

The University of Central Arkansas Board of Trustees convened at 10:00 a.m., May 27, 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 February 20, 2026, board meeting and the April 17, 2026, teleconference meeting, as submitted upon motion by Kelley Erstine and second by Michael Stanton.

### **END-OF-YEAR REPORTS FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENTS OF THE FACULTY SENATE, STAFF SENATE, AND STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**

Statements from the outgoing presidents of the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government Association are attached to the original minutes.

### **REPORTS**

President’s Report – President Davis recognized VITA for Preparers as the recipient of the Bear C.L.A.W.S. award and provided comments on the action agenda.

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.

### **ACTION AGENDA**

#### **Request for Provisional Positions**

The State of Arkansas, through the position appropriation process, permits the university to request provisional positions when there is an emergency or an unexpected need.

Provisional positions may be assigned when the university receives temporary and/or unanticipated funding through grants, contract agreements, or increased collections. Provisional positions exist only as long as the funding for those positions is available and do not automatically convert to regular, budgeted positions.

In submitting a request for the allocation of provisional positions, the state process first requires authorization for that request through the university's Board of Trustees.

The university is requesting approval to establish up to 300 provisional positions for fiscal year 2026-2027.

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

**"BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees authorizes the administration to proceed with requests for allocation of up to 300 provisional positions that will be funded by institutional funds, federal, state and private grants."**

**Fees – Room and Board – Board Policy No. 632**

The current room and board rate is \$9,566 per year (based on a double-occupancy room and the Total Access meal plan with a \$250 declining cash balance "DCB").

A 6.95% increase is recommended for room rates. This increase is primarily related to the continuing effort to maintain and upgrade housing facilities. Recommended repairs to the residence halls and university-owned apartments exceed \$10 million. The estimated annual revenue from the proposed increase in housing room rates is \$1,435,735.

After Aramark completed a Meal Plan Optimization review, which included board rate comparisons from public institutions within the state and incorporated feedback from students and campus stakeholders, a new type of dining plan, Bear Flex 3, was proposed as the new baseline dining plan for incoming freshmen. When creating an equivalent dining plan using current rates for year-to-year comparison, the increase is 6.05%. The increase in the dining plan should generate an additional \$2,005,528 overall.

The proposed room and board rate for 2026-2027 is \$11,210 per year, based on a double-occupancy room and the Bear Flex 3 meal plan with \$250 DCB plus three meal equivalencies, **for an overall increase of 6.50% over the equivalent 2025-2026 base plans.** This increase will result in a student paying an additional \$684 per year over **equivalent 2025-2026 base plans.** For the 2026-2027 academic year, Housing anticipates an annualized occupancy rate of approximately 96%.

The proposed schedule of room and board rates was presented to the Student Government Association (SGA) at their February 9, 2026, meeting.

The nightly rate (double/single) used for camps, conferences, and other nightly stays will be increased from \$23/\$30 to \$25/\$33.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Curtis Barnett and second by Kelley Erstine:

**"BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees hereby approves the following revisions to Board Policy No. 632, Fees – Room and Board.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees hereby approves the schedule of room and board rates presented below."**



## 2026-2027 ROOM + BOARD RATES

<u>Residence Halls/Greek Village</u>	Double Room Rate Per Semester	Single Room Rate Per Semester
TIER 1: Arkansas Hall, Bernard Hall, and RA Room	\$2,785	\$3,485
TIER 2: Baridon, Bear, Carmichael, Conway, Hughes, State, BUCs/Kappa Sigma	\$2,965	\$3,865
TIER 3: Farris Hall and New Hall	N/A	\$4,010
TIER 4: Donaghey Hall, The 425 House, GV Phase I & II	\$3,330	\$4,505

\*Single rooms are only available when space permits typically in the Spring semester.

