

# ACADEMIC COUNCIL Minutes February 5, 2026

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

**Absent:** None

**Guests:** Katelyn Harris, Yolanda Ingram, Suzette Matthews, Kellie Williams, Edwin Craft

**Call to order:** The Academic Council met in the Janice Wyatt Conference Room KWH on February 8, 2026. The meeting convened at 8:30 AM, with Provost Leslie Griffin presiding.

| Agenda item                 | Comments/Discussion   | Action taken    | Responsible party     |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Approval of Agenda:</b>  | Dr. Griffin began the meeting by asking for a motion to approve the agenda. The motion to approve the agenda was made by Dr. Vicki Bingham which was seconded by Kristen Land. All were in favor. | <b>Approved</b> | <b>Leslie Griffin</b> |
| <b>Approval of Minutes:</b> | The motion to approve minutes for Thursday, December 4 <sup>th</sup> was made by Dr. Vicki Bingham and seconded by Dr. Joe Childs. All in favor.  | <b>Approved</b> | <b>Leslie Griffin</b> |
| <b>Discussion Items</b>     |   |                 |                       |
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| <b>Guest Speaker</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katelyn Harris, Student Government Association Representative, presented a concept developed as a resolution of the Student Senate to implement mid-semester course evaluations. Peter Dean, President of the Faculty Senate, shared that they had been working on revisions to the course evaluations and invited collaboration. The resolution will be sent to the Provost for consideration at a future Academic Council Meeting.</li> <li>• Kristen Land introduced Yolanda Ingram, the new Coordinator of International Student Services, to the group.</li> <li>• Dr. Suzette Matthews introduced Kelly Williams, the new Director of Marketing,</li> </ul> |  |  |
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|                                 | <p>to the group. She will be scheduling meetings with various groups to discuss marketing needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Edwin Craft, Vice President for Finance and Administration, was invited by the Provost to take questions regarding processes and systems at Delta State. The conversation focused on common cumbersome and time-intensive processes particularly focused on processing MOAs. Dr. Craft shared that his office had been working with sister IHL institutions to evaluate processes and make suggestions to enhance communication and prevent delays.</li> </ul>   |  |  |
| <p><b>Provost's Updates</b></p> | <p><b><u>Provost, Dr. Leslie Griffin, provided the following updates:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Griffin shared that a consultant group recently visited the University to discuss the proposed MS IHL funding model revisions. Three models are under consideration and the consultant group is gathering input.</li> <li>• The budget process for the next fiscal year has begun. The Provost will be scheduling meetings within the next two weeks for budget discussions. She also asked if any anticipated new budget requests be sent by email as soon as possible.</li> <li>• The recent winter storm delayed some visits to community colleges to meet with program coordinators and faculty. Representatives from MGCCC will be on campus Friday to discuss a variety of partnership opportunities. Workforce pathways continue to be a major focus of potential collaboration. The Provost praised recent work in curriculum development and revision to create pathways.</li> <li>• Programmatic assessments will be modified to include some additional program metrics. Dr. Leffler will work with Chairs/Deans to include this in the assessment cycle.</li> </ul> |  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Leslie Griffin</b></p> |
| <p><b>Faculty Senate</b></p>    | <p><b>Faculty Senate President, Peter Dean, provided the following update:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peter Dean reported that the Faculty Senate had some cancellations of meetings for various reasons. A meeting is scheduled for February 12<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm. Agenda items include faculty recognition, course evaluation revisions, and the Faculty Handbook.</li> </ul>  |  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Peter Dean</b></p>     |

