

Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee

December 2025



Radford
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Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee

9:45a.m.**

December 4, 2025

Kyle Hall, Room 340, Radford, VA

DRAFT
Agenda

Call to Order

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair

- o September 11, 2025

o Academic Affairs Update

Dr. Bethany M. Usher, *Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs*

- o Points of Pride
- o Two-Year Plan Update
- o Strategic Plan Goals
- o Personnel Updates
- o Questions and Conversation

o Faculty Senate Update

Dr. Matthew Close, *Faculty Representative to the Board of Visitors*

Recommendations and Action Items

Dr. Bethany M. Usher, *Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs*

- o Resolution to discontinue B.S. in Biomedical Sciences
- o Resolution to create B.S. in Geospatial and Earth Sciences Program
- o Resolution to discontinue B.A./B.S. in Geology
- o Resolution to Discontinue B.A./B.S. in Geospatial Sciences

Other Business

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair

Adjournment

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair

**** All start times for committee meetings are approximate. Meetings may begin either before or after the listed approximate start time as committee members are ready to proceed.**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair

Mr. William Davis, Vice Chair

Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout

Ms. Joann S. Craig

Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet

Dr. Matthew Close, (Non-Voting Faculty Advisory Representative)

Meeting Materials



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Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee

Bethany Usher

Provost and Senior Vice President

Academic Affairs

December 3, 2025





Agenda

- Points of Pride
- Two year plan conclusion
- University and Academic Affairs Strategic Plan Goals
- Personnel Updates
- Action Items
 - Academic Programs



Points of Pride

Doctor of Education Program recipient of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate Program of the Year



Winner Announced: Program of the Year 2025

Radford University



Student Success and Experiential Learning

- Highlander Success Center awarded grant from the Advising Success Network
- 95% Quest attendance rate
- Fall Career Fair
- Largest Wicked Fest – 735 students from all colleges



Virginia Government Simulation



Collaborative Health Education and Outreach



“Healthcare is a team sport” Interprofessional Education (IPE) Case Study event



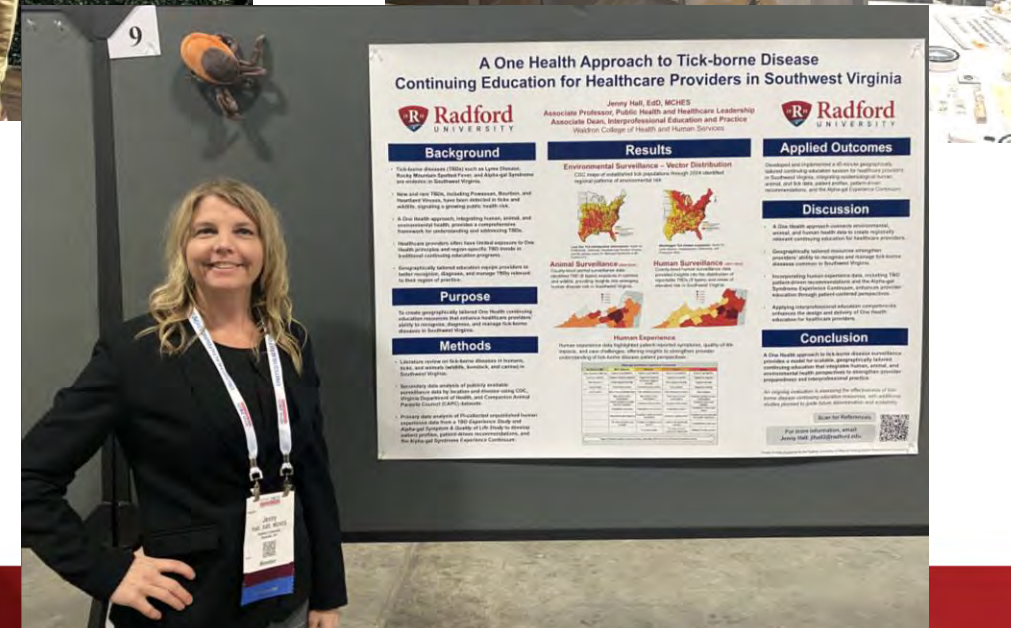
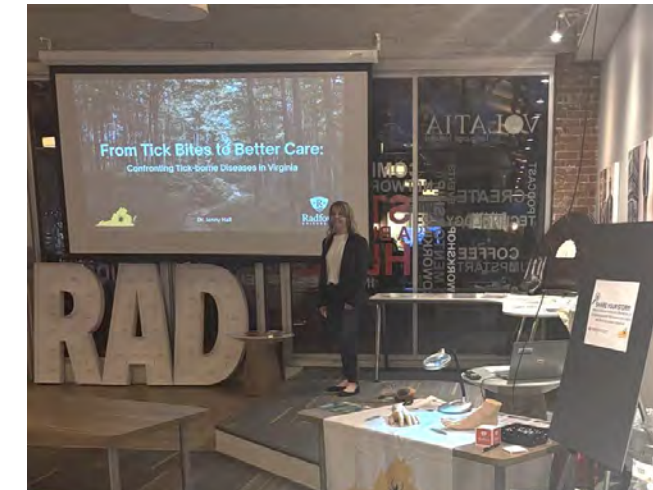
Radford CARES: Anthem providing Radford University with a mobile clinic (to be re-wrapped and branded)

