and Risk Management, and Psychology. The BA in Economics has not been a viable alternative to the BS in Economics and the BBA in Economics. Only two students are currently enrolled in the degree program. Because no courses are being deleted, those students may continue their plan of study without disruption. The new BA in Applied Economics will have a different focus from the BS and BBA in Economics, providing students with a viable alternative plan of study. Required and elective coursework will prepare students to use economic principles to analyze and solve complex, real-world problems. The department projects approximately ten students will graduate each year with the degree.

Notification: New BS in Electrical Engineering

The BS in Engineering Physics, first offered in 2019 and accredited by ABET in 2023, has quickly grown to 95 enrolled students in Fall 2025. Given the growing demand, the Department of Physics, Astronomy, and Engineering proposes a new BS in Electrical Engineering derived from the Engineering Physics curriculum. The Electrical Engineering curriculum will add four new courses to ensure full coverage of ABET standards. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for electrical and electronics engineers is projected to grow by 7% nationally from 2024 to 2034. In Arkansas, labor projections estimate approximately 860 electrical engineers in 2022 growing to about 920 by 2032, a 7% increase, with roughly 50 openings per year from growth and turnover. Additionally, the Arkansas 2025-2026 Projected Employment Opportunities List

notes that Electrical Engineers are in demand in all areas of the state. With a small addition to its curriculum, UCA can help supply these professionals and provide graduates ready to meet documented state and national needs.

Notification: New BS in Robotics Engineering

The BS in Engineering Physics, first offered in 2019 and accredited by ABET in 2023, has quickly grown to 95 enrolled students in Fall 2025. Given the growing demand, UCA proposes a new BS in Robotics Engineering derived from the Engineering Physics curriculum. The Robotics Engineering curriculum will add only one new course while streamlining the core to (1) reduce total degree requirements to 120 hours, (2) increase emphasis on robotics engineering coursework, and (3) give employers a transparent view of student skills. Nationally, robotics-related careers are projected to grow about 5% over the coming decade. This steady growth reflects employer demand for engineers trained in automation and robotics to support industries in logistics, advanced manufacturing, and defense—sectors central to Arkansas’s economy.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board unanimously declared an executive session to consider employment and disciplining of employees, upon motion by Curtis Barnett and second by Kelley Erstine.

OPEN SESSION

No action was taken during Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned upon motion by Michael Stanton and second by Amy Denton.

Jim Rankin, Jr.
Chair

Kay Hinkle
Secretary