

University of Central Arkansas
Council of Deans
Wednesday, July 29, 2026
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Wingo 214

MINUTES

1. Welcome: The Council of Deans met on Wednesday, July 29, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in Wingo 214. Provost Michael Hargis presided, and the following members were present: Dr. Stephen Addison, Dr. Tim Bisping, Dr. Kurt Boniecki, Dr. Debbie Dailey, Dr. Nancy Reese, Dr. Leah Horton (for Dr. Patricia Smith), and Dr. Tom Williams. Guests: Dr. Kevin Thomas, Vice President for Enrollment Services and Student Success, Ms. Kimberly Stubbs, Director of Financial Aid, Ms. Heather Ledbetter, Senior Associate Director of Financial Aid, Mr. Travis Kunkel, Assistant Director of Financial Aid
2. One Big Beautiful Bill Act: Ms. Kimberly Stubbs shared information regarding the rapidly shifting financial aid landscape, driven primarily by recent legislative updates including the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBB) and Title IV reforms. These structural updates significantly alter federal funding mechanisms, loan limits, and eligibility metrics. Academic Advising, Student Success, and the Office of Financial Aid are working to assist students through the new processes. UCA's website features a dedicated OBBB resource page containing direct links to government portals for official student Q&A and policy details.
3. Action Items
 - a. July 15, 2026 COD Minutes: A motion by Dr. Stephen Addison and second by Dr. Leah Horton was made to approve the minutes of July 15, 2026 as presented. The motion carried with two abstentions.
4. Provost Updates
 - a. The new employee welcome reception will be held on August 24, 2026 from 5:00pm-7:00pm at the President's House. In addition to new faculty and staff, their direct supervisors will also be invited to the event.
 - b. Members received their 2026-2027 college faculty promotion and tenure roster for review. Revisions should be submitted to April Gunn.
5. Report Out/Unit Updates
 - a. College of Science and Engineering
 - i. The new nature reserve entrance at Farris has been completed.
 - b. College of Education
 - i. Met with UCA Financial Aid regarding the Teacher Academy Scholarship to establish more effective oversight.
 - c. Graduate School
 - i. Sending curriculum proposals to teams in order to minimize gatekeeping and move toward productive advising.
 - d. College of Health and Behavioral Sciences

- i. The rural health transformation grant has been submitted and phase two is beginning.
 - e. College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
 - i. The 2026-2027 Artist in Residence event schedule is being put together.
 - f. Honors College
 - i. Landscaping work around Schichtl is being completed.
6. Important Dates and Information Items
- a. [2026-2027 Academic Timetable](#)
 - b. [Fall 2026 New Faculty Opening Sessions](#)
 - c. [Fall 2026 Opening Sessions](#)
 - o COD Meetings
 - July 29, 2026
 - August 12, 2026 (½ Day Deep Dive)
 - August 26, 2026
 - o August 6, 2026: Board of Trustees Meeting
 - o August 8, 2026: Summer Graduate Commencement-Reynolds Performance Hall
 - 9:00 am-CAHSS, COB, CHBS (CSD, OT, Psyc/Coun, ExSci, Sport Mgmt, Nursing)
 - 12:00 pm-COE, COSE, CHBS (PT, Health Science, NFS)
 - o August 16-21, 2026: Welcome Week
 - o August 19, 2026: Fall Convocation-9:00 am-Reynolds Performance Hall
 - o August 20, 2026: First Day of Classes

Meeting adjourned at 11:16 am