

ACADEMIC COUNCIL Minutes June 12, 2025

Present: Leslie Griffin, Joe Childs, Vicki Bingham, Fawn Ussery, Merideth Van Namen, Kristen Land, Tammy Prather, Jeffrey Leffler
Absent: Peter Dean

Guests: Jon Westfall

Call to order: The Academic Council met via Teams on June 12, 2025. The meeting convened at 8:30 AM, with Provost Leslie Griffin presiding.

Agenda item	Comments/Discussion	Action taken	Responsible party
Approval of Agenda:	The motion to approve the agenda was made by Dr. Vicki Bingham which was seconded by Kristen Land. All were in favor.	Approved	Leslie Griffin
Approval of Minutes:	The motion to approve minutes for both Thursday, May 8, 2025 and Thursday, May 29, 2025 was made by Dr. Vicki Bingham and seconded by Fawn Ussery. All in favor.	Approved	Leslie Griffin
Discussion Items			

Provost's Updates	<p><u>Provost, Dr. Leslie Griffin, provided the following updates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Griffin reported on the recent Academic Affairs retreat. The group which included the Provost, Deans, and Associate Provost worked on developing a plan to have a more purpose-driven focus. Artificial Intelligence was a key topic, and a decision was made to contract with Daphne Smith who will work with Dr. Jon Westfall to develop a module to be included in the First Year Seminar for all Delta State students to receive an introduction to AI and its appropriate uses. Dr. Griffin has been participating in a tour of "Sippin with the Statesmen" alumni 		Leslie Griffin
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	<p>events across the state. She will be attending the Delta Council meeting on campus on Friday, June 13th.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delta State will be hosting the Mississippi Institutes of Higher Learning Board of Trustees next week, which will include several key meetings and events around campus. • University enrollment bi-weekly meetings will begin including Deans. • The FY2026 budget has been a major focus of recent weeks. The university did not receive any funding for buildings that are typically received. Overall, the budget is healthy with increases over previous years, and every department received more travel and recruitment funds to support recruitment efforts. • The Director of Academic Engagement and Strategic Initiatives position has been posted, and the search committee will begin reviewing applications soon. The Director of the Gertrude C. Ford Center for Teaching and Learning position posting has been removed and Institutional Grants and the CTL will be restructured to pool resources and synergize faculty support efforts in the areas of teaching, learning, and grants with Heather Miller's current role expanding to include directing the CTL. • Dr. Griffin welcomed Dr. Joe Childs as the new Interim Dean of the College of Business and Aviation who will take over as the Dean July 1st. 		
Faculty Senate Update	<p><u>Faculty Senate President-Elect Jon Westfall provided the following update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jon Westfall represented Faculty Senate President Peter Dean who could not attend the meeting due to other obligations. Dr. Westfall reported that they have set a goal to ensure Faculty Senate representation at all Academic Council meetings. The Senate requested that Dr. Ennis provide a letter documenting his stance on academic freedom in response to HB 1193 of which the President has obliged. The Senate plans to review the constitution to consider how more representation can be provided considering recent campus reorganization. 		Jon Westfall
Action Items: New Business Policies and Forms			
New Business	<p><u>First Reading of the 2025-2026 Undergraduate Catalog:</u></p> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared that Deans, Chairs, and Administrative Unit Directors had worked on revisions to the 2025-2026 Undergraduate Catalog to reflect course and 	Approved	Jeffrey Leffler

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	<p>curriculum actions over the past year and to update informational components of the catalog. Academic Council has been provided with access to the red-lined document for review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First reading of red-lined changes to the Undergraduate Catalog. <p>A motion was made by Dr. Jeffrey Leffler to approve the action and was seconded by Dr. Merideth Van Namen. All in Favor</p>		
	<p><u>First Reading of the 2025-2026 Graduate Catalog:</u></p> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared that Deans, Chairs, and Administrative Unit Directors had worked on revisions to the 2025-2026 Graduate Catalog to reflect course and curriculum actions over the past year and to update informational components of the catalog. Academic Council has been provided with access to the red-lined document for review. Proposed actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First reading of red-lined changes to the Graduate Catalog. <p>A motion was made by Dr. Jeffrey Leffler to approve the action and was seconded by Dr. Merideth Van Namen. All in Favor</p>		Jeffrey Leffler
Announcements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fawn Ussery announced that the work to inventory the permanent art collection is underway with space in the archives reorganized and a system developed to monitor location of pieces on loan. Dr. Griffin shared that the Student Success Center is moving to the library in the fall. Campus constituents are working together to use space better with the goal of elevating the student and faculty experience. 		
Adjourned:	9:30 a.m.		
Next Meeting:	June 25, 2025, at 7:30 am in the KWH President's Conference Room		