

Council of Academic Deans

Council of Academic Leaders

Minutes

January 15, 2025

CAD Present: Andi Kent, Andrzej Wierzbicki (A&S), Angela Rand (LIB), Heather Hall (NURS), Susan Gordon-Hickey (CAHP), Michael Capella (MCOB), Todd Andel (SOC), Rick Carter (GLOBAL), Angela Barlow (CEPS), Harold Pardue (GRAD), Emily Wilson (WCOM)

CAL Present: Charles Guest, Julie Estis, S. Raj Chaudhury, Mathew Cox, Anjie Davis, Nicole Carr

Guests Present: Ashley Suggs, David Blair, Ashley Gibson, Christina Wassenaar, Alison Wood

Council of Academic Leaders

1. Minutes of the December 3, 2024 meeting were approved as written.
2. Licensure Program Disclosures and Attestation: Alison Wood reviewed the NC-SARA reporting procedures and the required disclosures and attestations.
3. Spring Mid-Term Deadline: Dr. Nicole Carr reminded the group of the new spring mid-term grade submission window, opening on February 24, 2025 and closing on March 5, 2025. Dr. Carr requested that progress feedback be given to students as early in the semester as possible, especially in cases where the students may be struggling. A reminder of the opening and closing dates will be posted weekly in the Daily Digest.
4. Communication Following CAL Meetings: Dr. Andi Kent reminded leaders to disseminate information to leadership teams following CAL & CAD meetings so that it may be passed on to faculty and staff.
5. Other:
 - a. David Blair reviewed proposed changes to the Military Leave Policy as required by federal law. Please provide any feedback on the policy to Mr. Blair directly.
 - b. Dr. Kent asked leaders to forward her any information on recognitions, awards or praise worthy faculty and staff within their departments.

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1. ACHE Proposal Process: Ashley Gibson reviewed deadlines for ACHE proposals and discussed new substantive changes guidelines for SACSCOC. Ashley also briefly mentioned a new ACHE "skinny" proposal, which is an abbreviated proposal made post-implementation of a program or concentration.
2. Non-Tenure Track Professor of Instruction Policy: Dr. Susan Gordon-Hickey proposed revisiting the Non-Tenure Track Professor of Instruction Policy, making changes that would allow colleges to write guidelines that are college-specific. This item was briefly discussed and may be brought back to the group at a later meeting.

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February 12, 2025

CAD Present: Andi Kent, Andrzej Wierzbicki (A&S), Lorene Flanders (LIB), Heather Hall (NURS), Susan Gordon-Hickey (CAHP), Michael Capella (MCOB), Todd Andel (SOC), Rick Carter (GLOBAL), Tres Stefurak (CEPS), Harold Pardue (GRAD), Emily Wilson (WCOM), Doug Marshall (HONORS), Darryl James (ENG)

CAL Present: Charles Guest, Julie Estis, Mathew Cox, Anjie Davis, Nicole Carr

Guests Present: Ashley Suggs, David Blair, Ashley Gibson, Christina Wassenaar, Jim Berscheidt, Micheal Chambers, Joél Billingsley, Lisa LaCross

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1. Minutes of the January 15, 2025 meeting were approved as written.
2. Brand Implementations: Jim Berscheidt reviewed the new brand implementations including the viewbook, academic program brochures, and email signature block. Copies of the latest South magazine are available in the MarComm office.
3. Revised Military Leave Policy: David Blair and Ashley Suggs presented the revised Military Leave policy for feedback. The policy was approved, with edits, and the approved copy will be sent via email to the Council once the edits are made.
4. Federal Grant Issues: Michael Chambers and Joél Billingsley discussed the current state of federal grants and the potential effects on our active research. The newly formed Active Research Review Group is working to determine the level of risk for each of the ongoing grants.
5. CoTL Update: Lisa LaCross provided an update on CoTL 2025 and announced Dr. Edward Watson and Dr. Maribeth Gandy Coleman as the 2025 keynote speakers.