NOV. 18 | 7 P.M.
LONG WAY BREWING
501 2ND ST., RADFORD, VA 24141

RAD TALKS

Judy Jenks

Medical Cannabis: What You Didn't Learn in School



Arts with the Community



Academic Affairs



19 R 10 Radford UNIVERSITY



Engagement with AI



- Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine Summit on AI:
 - Students Bhavna Sheth and Ryan Stuck presented research
 - Faculty mentors Pam Frasier, Mingyang Zheng, and Nathan Lahn
- AAC&U Institute on AI, Pedagogy, and the Curriculum
 - AI Task Force, led by Charlie Cosmato and Laura Vernon
- Planning January AI Symposium

RB
TC ROANOKE-BLACKSBURG
TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL

EMERGING TECH CONFERENCE

FROM PROMPT TO
PROTOTYPE: BUILDING WITH
CUSTOM GPTS AND AI
AGENTS



Dr. SAMANTHA
STEIDLE



Dr. LUKE
LISKA

Tartan Transfer Summit



Two-year Strategic Plan Results

Academic Affairs Summary

Distinction: Improve Academic Programming

- ✓ 2.1 Define intentional academic portfolio
- ✓ 2.2 Revise REAL General Education
- ✓ 2.3-2.4 Increase undergraduates participating in experiential learning with career-ready competencies
- ✓ 2.5 Implement Civil Discourse Activities



Distinction: Stabilize Resources

- ✓12.1 Reduce under-enrolled programs, minors and concentrations
- ✓12.2 Maximize faculty expertise
- ✓12.3 Restructure and fill Academic Affairs administrative roles