### Apartments

TIER 1: Stadium Park, Oak Tree, Georgetown	\$3,140	\$3,940
TIER 2: Erbach, Torreyson, Bear Village, Landis Hollow, Long Creek, Farris Rd	\$3,330	\$4,505
TIER 3: Orso Vista	N/A	\$4,675

### Break Housing

	Double Room Rate	Single Room Rate
Winter Break	\$480	\$655
Spring Break	\$155	\$230
May Intersession	\$580	\$580
Summer I	\$640	\$840
Summer II + August Intersession (\$185 credit if properly check out by August 7th)	\$830	\$1,030
Nightly Rate used for approved early arrivals, late stays, camps, and other special circumstances	\$25 per night	\$33 per night

NOTE: Apartments, Donaghey Hall, and Greek Village are open during Winter and Spring Breaks.

### Meal Plans

Residence Hall Meal Plan Options	Rate per semester
Bear Flex 3 - Total Access + 3 meals/week + \$250 Dining Dollars	\$2,820
Bear Flex 12 - Total Access + 12 meals/week + \$250 Dining Dollars	\$3,115

#### Upperclass Student Meal Plan

Den 10 - 10 visits/week in the Christian Cafeteria only + \$325 Dining Dollars	\$2,525
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\*students eligible after two full semesters living on campus

#### Apartment + Donaghey Hall Meal Plan

\$950 Dining Dollars (+ \$65 Bonus DD)	\$950
\$300 Greek Village Dining Dollars (GREEK VILLAGE ONLY)	\$300

**IMPORTANT:** Freshmen are required to live on campus for two semesters. Apartments are available to students who are entering their second academic year. Single rooms are limited and upgrades are available space permitting. Meal plans are mandatory for all residents and may only be changed before classes begin each term. Any resident can choose a Residence Hall meal plan. You must be in an Apartment, Donaghey Hall, or Greek Village to choose the All Dining Dollar plan. Unused Dining Dollars will expire at the end of the Summer II term. The residence halls close for break periods with housing available for additional cost. Apartments, Donaghey Hall, and Greek Village are open during winter and spring breaks. Summer Housing is available in one of the residence halls.

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

**Fees – Mandatory General Registration and Other – Board Policy No. 630, Fees – Other Instructional Fees – Board Policy No. 639, and Fees – General Administrative – Board Policy No. 634**

The administration proposes the following changes in mandatory tuition and fees and other instructional fees:

**1. Mandatory Tuition and Fees:**

The current tuition rate (the general registration fee) is \$260.20 per credit hour for undergraduate students and \$320.70 per credit hour for graduate students.

Based on a review of the university's needs and to prepare the proposed operating budget for the next academic year, the administration proposes that mandatory tuition and fees for undergraduate and graduate students increase by 4.06%. The changes proposed in the chart below include increases for mandatory tuition and fees only. The mandatory fee increases include the Facilities, Technology, and Thomas C. Courtway Student Recreation Center fees.

<b>Student Status</b>	<b>Hours per Semester</b>	<b>Current FY26 Cost Fall/Spring</b>	<b>Proposed FY27 Cost Fall/Spring</b>	<b>Dollar Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Undergraduate	15	\$10,940	\$11,384	\$444	4.06%
Graduate	12	\$10,233	\$10,648	\$415	4.06%

**Justification:**

The proposed tuition and fee rate reflects an increase of **4.06%** for undergraduate students and **4.06%** for graduate students. Based on the projected enrollment of full-time-equivalent students, if approved, the fee increases will generate approximately \$3.7 million in additional revenue for Education & General (E&G). The additional E&G fee revenue will be applied toward bringing faculty and staff salaries to 90% of the market salary study. The Facilities Fee revenue will generate approximately \$1.6 million, which will be applied toward support, debt service for the District Loop & Hydronics project, and other deferred maintenance across campus. The Technology Fee revenue will generate approximately \$266,766 for centralized computers across campus. The Thomas C. Courtway Student Recreation Center Fee revenue will generate approximately \$261,431 to support the facility's overall operations.