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1. AHETEC Update: Susan Gordon-Hickey addressed the feedback received from the Faculty Senate, the committee's response, and the revised report based on that feedback. Dr. Gordon-Hickey submitted the revised AHETEC report for review by the deans.
2. Other: Raise eligibility for Exceptional Performance Stipends was discussed and the consensus was that they should not be raise-eligible. A motion to confirm this decision was made by Dr. Andrzej Wierzbicki, seconded by Dr. Susan Gordon-Hickey, and passed unanimously.

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March 11, 2025

CAD Present: Andi Kent, Andrzej Wierzbicki (A&S), Lorene Flanders (LIB), Heather Hall (NURS), Susan Gordon-Hickey (CAHP), Michael Capella (MCOB), Todd Andel (SOC), Rick Carter (GLOBAL), Angela Barlow (CEPS), Harold Pardue (GRAD), Emily Wilson (WCOM), Doug Marshall (HONORS), Darryl James (ENG)

CAL Present: Charles Guest, Julie Estis, Mathew Cox, Anjie Davis, Nicole Carr, S. Raj Chaudhury, David Blair

Guests Present: Ashley Suggs, Ashley Gibson, Christina Wassenaar, Jim Berscheidt, Jeb Schrenk, Diana Nichols

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1. Minutes of the February 12, 2025 meeting were approved as written.
2. New Website Design and Email Signatures: Jim Berscheidt, Jeb Schrenk and Diana Nichols presented the new website design and reminded everyone to be sure to update their email signature to the new format.
3. JagPack & Required Course Materials: Dr. Andi Kent reminded deans to stress the importance of only submitting course materials that they intend to use as students cannot be refunded for course materials once the deadline to opt out has passed.
4. Faculty Letters to Grads: Dr. Kent announced a new program, piloted by the bookstore manager, to provide all grads with a personalized letter from faculty, the president, and the EVP and provost when they pick up their regalia for graduation.
5. Others:
 - a. A request was made to have Buck Kelley give an update on ongoing projects on campus and at USA Health.
 - b. Dr. S. Raj Chaudhury announced the upcoming Canvas training program.
 - c. David Blair announced that a Military Service resource Fair would be held on campus on April 3, 2025 and spaces for departments were still available,

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April 9, 2025

CAD Present: Andi Kent, Andrzej Wierzbicki (A&S), Lorene Flanders (LIB), Heather Hall (NURS), Susan Gordon-Hickey (CAHP), Michael Capella (MCOB), Todd Andel (SOC), Maya De Andrade (GLOBAL), Harold Pardue (GRAD), Emily Wilson (WCOM), Doug Marshall (HONORS), Eric Steward (ENG)

CAL Present: Charles Guest, Julie Estis, Mathew Cox, Anjie Davis, Nicole Carr, S. Raj Chaudhury, David Blair

Guests Present: Ashley Suggs, Ashley Gibson, Christina Wassenaar, Buckley Kelley, Amy Clay, Kaitlin Falks

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1. Minutes of the March 11, 2025 meeting were approved as written.
2. Updates on Campus Facilities Projects: Buck Kelley gave an update regarding ongoing capital projects across all USA campuses.
3. Budget Requests: Amy Clay provided a template for budget requests and reminded deans and directors of the May 2, 2025 due date for all requests.
4. Teaching Effectiveness Policy & Implementation Plan: Dr. Julie Estis and Dr. S. Raj Chaudhury presented a draft of the new policy, establishing university guidelines for assessing teaching effectiveness for review. This policy will be discussed further at a future CAD meeting.
5. Others:
 - a. David Blair gave an update on past and future Military Services recruiting events as well as the new emblems that can be used in our recruiting materials.
 - b. Dr. Doug Marshall outlined the new SURF funding model.