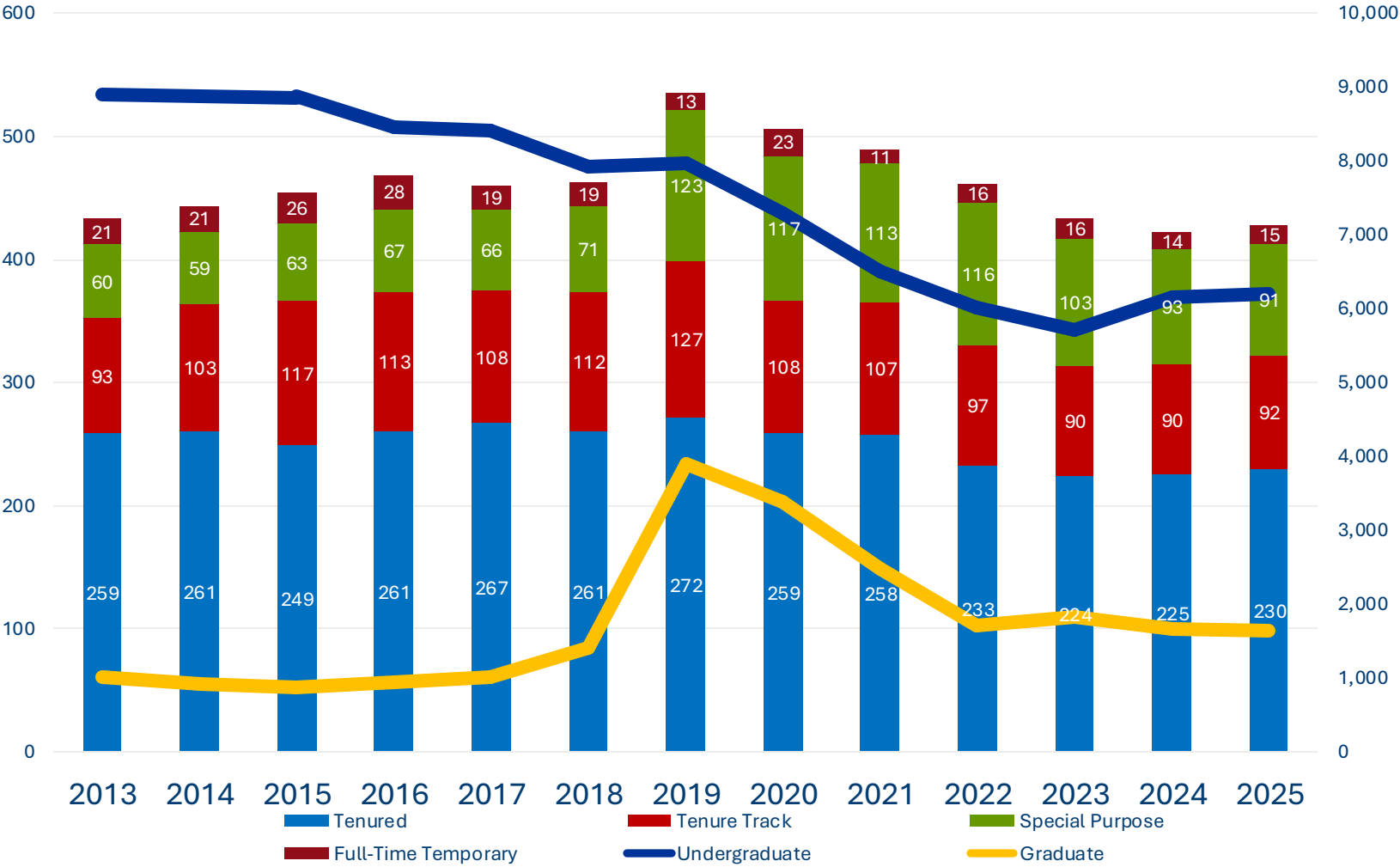


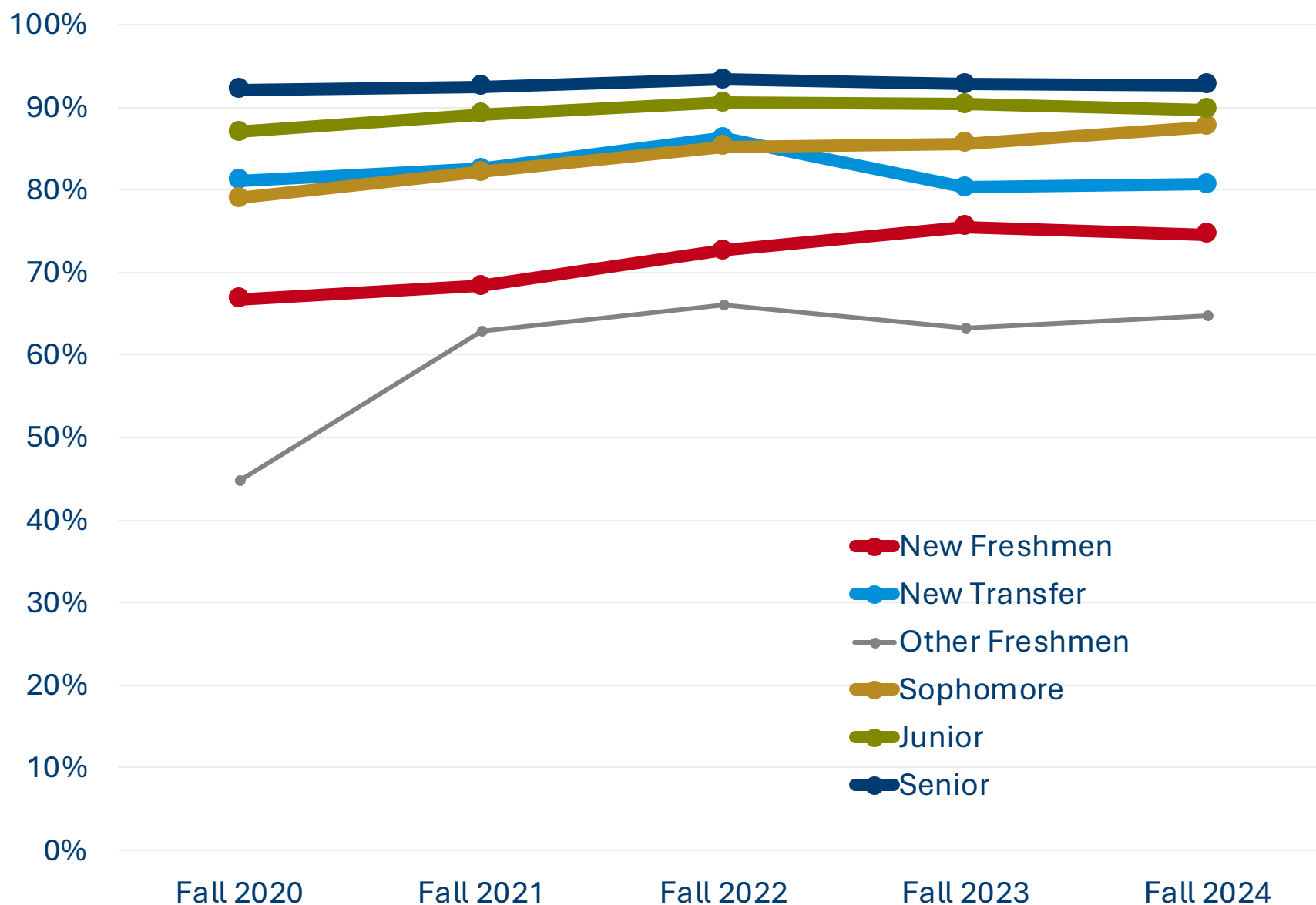
Distinction: Stabilize Enrollment

- ✓7.1 Improve transfer pathways
- ✓7.2 Implement RISE QEP to improve pass rates in 100/200 courses
- ✓7.3 Improve student success (retention and graduation)
- ✓7.4 Offer courses based on need