**2. Fully-Online Program Registration**

UCA Online allows students to earn a degree without the traditional constraints of time and location experienced by on-campus students. The academic standards required for UCA Online

programs and courses are the same as those for our on-campus equivalents. Students admitted to UCA Online receive flat-rate tuition regardless of residency or location.

<b>Fully-Online Program Registration</b>			
<b>Student Status</b>	<b>Current FY26 Cost per Hour</b>	<b>Proposed FY27 Cost per Hour</b>	<b>Dollar Change</b>
Undergraduate	\$319	\$332	\$13
Graduate	\$363	\$378	\$15

**Justification:**

The proposed increase takes into consideration the costs of operating expenses for this program, along with inflation.

**3. Study Abroad Program Registration**

The Office of Education Abroad and National Student Exchange (NSE) offer UCA students the opportunity to study abroad or study away while earning credit toward their degrees. Education Abroad offers international academic programs in over 20 countries on five continents. Students can earn academic credit by spending a semester at one of UCA’s international partner universities, participating in a short-term, faculty-led trip, or by improving their language proficiency through language immersion programs. NSE offers students the opportunity to study away and attend universities in the U.S. and Canada while earning credits toward their degree.

<b>Study Abroad Program Registration</b>			
<b>Student Status</b>	<b>Current FY26 Cost per Hour</b>	<b>Proposed FY27 Cost per Hour</b>	<b>Dollar Change</b>
Undergraduate	\$291	\$303	\$12
Graduate	\$335	\$349	\$14

**Justification:**

The proposed increase takes into consideration room and board rate increases, along with projected costs of insurance, inflation, and other necessary costs.

**4. College of Science and Engineering Course Fee**

We are proposing the following increase to the College of Science and Engineering Course Fee:

<b>College of Science and Engineering</b>			
<b>Department/School/Program Fee</b>	<b>Current FY26 Cost per Hour</b>	<b>Proposed FY27 Cost per Hour</b>	<b>Dollar Change</b>
College of Science and Engineering Course Fee	\$7.50	\$19.65	\$12.15

**Justification:**

The proposed increases will generate revenue that will be placed in a rollover index to allow the departments to budget for future equipment needs and deferred maintenance.

**5. First-Year Fee**

<b>Administrative Fee</b>	<b>First-Time Undergraduate</b>	<b>Transfer Student</b>
First-Year	\$100.00	\$50.00

**Justification:**

The First-Year fee is not increasing but will now be assessed the "first semester of enrollment" rather than the "first semester of full-time enrollment." The fee serves all first-year undergraduate students and does not distinguish between part-time and full-time. This change will also streamline the record-keeping process.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Terry Fiddler and second by Amy Denton:

**“BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees approves the schedule of fees as the General Registration and Fee charges, the Fully-Online Program Registration increase, the Study Abroad Program Registration increase, the College of Science and Engineering Course Fee increase, and the First-Year Fee assessment, effective fall 2026.”**

**Operating Budget 2026-2027**

The following is a summary of the proposed operating budget for FY27 (July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027).

This operating budget has been prepared based on the following:

- a. Approval of a 4.06% increase in undergraduate and graduate mandatory tuition and student fees as set forth in the schedule of tuition and fees;
- b. Student semester credit hour production based on FY25 actual;
- c. Recognized State Appropriations decrease of \$1,453,939. Educational Excellence Trust Fund (EETF) revenue is budgeted at the FY26 level of \$7,640,948;
- d. Approval of the overall increase in room rate of 6.95%;

- e. After calculating the meal plan equivalency, approval of the board plan at 6.05% for the new dining plan, Bear Flex 3;
- f. Adjustments within existing budgets; and
- g. Commitment of prior year-end funding. Covered expenses are included in the FY27 operating budget, offset by a transfer from Plant Funds.

The budget totals \$218,387,957, an increase of \$6,825,906 or 3.23% over the October revised budget.

The departmental expense budgets are generally held to the same levels as the prior fiscal year (FY26) with a few strategic exceptions.

