

ACADEMIC COUNCIL Minutes August 14, 2025

Present: Leslie Griffin, Peter Dean, Joe Childs, Vicki Bingham, Fawn Ussery, Merideth Van Namen, Kristen Land, Tammy Prather, Jeffrey Leffler, Heather Miller
Absent: None

Guests: Curtis Coleman

Call to order: The Academic Council met in the Janice Wyatt Conference Room KWH on August 14, 2025. The meeting convened at 8:30 AM, with Provost Leslie Griffin presiding.

Agenda item	Comments/Discussion	Action taken	Responsible party
Approval of Agenda:	Dr. Griffin began the meeting by asking for an amendment to the agenda to include a discussion of key priorities set by the Office of Academic Affairs. The motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Dr. Jeffrey Leffler which was seconded by Dr. Merideth Van Namen. All were in favor.	Approved	Leslie Griffin
Approval of Minutes:	The motion to approve minutes for Thursday, June 25; Tuesday, July 8; Sunday, July 13; and Wednesday, July 30, 2025; was made by Fawn Ussery and seconded by Dr. Peter Dean. All in favor.	Approved	Leslie Griffin
Discussion Items			

Guest Speaker	<p><u>Vice President for Enrollment Management, Dr. Curtis Coleman, provided the following updates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Coleman provided some general enrollment updates. Duplicated program categories in PowerBI are being corrected. Participation in Taking Care of Business has increased and graduate admissions continue to be up as are readmitted students. He expressed gratitude to everyone for their contributions to work on getting students enrolled in a timely manner after admission. 		
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<p>Provost's Updates</p>	<p><u>Provost, Dr. Leslie Griffin, provided the following updates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Griffin shared that there is still no ruling on HB 1193. • She also shared that faculty in the School Leadership, Research, and Psychology created a new concentration in Higher Education for the Master of Education in Educational Administration and Supervision. This new concentration was developed in response from feedback from community college partners. She and Dr. Van Namen recently hosted a virtual interest meeting for the new concentration and a cohort will begin Fall 2025. She expressed appreciation for everyone working together to expedite the approvals of the new concentration. A special Centennial scholarship of \$1,000 each was created for the first ten students who are admitted and enrolled in the new concentration. • She shared that the group will be reviewing and updating several Academic Affairs policies in each of the upcoming Academic Council Meeting until all policies in PolicyStat are up to date. • Homecoming was the special topic of a recent President's Cabinet meeting. Academic Affairs will be hosting a reception with cake and punch along with some giveaways from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm on the day of Homecoming in the artium of Kent Wyatt Hall. Alumni will be invited to visit. Parade details are forthcoming. • Dr. Griffin shared that Academic Affairs is purchasing a four-seater golf cart that will be available to check out for Academic Affairs units. 		<p>Leslie Griffin</p>
<p>Faculty Senate</p>	<p><u>Faculty Senate President Peter Dean provided the following update:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Senate has scheduled a special virtual meeting to discuss the Faculty Load Guidelines document created by the Task Force on Faculty Load and Compensation. 		<p>Peter Dean</p>
<p>Action Items: New Business Policies and Forms</p>			

