

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

MINUTES

1. Welcome: The Council of Deans met on Wednesday, September 9, 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. Michael Mills, Dr. Darshon Reed (for Dr. Nancy Reese), Dr. Patricia Smith, and Dr. Tom Williams. Guests: Dr. Jake Held
2. Guests: Dr. Jake Held, Assistant Provost for Academic Assessment and General Education: LD Core Revision Plans: Dr. Held discussed the Core Council's current actions regarding the required updates to the lower-division core curriculum in response to new state mandates. To address these mandates, the Council is evaluating two primary framework options: a State-Aligned Plan and an FYS-Distributed Plan. On October 6, the Council will vote to select a baseline plan, which will then be distributed campus-wide for open review. To support shared governance, town hall sessions will be hosted to collect feedback from all stakeholders before a final Council vote in November or December sends the proposal to the Undergraduate Council. No plan will move forward without comprehensive campus input, ensuring the selected framework is fully refined ahead of its mandatory inclusion in the Fall 2027 Academic Bulletin. Members with questions or feedback from their units are encouraged to reach out directly to Dr. Held.
3. Action Item
 - August 26, 2026 COD Minutes: A motion by Dr. Addison and second by Dr. Smith was made to approve the minutes from August 26, 2026 as written. The motion carried with two corrections.
4. Information Item:
 - September 3, 2026-Undergraduate Council: Dr. Boniecki shared and members reviewed information items from the September 3, 2026 Undergraduate Council meeting.
5. Discussion
 - Enrollment Debrief: Members reviewed their recent division enrollment reports, highlighting both positive and negative trends across individual units. The discussion focused on identifying actionable opportunities for program evaluation and growth. To ensure a thorough review, upcoming 1:1 meetings will feature a deep dive into each unit's specific report, with an emphasis on evaluating Student Semester Credit Hours (SSCH) alongside overall headcount.
 - Strategic Plan Implementation Update: The immediate next step is to identify imperative leaders for each strategic priority and prioritize the initial set of tasks, after which the leaders will contact deans for team

recommendations. Concurrently, a proposal to reconstitute the University Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) will go to the Committee on Committees (CoC) on September 18th for consideration. This proposal formalizes the Provost as Chair, adds imperative leads to the committee, and requires members to elect a Co-Chair from outside the Cabinet; notably, the core role and function of the SPC will remain unchanged.

- Secondary education programs and year long residency requirements: Dr. Dailey shared updates on the Arkansas year-long residency program and asked members to forward all relevant deadlines to their program coordinators. As a reminder, only designated residency coordinators based in the COE are authorized to make arrangements with schools, and no other personnel should initiate contact. Information sessions are being conducted and coordinators are required to attend and actively participate in the sessions. Provost Hargis asked that the group ensure that the program coordinators within their units participate fully in this important work.

6. Provost Updates

- Faculty Senate held their first meeting on Tuesday, September 8, 2026. Provost Hargis shared the following constituent concerns as shared at the meeting.
 - i. Graduate students currently struggle to identify faculty research interests and find appropriate mentors. To address this issue, members discussed potential solutions, and Mills will explore options to present at an upcoming COD meeting.
 - ii. Concerns about workload expectations for nine-month faculty during off-contract periods. Members agreed that clear guidelines are needed to define what tasks are required versus optional during this time and should be supported by PAF action and agreed contract specifications.
 - iii. Student health concern during class. Members agreed that if there is a health emergency, the first response is a call for emergency services. Buildings are consistently monitored for safety and health concerns.

7. Report Out/Unit Updates

- College of Business
 - i. The Risk Manager on Campus program will be held Thursday, September 10, 2026.
 - ii. The Insurance Hall of Fame Banquet will be held October 15, 2026.
- Honors College
 - i. Honors Challenge and Global Goals Week is September 22-25, 2026.
 - ii. Currently reevaluating the college's admission process.
- College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
 - i. UCA's Film Program has been named to MovieMaker's 30 Best Film Schools in the U.S. and Canada 2026.
- College of Health and Behavioral Sciences
 - i. The college is waiting to hear back from two grant submissions. The anticipated date is October 1, 2026.
- Kurt Boniecki

- i. The assurance argument for Criteria 1 was shared with campus last week. An open forum will be held on September 10, 2026 at X-period in COB 315. Criteria 2 will be sent this week and a forum is scheduled for September 24, 2026 at X-period in Burdick 205.
- Graduate School
 - i. The office is currently meeting with members individually to discuss collaboration and research opportunities.
- College of Education
 - i. Dr. Dailey will be participating in Project ElevatED at Florida State University on September 26, 2026.
- College of Science and Engineering
 - i. Materials for the COD book discussion have been placed in the shared drive. The first meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 16, 2026, at 9:00 am in Wingo 214.

8. Important Information Items and Dates

- [UCA 2035](#)
- [2026-2027 Academic Timetable](#)
- COD Meeting
 - September 23, 2026, 9:00 am - 11:00 am, Wingo 214
 - October 7, 2026, 9:00 am - 11:00 am, Wingo 214
- COD Book Discussion
 - September 16, 2026, 9:00 am - 11:00 am, Wingo 214
 - October 14, 2026, 9:00 am - 11:00 am, Wingo 214
- September 17, 2026: Distinguished Scholars Day
- October 2, 2026: Board of Trustees Meeting
- October 6, 2026: Campus Talks - X-period, COB Auditorium

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:30 am