This budget is prepared with cautious optimism. Primary objectives are to 1) focus on student success, 2) maintain stable reserves, and 3) minimize the financial impact on students and their families.

### **1. Major Components of Sources**

- a. The Educational & General (E&G) Tuition and Fee budget at \$97,286,805 comprises 44.55% of the total budgeted revenue (59.70% of E&G only) and is based on FY25 student semester credit hours. The annualized increase in Tuition and Fees is 4.06% or \$444 per year for an undergraduate student enrolled in 15 hours per semester.
- b. The State Appropriation budget at \$61,205,574 represents 28.02% of the total budgeted revenue (37.56% of E&G only). Funding consists of the Revenue Stabilization Act (RSA) and EETF.
- c. Auxiliary revenues account for 25.38% of the budgeted revenue, which reflects a net increase of 8.81% over all auxiliary units.

### **2. Major Components of Uses**

- a. Salaries and benefits together make up 53.70% of the operating budget for E&G and Auxiliary, which is consistent with industry standards. Salary items include 1) 90% market salary for faculty and staff, 2) faculty promotions and advancement, and 3) academic position adjustments.
- b. The operating budget includes a Voluntary Employee Retirement Incentive option.
- c. Maintenance and Operation (M&O) makes up 19.52% of the budget and includes increases in technology contracts, a custodial services contract, food service and housing contracts, centralized computers, and other smaller adjustments.
- d. Scholarships and waivers account for 14.17% of the budget.
- e. Debt service comprises 7.17% of the university's operating budget. It reflects the new District Cooling and Hydronics debt service, payoff of 2006 Series B & C Bonds, payoff of 2015 Series B Bonds, and related normal payment schedule changes.

### **3. Voluntary Employee Retirement Incentive**

The administration is seeking approval of a Voluntary Employee Retirement Incentive (VERI) for employees who are at least fifty-five (55) years old with at least four years of total, full-time employment at the university, and are 100% vested if participating in TIAA, as of December 31,

2026. Individuals with at least 28 years of service with UCA or the State of Arkansas are also eligible.

This plan will allow UCA to provide eligible faculty and staff with an attractive, completely voluntary retirement incentive, and it will allow leadership to plan strategically for the future.

Approximately 358 faculty and staff members who meet the criteria will be offered the opportunity to participate in the program. Those who elect to participate will receive a \$5,000 payout in addition to 20% of their base salary as of December 31, 2026. Additionally, any employee with over ten years of service will receive 1.0% of their base salary for each year of service beyond ten years, up to a maximum of 10% of the employee's base salary as of December 31, 2026.

Employees will have a 111-day election period to participate in the program. If approved by the board, the election period will begin Wednesday, May 27, 2026, and will close at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, September 14, 2026.

Participating staff members will retire effective December 31, 2026, and participating faculty will retire effective May 15, 2027.

Pursuant to Board Policy 200, this budget is presented for consideration by the Board of Trustees.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Michael Stanton and second by Curtis Barnett:

**“BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees approves the 2026-2027 operating budget totaling \$218,387,957.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees hereby approves the Voluntary Employee Retirement Incentive plan described above, and that 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 implement the retirement plan.”**

### **Campus Project**

The administration requests approval to proceed with the renovation and preparation of 355 Ledgelawn Drive for the UCA Innovation Campus. The renovation is being completed through a job order contract by UCA for approximately \$1,163,000. The Conway Development Corporation is responsible for \$500,000 of that amount pursuant to a tenant improvement allowance in the lease agreement. The project also includes campus network access, measures necessary to link the building to the main campus, and the purchase of such items as office, laboratory, and audiovisual equipment, computers, and furniture. The estimated completion date of the project is August 15, 2026.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Michael Stanton and second by Kelley Erstine:

**"BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the administration to proceed with the planning, design, and completion of the specified project, and authorizes the president of the university, or his designee, to execute documents, enter into contracts, and take such other steps as may be necessary or required to facilitate the specified project."**

### **UCA 2035 Strategic Plan**

The University of Central Arkansas' current strategic plan was approved by the Board of Trustees on May 13, 2016, and has guided institutional priorities, planning, and resource allocation over the past decade. Since its adoption, the university has experienced significant changes in higher education, including shifts in student expectations, workforce needs, technological advancement, demographic trends, and state and federal policy requirements.

