

Associate Deans Council
Meeting Minutes of April 22, 2026

Present: Tracey Baham, Sawyer Bowering, Steve Bullard, Tracy Craven, Jim Dunne, Anastasia Elder, Brent Fountain, Dana Franz, Robert Green, Kim Hall, Brien Henry, Jamie Larson, Logan Link (for C. Jackson), Dominic Lippillo, Bethany Mills, Lynda Moore-White, David Nolen, Sean Owen, Andy Perkins, Matthew Priddy, Rebecca Robichaux-Davis, Kevin Rogers, Peter Ryan, Emily Shaw, Deanna Smith, Abrigail Spreen, Jason Tiffin, Shelby Tschume, Lisa Stricklin, Cat Walker, Robert West, Lauren Wright

Dr. Tracey Baham called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

1. Consideration of the Minutes

A motion was made by Dr. Robert Green and seconded by Dr. Kevin Rogers to accept the minutes from March 25, 2026. Council members voted to approve the minutes.

2. AOP 12.09: Class Attendance & Reporting Absences

Professor Dominic Lippillo motioned and Dr. Kevin Rogers seconded to bring forward AOP 12.09: Class Attendance & Reporting Absences.

The subcommittee for AOP 12.09, chaired by Professor Lippillo with membership including Council members, representatives from Student Affairs, and a representative from Faculty Senate, considered three primary questions regarding the changes to this policy:

- Which absences need verification and which ones do not?
 - Changes to the policy included the following:
 - Department Heads will supervise all class attendance policies and may seek guidance from the Dean of Students Office for out of the ordinary circumstances.
 - The list of excused absences were separated into three separate lists: (1) those where faculty do not have discretion and where students need to provide documentation with date and time-stamps (note that scheduled interviews for employment and admissions interviews for professional or graduate school was added to this list), (2) U.S. Presidential elections remained as a special circumstance on the day of the election, and (3) all other absences where faculty have discretion.
 - In cases where excused absences are questionable, instructors should follow the reporting chain through their Department Head and Dean.
 - The DRC provided guidelines for how students with documented disabilities may qualify for an attendance policy modification in

consultation with the instructor and without the need for medical documentation.

- How long do students have to make-up their missed work?
 - Council determined that no adjustment was needed to the language, and the policy will continue to stipulate that makeup work should occur in a timely manner.
- How many absences are too many absences?
 - Council reviewed the following four language options from the subcommittee:
 - If the student misses more than 40% of the classes, the instructor may fail them,
 - If the student accrues a significant number (25%-50% of absences depending on the college or class), then the instructor may fail them,
 - Some specific language that takes into consideration the DRC Guidelines that scales missed absences depending on the method of instruction and the frequency/duration of class meetings, and
 - the instructor's syllabus takes precedence.
 - Council determined that no changes were needed because the policy already states that best practices suggest that "passing or failing a course should not rest solely on class attendance and participation."

The policy was approved with the following revisions:

- Excused absences to include academic leadership approval for college/school events, as well as official university activity.
- Additional language clarifying that the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President is the final arbiter of any absence validity disputes.

3. IE Report Overview

Dr. Dana Franz presented a new IE feedback report that will be implemented this year. The report features detail from a checklist for each outcome, as opposed to a holistic summary of the committee's review. She is holding several one-hour help sessions to describe how program faculty, Department Heads, and other academic leaders can interpret the feedback reports and how they can use the feedback to improve the assessment process in the coming year.

4. AOP 12.01: Academic Add/Drop

Dr. Robert Green motioned and Dr. Kevin Rogers seconded to bring forward AOP 12.01: Academic Add/Drop.

Dr. Jim Dunne, Dr. Robert Green, and Dr. Kevin Rogers presented AOP 12.01 with their revisions to adjust the last day to drop a class with a W. Dr. Dunne provided several peer institution comparisons, and suggested pushing the date further into the semester to align with our peers.

AOP 12.01: Academic Add/Drop was passed contingent with a vote of 7 in favor and 3 not in favor. The contingency will either be lifted on May 13, or the policy will be brought back for another round of reviews on May 27. Council passed contingent the need to adjust the language in this draft from withdrawal from an individual class back to drop with a W to be in line with the Add/Drop form. This language adjustment will be handled after the meeting and recirculated among the Council members to determine whether the contingency can be lifted or whether the policy needs to come back for a full review.

The approved changes to the policy included the following adjustments:

- Adjust the last day to drop a class with a W to 75% of the instructional period (roughly 52 class days into the semester). The Student Association also shared a resolution in support of the 75% drop date.
- Adjust the language to encourage faculty to provide multiple forms of meaningful and significant forms of graded feedback before the drop deadline. Significant assessment is defined as “one of sufficient weight to affect the final grade”
- Added language to Section II to match Section I that students will not receive a tuition refund when they drop with a W.

5. Announcements

- IE Report Overview Meetings
 - The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness is hosting several meetings to provide an overview of the new IE Report Assessment Checklist. These sessions are open for assistance and discussion and will be held in 3007 Lee Hall:
 - Thursday, April 30: 1:00-2:00 p.m.
 - Monday, May 4: 10:00-11:00 a.m.
 - Tuesday, May 5: 10:00-11:00 a.m.
 - Thursday, May 7: 2:00-3:00 p.m.
 - Virtual meeting options will be available, and further information will be circulated this week. Please direct any questions to Dr. Dana Franz, dfranz@oire.msstate.edu.
- Course Evaluation Surveys
 - Course evaluation surveys were deployed on Tuesday, April 21, and will run through Wednesday, May 6. Smartevals reference material can be found at <https://ir.msstate.edu/research/smartevalsdeptheds.php> and questions can be directed to coursesurveys@ir.msstate.edu.
- College of Architecture, Art, and Design
 - The Graphic Design and Photography BFA Exhibitions will be on display in the Old Main Art Gallery from April 22-29, 2026. A reception will be held Thursday, April 23, from 5:00-6:00 p.m.

- The Interior Design Senior Exhibit will be on display at the Animal Industries Annex on Friday, April 24, 2026.

Meeting adjourned 3:02 p.m.