Faculty and Student Headcount 2013-2025





Undergraduate Student Success: Retention and Graduation

2031 Strategic Plan

Academic Affairs Priorities

Academic Affairs Priorities



**1. Increase
Experiential
Learning**



**2. Foster More
Multi-
Disciplinary
Research
Collaborations**



**3. Lead SWVA in
supporting
healthy
communities
and producing
health care talent**



**4. Develop
Radford Online
Academic
Strategy and
Portfolio**



**5. Develop an
Intentional,
Streamlined
Curricular
Portfolio**



**6. Support
Faculty Work
Life**

Student Success – Relevant – Equitable – Accessible

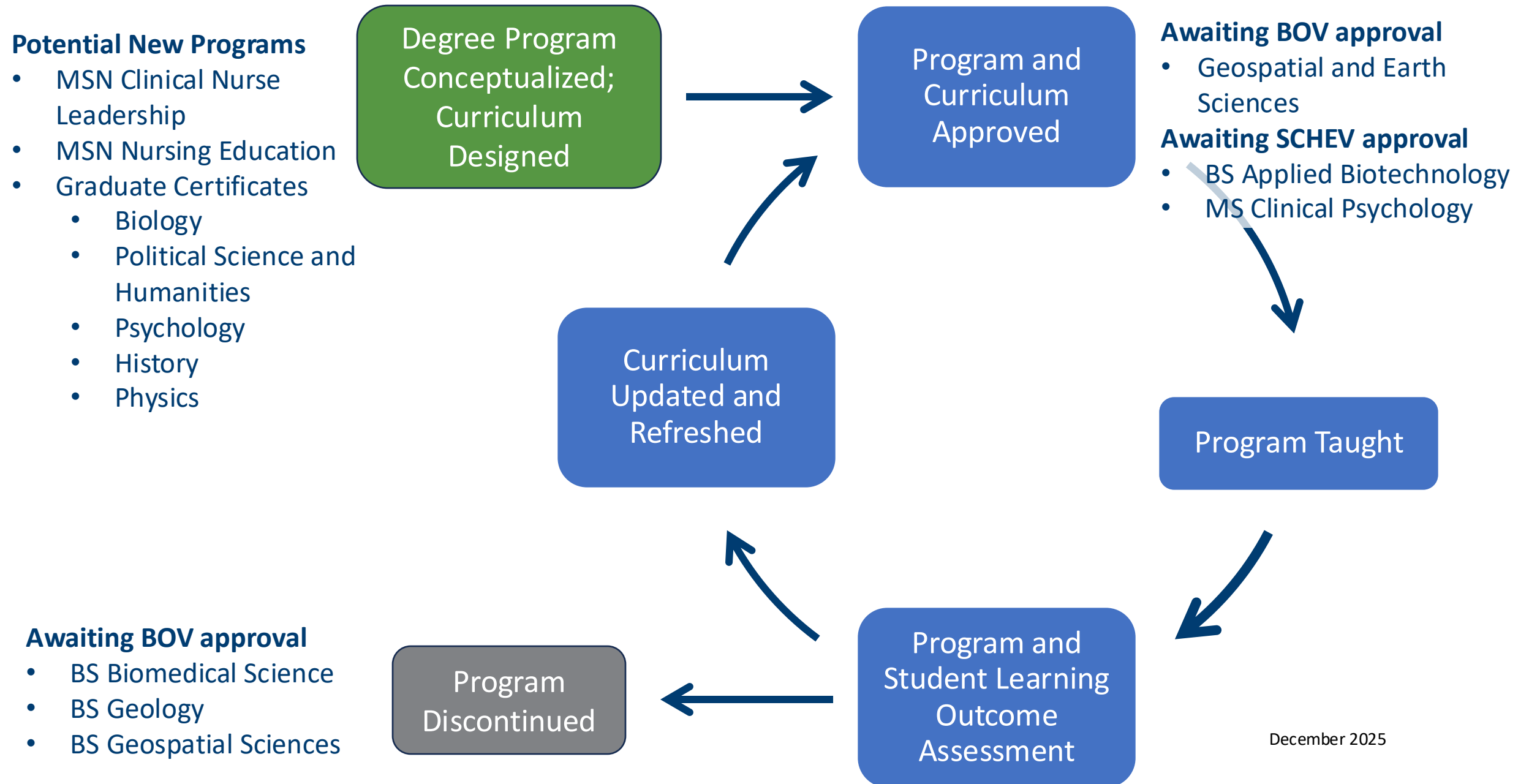


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Program and Personnel Updates

Curriculum Lifecycle and Academic Portfolio Evolution



Academic Affairs Leadership

Artis College of
Science and
Technology
Dean
Steven Bachrach

College of
Education and
Human
Development
Dean
Tamara Wallace

College of
Humanities and
Behavioral Science
Interim Dean
Jeff Aspelmeier

College of Nursing
Dean
Wendy Downey

College of Visual
and Performing
Arts
Dean
Rachel Williams

Davis College of
Business and
Economics
Dean
Donna McCloskey

Waldron College of
Health and Human
Services
Dean
Kenneth Cox

**Provost and Senior
Vice President**
Bethany M. Usher

Executive
Assistant to the
Provost
Karen Montgomery

Finance and
Administration
Director
Adam Neal

Academic Affairs
Associate Provost
Jeanne Mekolichick

Student Success
Assistant Provost
Jerel Benton

Curriculum and
Academic Quality
Assistant Provost
Jessica Stowell

Graduate Affairs
Assistant Provost
Agida Manizade

University
Registrar
Katie Piper

Health Sciences
*Assistant Vice
President*
Active Search

Radford Online
*Assistant Vice
President*
Active Search



Voting Items

Board Action Item: Approve Program Closure

Biomedical Sciences BS

- *Acquired in merger in 2019*
- *Overlap with B.S. in Biology Curriculum*
- *Faculty created more flexible concentration within the B.S. in Biology*
- *In alignment with Curriculum Lifecycle*