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<p>New Business</p>	<p>Academic Affairs Key Priorities: Dr. Griffin shared a spreadsheet including four major priorities for the next academic year. These include AI initiatives, a comprehensive advisement system, an assessment system for continuous improvement, and general improvement of internal processes. Units within Academic Affairs should align their initiatives to these overarching priorities.</p> <p>A motion was made by Dr. Vicki Bingham to accept the priorities and was seconded by Fawn Ussery. All in Favor</p>	<p>Passed</p>	<p>Leslie Griffin</p>
	<p>Academic Standing Policy (1st Reading): Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jeffrey Leffler red-lined edits to the Academic Standing policy. • Proposed revisions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adds word “undergraduate” throughout to emphasize that the policy applies to only undergraduate students. ○ Adjusts language to reflect new organizational structure. <p>A motion was made by Dr. Jeffrey Leffler to approve the action and was seconded by Tammy Prather. All in Favor</p>	<p>Passed</p>	<p>Jeffrey Leffler</p>
	<p>Administrative Appointments – Tenure and Promotion (1st Reading): Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared a red-lined copy of changes to the Administrative Appointments – Tenure and Promotion Policy. • Proposed actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mild edit to represent the new organizational structure (“Department” changed to “School” and “Library” added. <p>A motion was made by Dr. Jeffrey Leffler to approve the action and was seconded by Fawn Ussery. All in Favor</p>	<p>Passed</p>	<p>Jeffrey Leffler</p>
	<p>Unit/Division Chair Policy (1st Reading): Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared a red-line copy of changes to the Unit/Division Chair Policy. • Proposed revisions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Edits to language to reflect the new organizational structure (“Department” changed to “School”). ○ Adds a line that prior to reappointment, the Dean will conduct a formal evaluation ○ Emphasizes that Chairs do not routinely teach overloads and explicitly states that the Provost approves any overloads. 	<p>Passed</p>	<p>Jeffrey Leffler</p>

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	<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>Intellectual Property Policy (1st Reading): Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared a copy of the Intellectual Property Policy. • No revisions are proposed. This action would approve the policy as is for another cycle. <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>Passed</p>	<p>Jeffrey Leffler</p>
	<p>Faculty Credentials Policy (1st Reading): Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared a red-line copy of changes to the Faculty Credentials Policy. • Proposed revisions update the policy to reflect SACSCOC requirements and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The policy as written overemphasized the 18 hours of graduate coursework in the discipline in a way that SACSCOC does not. ○ The work “extraordinary” was changed to “some” and the language was changed to reflect a combination of education, industry certification, and outstanding professional or creative accomplishments. ○ A statement indicating that it is the responsibility of the School/Division seeking the credentialing to “clearly demonstrate in such a way a reasonable person would understand that the individual is suited to teach the courses for which they are credentialled.” ○ Also emphasizes that the Office of Academic Affairs must receive official transcripts before an offer of employment is made. ○ A line requiring review by the Graduate Council for those teaching graduate courses was removed. ○ Additional edits reflect the new organizational structure (“Department” becomes “School”). <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>Passed</p>	<p>Jeffrey Leffler</p>

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	<p>Graduate Student Suspension and Dismissal Policy: Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared a red-line copy of proposed changes to the Suspension and Dismissal policy in the 2025-2026 Graduate Catalog. • Proposed revisions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students who earn three grades of “C” or one grade of “D” or “F” will be placed on probation versus being dismissed from the degree program. This will allow for the student to remain enrolled while they are working on their improvement plan. ○ Students who earn two grades of “D” or “F” or earn a fourth grade of “C” will be dismissed from their degree program. ○ Additional edits reflect the new organizational structure (“Department” becomes “School”). <p>A motion was made by Dr. Jeffrey Leffler to approve the action and was seconded by Dr. Vicki Bingham. All in Favor</p>	Passed	Jeffrey Leffler
<p>Discussion</p>	<p><u>Kent and Janice Wyatt Fund</u> Dr. Griffin asked Academic Council to give input on the process for applying for the Kent and Janice Wyatt funds. The fund generates approximately \$3,000 per year which makes three cycles of applications excessive. The group consensus was that one cycle per year would be most appropriate considering the amount of funds available and increased funds that have been allocated for faculty travel.</p>		Leslie Griffin
<p>Announcements:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Faculty Orientation, August 18, 2025, 8:30 am – 11:00 am, Young-Mauldin Dining Hall Multipurpose Room • Welcome Back Celebration, August 18, 2025, 5:00 pm, The Pharm, 301 Cotton Row of Cleveland • Last day to admit without Dean/Provost permission, August 20, 2025 		
<p>Adjourned:</p>	10:49 a.m.		
<p>Next Meeting:</p>	September 11, 2025, at 8:30 am in the Janice Wyatt Conference Room		