During the 2025–2026 academic year, the university engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process to develop a new long-range plan to guide the institution through 2035. The development of UCA 2035 included broad participation from faculty, staff, students, alumni, trustees, and community partners. More than 1,400 individuals contributed through surveys, community conversations, feedback labs, and working groups. The process was informed by institutional data, environmental scanning, and consultation with EAB.

UCA 2035 is designed to serve as the university's operating framework for aligning academic priorities, enrollment strategies, financial planning, technology investments, facilities development, and organizational decision-making. The plan also positions the university to prepare for future accreditation and institutional review activities, including the next comprehensive review by the Higher Learning Commission.

The plan is organized around four strategic imperatives: Centering Student Success; Arkansas Campus of Innovation; Discovery in Action; and Future-Ready Foundations. Together, these imperatives provide an integrated roadmap to strengthen student outcomes, expand innovation and workforce partnerships, advance research and creative activity, and ensure that the university's people, systems, and infrastructure are prepared to meet the opportunities and challenges of the next decade.

The proposed effective date of UCA 2035 is July 1, 2026. Upon approval by the Board of Trustees, the administration will begin implementation of the plan and align divisional goals, performance metrics, and resource allocation processes with the strategic priorities outlined in the document.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Terry Fiddler and second by Kay Hinkle:

**"BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees of the University of Central Arkansas hereby approves the UCA 2035 Strategic Plan, effective July 1, 2026, and authorizes the president and university administration to take all actions necessary to implement the plan and align institutional priorities, operational planning, and resource decisions with its strategic imperatives."**

## **Faculty Handbook – Board Policy No. 300**

The UCA *Faculty Handbook* Committee recommends revisions to the opening pages, document, and chapters two, three, and seven of the current *Faculty Handbook*. The following is a summary of the recommended revisions:

- Opening Pages:
  - Cover page: modify date of the document
  - Title page: modify date of Board approval (pg. i)
  - Forward: specify “Business days” as all days (pg.ii)
  - Table of Contents: modify page numbers (pg. iv-vii)
- Document:
  - Clerical revisions to handbook
- Chapter Two:
  - V.: By-Laws updated by Faculty Senate with approval by faculty (pg. 7-9)
- Chapter Three:
  - II.B.: Remove definition of “close relative” and reference Board Policy for clarification (pg. 12)
  - III.B.: add language to specify offering years of credit for promotion of non- tenure track faculty (pg. 15)
  - IV.A.4.: revise language to specify the promotion to professor timeline (pg. 20)
  - IV.B.3.: revise language to specify the promotion to senior lecture/senior clinical instructor/senior laboratory instructor timeline (pg. 20)
  - V.D.: revise language to specify the promotion to professor timeline (pg. 23)
  - VII.: edit procedure and revise language to align with tenure-track guidelines (pg.29-30)
- Chapter Seven:
  - I.D.2.: add current president of the senate will record meeting minutes (pg. 65)
  - II.F.: revise language to clarify committee initiative (pg. 68)
- Correction:
  - Correct one error in the Faculty Handbook resolution submitted for approval to the Board of Trustees on May 21, 2024.
- Chapter Seven: I.D.2.: Change the not affiliated designee to specify Honors College or Torreyson Library (pg. 65)

The recommendations of the Faculty Handbook Committee have been considered and endorsed by the Faculty Senate, and other appropriate administrators.