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| Action Items:<br>New Business<br>Policies and Forms |  |               |                        |
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| Policy Action Items                                 | <p><b><u>Policy Action: Scholastic Honors (First Reading)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared a proposed revision to the Scholastic Honors policy.</li> <li>• Proposed actions include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Red-lined changes to the policy to more explicitly state how incomplete grades and grades below C would impact eligibility for President’s and Dean’s list recognition and to allow more broad transfer student participation.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>A motion was made by Dr. Jeffrey Leffler to approve the actions and was seconded by Dr. Vicki Bingham. All in Favor.</b></p> | <b>Passed</b> | <b>Jeffrey Leffler</b> |
|   | <p><b><u>Policy Action: Student Advising (First Reading)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared a proposed revision to the Student Advising policy.</li> <li>• Proposed actions include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Red-lined changes to the policy to reflect the recently adopted comprehensive advising model.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Discussion included that faculty feedback had been generally positive regarding the comprehensive advising model.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>A motion was made by Dr. Jeffrey Leffler to approve the actions and was seconded by Dr. Vicki Bingham. All in Favor</b></p> | <b>Passed</b> | <b>Jeffrey Leffler</b> |
|   | <p><b><u>Policy Action: Class Attendance (First Reading)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared a proposed revision to the Class Attendance policy.</li> <li>• Proposed actions include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Red-lined changes to the policy to remove the dropping of students with over 25% absences and to reflect federal financial aid requirements regarding</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>   | <b>Tabled</b> | <b>Jeffrey Leffler</b> |

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|                                  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>class attendance policies in course syllabi</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion included that the recommendations originated from the Registrar’s office. The group would like more clarification from financial aid regarding specific requirements.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tabled</b></p>  |               |                        |
|                                  | <p><b><u>Policy Action: Class Absences and Excuses (First Reading)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Jeffrey Leffler shared a proposed revision to the Class Absences and Excuses policy.</li> <li>• Proposed actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Red-lined changes to the policy to reflect the absence of an on-site medical facility.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A decision was made to defer to a future meeting due to time constraints.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tabled</b></p>   | <b>Tabled</b> | <b>Jeffrey Leffler</b> |
| <b>Curriculum/Course Actions</b> | <p><b><u>Curriculum Action: BAS Commercial Aviation</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Joe Childs shared proposed curriculum actions to revise the BAS in Aviation Management.</li> <li>• Proposed actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Red-lined changes to the undergraduate catalog to delete CAV 332 and add CAV 333 to the curriculum.</li> <li>○ Red-lined changes to the undergraduate catalog to deleted CAV 332</li> <li>○ Red-lined changes to the undergraduate catalog to add CAV 333</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>A motion was made by Dr. Joe Childs to approve the actions and was seconded by Dr. Vicki Bingham. All in Favor</b></p> | <b>Passed</b> | <b>Jeffrey Leffler</b> |
|                                  | <p><b><u>Course Actions: BAS CAV 250, 256</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Joe Childs shared proposed curriculum actions to revise courses in Commercial Aviation.</li> <li>• Proposed actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Red-lined changes to the undergraduate catalog to revise CAV 250.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>  | <b>Passed</b> | <b>Jeffrey Leffler</b> |

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|                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Red-lined changes to the undergraduate catalog to revise CAV 250.</li> <li>○ Red-lined changes to the undergraduate catalog to revise CAV 256.</li> </ul> <p>A motion was made by Dr. Joe Childs to approve the actions and was seconded by Dr. Vicki Bingham. All in Favor</p>   |  |                       |
| <b>Discussion</b>     | <u>None</u>  |  | <b>Leslie Griffin</b> |
| <b>Announcements:</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No Show Reporting to Registrar – February 5, 2026</li> <li>• Robert E. Smith School of Nursing Health Fair – February 10, 2026, 9:30-11:30</li> <li>• President’s Town Hall Meeting – Thursday, February 5, 2026, 3:00 pm, Jacob Conference Center</li> <li>• FLAC Finalization Meeting for Admins – February 10, 2026, 1:30 pm, FCTL</li> <li>• FLAC Finalization Meeting for Chairs/Deans – February 11, 2026, 3:30 pm, FCTL</li> </ul> |  |                       |
| <b>Adjourned:</b>     | 11:38 a.m.   |  |                       |
| <b>Next Meeting:</b>  | February 19, 2026, at 1:30 pm in the Janice Wyatt Conference Room  |  |                       |
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