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May 7, 2025

CAD Present: Andi Kent, Andrzej Wierzbicki (A&S), Lorene Flanders (LIB), Heather Hall (NURS), Susan Gordon-Hickey (CAHP), Michael Capella (MCOB), Todd Andel (SOC), Rick Carter (GLOBAL), Harold Pardue (GRAD), Emily Wilson (WCOM), Doug Marshall (HONORS), Darryl James (ENG), Angela Barlow (CEPS)

CAL Present: Charles Guest, Julie Estis, Mathew Cox, Anjie Davis, S. Raj Chaudhury, David Blair

Guests Present: Ashley Suggs, Ashley Gibson, Christina Wassenaar, Amy Clay, Sinead Ni Chadhain

Council of Academic Leaders

1. Minutes of the April 9, 2025, meeting were approved as written.
2. Chat with a Professor & Fall USA Day: Mathew Cox recapped the Chat with a Professor program and asked for feedback and areas for improvement. He announced the Fall USA Day has been set for September 20, 2025.
3. Required Hours in Residence/Transfer Credit Limits Policy: Ashley Suggs mentioned that this new policy was created to address the lack of a policy regarding certificate programs and to consolidate our existing residency and transfer policies into a comprehensive policy. The portion of the policy relevant to certificate programs aligns with our established transfer policy for minors.
4. Academic Affairs Restructuring: Dr. Charlie Guest discussed the new roles of Ashley Gibson and Amy Clay within the Department of Academic Affairs.
5. Part-time Faculty Hiring: Ashley Gibson detailed a new procedure for part-time faculty which will make them active in Banner for three years from the effective date, dispensing with the need to re-enter them in Banner every academic year.
6. USA Course Formats Policy Proposal: Dr. S. Raj Chaudhury discussed the proposed changes to the policy and the impacts it will have on military and international students. The policy is tentatively slated for implementation in the fall of 2026.
7. FS 1029 Non-Tenure Track Promotion & FS 1030 Revisions to Faculty Promotion Process (HB section 3.10.3): Dr. Sinead Ni Chadhain presented these two new Faculty Senate bills to the deans for discussion at the CAD meeting.

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8. Teaching Effectiveness Policy: Due to time constraints, this policy was tabled to be discussed at a future meeting.
9. FS 1029 Non-Tenure Track Promotion & FS 1030 Revisions to Faculty Promotion Process (HB section 3.10.3): Dr. Guest led a discussion regarding the FS 1029 Non-Tenure Track Promotion bill and asked for deans to send further feedback for review at a later meeting and/or the CAD retreat on June 25, 2025. FS 1030 was tabled for discussion at a future meeting.
10. Other: Dr. Kent announced that a Council of Academic Dean's Retreat will be held on June 25, 2025, from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Country Club of Mobile. More details will follow.

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July 8, 2025

CAD Present: Andi Kent, Andrzej Wierzbicki (A&S), Lorene Flanders (LIB), Heather Hall (NURS), Susan Gordon-Hickey (CAHP), Michael Capella (MCOB), Todd Andel (SOC), Rick Carter (GLOBAL), Harold Pardue (GRAD), Darryl James (ENG), Angela Barlow (CEPS)

CAL Present: Julie Estis, Anjie Davis, S. Raj Chaudhury, David Blair, Nicole Carr

Guests Present: Ashley Suggs, Ashley Gibson, Laura Vrana, Amy Clay, Ellen Harrington, Nick Lawkis

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1. Minutes of the May 7, 2025, meeting were approved as written.
2. Teaching Effectiveness Policy: Dr. Harold Pardue opened the floor for discussion of the policy. After further edits to the document were suggested, a preliminary vote in favor of the revised policy was made. However, following the meeting, concerns were expressed regarding those changes to the document resulting in a decision to bring this policy back before the CAD at the next meeting.
3. FS 1030 Revisions to Faculty Promotion Process (HB section 3.10.3): Dr. Julie Estis informed the deans that small working groups within the CAD would be established to review this policy. These work groups will make recommendations to the EVP/P based on their discussions.
4. Retreat Follow-up: Dr. Estis reviewed the notes from the work that was done during the Deans Retreat on June 25, 2025, and circulated sign-up sheets for the four Tenure and Promotion Policy working groups. Those groups include Timeline & Logistics, Tenure & Promotion Policy Updates, Annual Evaluation Processes and External Review.