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Kelley Erstine and second by Amy Denton:

**“BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees hereby approves the above revisions to the UCA *Faculty Handbook*.”**

## **Academic Calendar and Critical Dates—Fall 2029 through Summer 2030**

The academic calendar covering the period from fall 2029 through summer 2030 has been reviewed by the University Calendar Committee and has been recommended by all appropriate academic administrators.

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

The board unanimously approved the following resolution upon motion by Curtis Barnett and second by Michael Stanton:

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

### **Academic Calendar 2029-2030**

#### **FALL SEMESTER 2029**

August 19-22, Sunday – Wednesday	Welcome Week
August 19, Sunday	Opening Freshman Convocation
August 23, Thursday	Instruction Begins (day and evening classes)
September 3, Monday	Labor Day Holiday (university closed)
October 18-21, Thursday – Sunday	Fall Break
November 21, Wednesday	Thanksgiving Break (no classes – university offices open)
November 22-25, Thursday – Sunday	Thanksgiving Holiday (university closed)
December 7, Friday	Study Day
December 8, Saturday	Final Examinations
December 10-13, Monday – Thursday	Final Examinations
December 13, Thursday	Winter Commencement: Graduate Ceremony
December 14, Friday	Winter Commencement: Undergraduate Ceremonies

#### **WINTER INTERSESSION**

December 17, Monday	Instruction Begins for Winter Intersession
December 25, Tuesday	Christmas Day (no classes)
January 1, Tuesday	New Year’s Day (no classes)

January 4, Friday

Final Examinations for Winter Intersession

### **SPRING SEMESTER 2030**

January 17, Thursday

Instruction Begins (day and evening classes)

January 21, Monday

Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday (university closed)

March 17-March 24, Sunday – Sunday

Spring Break

May 3, Friday

Study Day

May 4, Saturday

Final Examinations

May 6-May 9, Monday – Thursday

Final Examinations

May 9, Thursday

Spring Commencement: Graduate Ceremony

May 10, Friday

Spring Commencement: Undergraduate Ceremonies

### **SUMMER 2030**

May 20, Monday

Instruction Begins for May Intersession and 13-Week Summer Session classes

May 27, Monday

Memorial Day Holiday (university closed)

June 7, Friday

Final Examinations for May Intersession classes

June 10, Monday

Instruction begins for 1<sup>st</sup> Five-Week Summer Session and 10-Week Summer Session classes

July 4, Thursday

Independence Day Holiday Observed (university closed)

July 12, Friday

Final Examinations for 1<sup>st</sup> Five-Week Summer Session

July 15, Monday

Instruction begins 2<sup>nd</sup> Five-Week Summer Session classes

August 16, Friday

Final Examinations for 13-Week Summer Session classes, 10-Week Summer Session classes, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Five-Week Summer Session classes

August 17, Saturday

Graduate Summer Commencement Ceremonies

## **NOTIFICATIONS/DELETIONS**

### **Notification: New Associate of Science in General Education**

UCA will offer the Associate of Science (AS) in General Education as a degree earned in progress towards any Bachelor of Science degree, including the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and the Bachelor of Science in Education (BSE), rather than as a standalone degree program. The AS in General Education will serve to recognize academic achievement and establish a milestone in a student's learning trajectory towards a bachelor's degree. Students may not declare the AS in General Education as their major course of study. Rather, students will automatically be notified that they have earned the degree upon satisfactory completion of the minimum requirements. The proposed degree is similar to the Associate of Science En Route degree awarded by Arkansas State University and will complement the existing Associate of Business Administration that is earned by BBA students and the revised Associate of Arts in General Education that is earned by BA students.

### **Notification: Revision of the Associate of Arts in General Education**

The Associate of Arts in General Education offered by UCA is being re-envisioned as a degree earned in progress towards a bachelor's degree, rather than as a standalone degree program. To do so, the directed electives will be chosen from major or related courses used in fulfillment of a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Public Administration degree, rather than the current limited set of courses. The degree is similar to the Associate of Arts En Route degree awarded by Arkansas State University and will complement the existing Associate of Business Administration that is earned by BBA students and the new Associate of Science in General Education that is earned by BS students.

### **Notification: New Certificate of Proficiency in Professional Selling**

The Department of Marketing and Management at UCA will offer students a Certificate of Proficiency (CP) in Professional Selling. This new certificate is a response to ongoing feedback from industry partners and the department's advisory board and will prepare students to meet industry demand for professional selling knowledge and skills. The program is a total of 9 credit hours and consists of the three existing courses in the Marketing curriculum.

### **Notification: Revision of the Master of Science in Nursing and New Family Nurse Practitioner Concentration**

The School of Nursing at UCA is making a significant revision to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree to meet the competencies required by new accreditation standards, to optimize current resources, and to meet the needs of our students and community. The revision adds 43 credit hours of new courses to the MSN degree, removes 12 credit hours of old coursework, and adds a Family Nurse Practitioner concentration to complement the existing Nurse Educator concentration. As a result, the existing MSN Nurse Educator concentration will require a total of 39 credit hours, and the MSN Family Nurse Practitioner concentration will require a total of 46 credit hours. The School of Nursing has removed direct admission to the Doctor of Nursing Practice program for those with a BSN. The new Family Nurse Practitioner concentration will provide students that have earned a BSN with an incremental pathway to

advanced study in nursing, allowing them to earn the MSN before considering the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. The revised MSN program will be delivered online.

**Notification: New Concentration in Substance Use Prevention**

The Department of Health Sciences at UCA proposes to add a new concentration in Substance Use Prevention to the MS in Health Promotion degree. The concentration packages existing courses in the MS program and offers students the opportunity to complete the coursework required to sit for the Arkansas Certified Prevention Specialist (CPS) certification. Prevention Professionals of Arkansas has verified that completion of the courses for the concentration provides eligibility to sit for the certification exam. Students completing the concentration complete 15 credit hours of required courses instead of 15 credit hours of elective courses. A thesis is not required for those completing the concentration.

**Notification: Change the Classification (CIP) Code for the Master of Science in Nutrition**

The previous CIP code "general foods, nutrition, and wellness study" (19.0501) no longer accurately represents the program requirements of either the MS in Nutrition nor the MS in Nutrition-Dietetics and Nutrition Therapy concentration. Requirements for both programs include a comprehensive curriculum focusing on dietetics. For this reason, the appropriate CIP code for this MS program is Dietetics/Dietitian (51.3101).

**Notification: New Minor in Bioinformatics**

The Department of Biology at UCA will offer a Bioinformatics minor. The new minor is a timely and strategic response to the growing demand for students to develop computational and analytical skills essential to modern biological research. As the life sciences become increasingly data-driven, students with bioinformatics training are exceptionally well-positioned for careers in high-growth fields. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, jobs for data scientists are projected to grow by 36% between 2023 and 2033, while roles for medical scientists and biochemists – fields that increasingly rely on bioinformatics – are projected to grow by 11% and 9%, respectively. This initiative will empower students to interpret complex datasets, enhance their competitiveness for graduate programs and careers in biotechnology, healthcare, and data science, and foster interdisciplinary collaboration between biology, computer science, computer information systems and analytics, and mathematics. The new minor adds one new course in Bioinformatics. By leveraging existing courses and faculty expertise, the minor can be implemented with minimal additional resources while aligning with institutional goals of innovation, STEM integration, and workforce preparedness. This initiative reflects both the evolving nature of biology and the interests of students seeking to apply biological knowledge in data-intensive contexts, and it promises to enhance our students' learning and career opportunities significantly.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The board unanimously declared an executive session to consider employment and disciplining of employees, upon motion by Kay Hinkle.

**OPEN SESSION**

The board unanimously approved the following motion by Kay Hinkle and second by Curtis Barnett:

**“I move that all matters set forth on the personnel list discussed in executive session be approved.”**

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

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**Jim Rankin, Jr.**  
**Chair**

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**Kay Hinkle**  
**Secretary**