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5. South Alabama PAC for Higher Education: Nick Lawkis spoke to the academic leaders about the PAC and how donations are used in the advancement of the University. Mr. Lawkis directed them to the webpage for further information and for ways to contribute.
6. Department Chairs Professional Development Committee Update: Dr. Ellen Harrington and Dr. S. Raj Chaudhury reviewed the charge of the committee and the work that has been done to date in bringing the Department Chair Professional Development workshop to fruition. They discussed future goals and programming that is currently in the works.
7. Flagship Leaders Scholarship: This was tabled until the next meeting.
8. Other: Dr. Harold Pardue announced that the Process Improvement committee would restart in the fall, and he reminded the group of the importance of submitting mid-term grades for students.

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August 27, 2025

CAD Present: Andi Kent, Andrzej Wierzbicki (A&S), Lorene Flanders (LIB), Heather Hall (NURS), Susan Gordon-Hickey (CAHP), Michael Capella (MCOB), Todd Andel (SOC), Rick Carter (GLOBAL), Harold Pardue (GRAD), Darryl James (ENG), Angela Barlow (CEPS), Doug Marshall (HONORS), Emily Wilson (COM)

CAL Present: Charlie Guest, Julie Estis, Anjie Davis, Nicole Carr, S. Raj Chaudhury, David Blair, Mathew Cox

Guests Present: Ashley Suggs, Ashley Gibson, Amy Clay, Christina Wassenaar

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1. Minutes of the July 30, 2025, meeting were approved as written.
2. WOW and Convocation: Dr. Nicole Carr gave an update on Fall 2025 WOW activities and expressed gratitude to everyone for the participation leading to its success.
3. Policy on Course Formats: Dr. S. Raj Chaudhury led a discussion on the effects that the proposed course formats and instructional modalities updates will have on the international and military student populations. The group also discussed the implications that this LMS policy would have with SACSCOC. Dr. Chaudhury will provide the council with additional information to continue the discussion and talk through the approval process at the next Cal meeting.
4. LMS Certification Policy Updates: After a group discussion, Dr. Chaudhury proposed updates to the policy.
5. Others: Reminder that Fall USA Day is on September 20, 2025.

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6. Tenure and Promotion Working Groups: Dr. Julie Estis reminded groups to be prepared to report on their progress at the October 1, 2025, CAD meeting.
7. Teaching Effectiveness Policy Implementation Plan: Feedback was received from the deans on the implementation plan. Based on this feedback, Dr. Estis will distribute the finalized plan to the deans.
8. Midtown Optimist Club: Dr. Andi Kent announced that the Midtown Optimist Club would like to award a Student of Month from the university at their monthly meetings. Deans are to develop their own criteria for student selection from either the undergraduate or graduate population of their school or college. Our office will poll deans for their preferred month and assign them accordingly.

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October 1, 2025

CAD Present: Andi Kent, Andrzej Wierzbicki (A&S), Angela Rand (LIB), Heather Hall (NURS), Susan Gordon-Hickey (CAHP), Michael Capella (MCOB), Todd Andel (SOC), Bri Ard (GLOBAL), Harold Pardue (GRAD), Darryl James (ENG), Angela Barlow (CEPS), Doug Marshall (HONORS), Emily Wilson (COM)

CAL Present: Charlie Guest, Julie Estis, Nicole Carr, S. Raj Chaudhury, David Blair, Mathew Cox

Guests Present: Ashley Suggs, Ashley Gibson, Amy Clay, Christina Wassenaar

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1. Minutes of the August 27, 2025, meeting were approved as written.
2. Grilled Cheese and Doughnuts: Dr. Doug Marshall announced that the first Honors College Grilled Cheese and Doughnuts event for fall will be held today, October 1st, from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. All Academic Leaders are invited.
3. Catering Waiver Policy: Dr. Chris Cleveland informed leaders that under the new Catering Waiver policy, waivers are not required for catering events of \$250 or less. Coca Cola products are still required at campus events even when ordering from an off-campus vendor.
4. USA Course Formats Policy: Dr. S. Raj Chaudhury presented a proposed revised course format policy. After discussion, Dr. Angela Barlow made a motion to approve, Dr. Andrzej Wierzbicki seconded the motion and the motion passed by a unanimous vote. The target launch date for the new course formats is Spring 2027.
5. Student Complaint Log: Dr. Julie Estis gave a reminder that the student complaint logs from each department are due in January and reviewed the goal of the logs and usage of the data collected. Dr. Estis will distribute the FAQ sheet electronically to the full Council.
6. Others: None

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7. GA Paperwork: Dr. Harold Pardue described recent issues encountered with Graduate Assistant paperwork completion and submission. The Graduate School will be instituting new processes in an effort to reduce errors. Dr. Pardue asked the deans to review current procedures for GA assistants within their programs to ensure timely submission of paperwork going forward.
8. Affirmative Action Report: In compliance with SB 129, the formerly named Affirmative Action Report has been updated to the Faculty Search Report and is available on the Academic Affairs webpage.
9. Tenure and Promotion Working Groups: Each working group reported on their groups efforts to date, highlighting challenges and opportunities presented by the Faculty Senate's

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proposed revisions to the current policy. After lengthy discussion, a follow-up meeting for the working groups was requested and will be scheduled expeditiously.

10. FS 1029 - Non Tenure Track Promotion: Tabled until the next CAD meeting.
11. FS 1030 - Revisions to Faculty Promotion Process: Tabled until the next CAD meeting.
12. Other: Dr. Joy Washington, in the Office of Marketing and Communications, will be the liaison for the Colleges and the Midtown Optimist Club for the MOC Student of the Month.

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November 19, 2025

CAD Present: Andi Kent, Andrzej Wierzbicki (A&S), Angela Rand (LIB), Heather Hall (NURS), Susan Gordon-Hickey (CAHP), Michael Capella (MCOB), Todd Andel (SOC), Rick Carter (GLOBAL), Harold Pardue (GRAD), Darryl James (ENG), Tres Stefurak (CEPS), Doug Marshall (HONORS), Franklin Trimm (COM),

CAL Present: Charlie Guest, Julie Estis, Nicole Carr, S. Raj Chaudhury, Anjie Davis, Mathew Cox

Guests Present: Ashley Suggs, Ashley Gibson, Amy Clay, Emily Wilson, Christina Wassenaar

Council of Academic Leaders

1. Minutes of the October 29, 2025, meeting were approved as written.
2. Questions Ahead of Townhalls: Dr. Christina Wassenaar asked the deans to have faculty provide questions to the Faculty Senate representatives in their college or divisions, ahead of the townhalls that are planned for Spring 2026.
3. Others: Mathew Cox gave an update on the Honors College Showcase and various recruiting events planned for spring. Dr. Andi Kent provided status updates on the new Jaguar Marching Band building, the new Whiddon College of Medicine building and the WCOM dean search.

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4. No Web Component Course: Ashley Suggs led a discussion regarding the Course Modalities guidelines. A proposal was made to change the name of the "No Web Component Course" mode to "Web Enhanced". A motion to approve the proposed change was made by Dr. Andrzej Wierzbicki, seconded by Dr. Susan Gordon-Hickey, and passed by a unanimous vote. This change will not result in any impact to the international or military students.
5. SAMSF Timely Submissions: Dr. Charlie Guest reminded deans that SAMSF's need to be submitted in a timely manner and going forward, all requests for reimbursement through SAMSF must be submitted within 30 days of expenditure.
6. Tenure and Promotion Working Groups: Dr. Julie Estis outlined next steps for the working groups going forward. She will be meeting with Faculty Senate in the coming weeks to discuss the deans' suggestions for policies FS 1029 and FS 1030 prior to returning those policies to them in DocRoute.
7. Other: Dr. Kent noted that after meeting with student groups across campus, many have mentioned not having access to space for meetings, etc. She asked deans for help with allowing these groups to use space in their colleges with the understanding that the students will leave the areas as they found them – including, furniture placement, AV, etc.