Board Action Item: Approve New Academic Program

Geospatial and Earth Sciences, BS

- *Department merger in 2024*
- *Merger of Geology and Geospatial Science degree programs*
- *Integrates curricula from both programs*
- *Streamlines curricula in alignment with Curriculum Lifecycle*



AESSC Attachment B

Board Action Item: Approve Program Closure



Geology BS

- *Department merger in 2024*
- *SCHEV Program Productivity Policy – Geology at risk*
- *New BS in Geospatial and Earth Sciences integrates curricula from Geology*

Board Action Item: Approve Program Closure



Geospatial Science, BS

- *Department merger in 2024*
- *SCHEV Program Productivity Policy – Geospatial Sciences at risk*
- *New BS in Geospatial and Earth Sciences integrates curricula from Geospatial Sciences*

**RADFORD UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT SUCCESS
COMMITTEE**

December 4, 2025

**RESOLUTION FOR DISCONTINUANCE OF THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.) IN
BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

WHEREAS, Radford University acquired the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Biomedical Sciences program in the merger with Jefferson College of Health Sciences in 2019 and it has been offered by our Department of Biology; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Biology also has a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Biology with substantive curricular overlap with the B.S. in Biomedical Sciences; and

WHEREAS, advising students between these two related majors has proven difficult; and

WHEREAS, the faculty have developed a concentration within the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Biology which maintains the curriculum from the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Biomedical Sciences and is more flexible for students; and

WHEREAS, this closure is in alignment with the Curriculum Lifecycle at Radford University;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, a decision has been made to discontinue the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Biomedical Sciences and remove it from the Radford University degree inventory;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President and/or his designee(s) are hereby authorized to submit any and all documentation that may be required to receive approval of the discontinuance of the program to the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia.

DRAFT RADFORD UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT SUCCESS
COMMITTEE

December 4, 2025

RESOLUTION TO CREATE A NEW BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.) IN GEOSPATIAL
AND EARTH SCIENCES DEGREE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, Faculty Senate approved the merger of the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)/Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geology and the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) / Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geospatial Sciences into a new Bachelor of Science in Geospatial and Earth Sciences degree program; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, the Department of Geology and the Department of Geospatial Science merged into the Department of Geospatial and Earth Sciences. This combined department currently offers two degree programs, the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)/ Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geology and the B.S. and B.A. in Geospatial Science, which share several common courses; and

WHEREAS, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) has implemented a new Program Productivity Policy, placing additional viability requirements on academic programs and rendering the Geospatial Sciences degree program at risk of mandatory closure; and

WHEREAS, the faculty have developed a comprehensive yet streamlined Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Geospatial and Earth Sciences that integrates Geology and Geospatial Science curricula and provides students with essential skills for careers in related fields; and

WHEREAS, jobs in the field of GEO are expected to grow in Virginia at a rapid rate and there are 10 jobs in Virginia in related occupations for every graduate from a related degree program in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the new degree program is projected to have a minimal effect on the budget;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee recommends that the Board of Visitors approve the creation of the new Bachelor of Science in Geospatial and Earth Sciences degree;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President and/or designee(s) are hereby authorized to submit any and all documentation that may be required to receive approval of the new degree program to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

**RADFORD UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT SUCCESS
COMMITTEE**

December 4, 2025

**RESOLUTION FOR DISCONTINUANCE OF THE BACHELOR OF ARTS
(B.A.)/BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.) IN GEOLOGY**

WHEREAS, the Department of Geospatial and Earth Sciences in the Artis College of Science and Technology at Radford University proposes to discontinue the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)/Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geology; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, the Department of Geology and the Department of Geospatial Sciences merged into the Department of Geospatial and Earth Sciences. This combined department currently offers two degree programs - the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)/ Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geology and the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)/ Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geospatial Science - which share several common courses; and

WHEREAS, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) has implemented a new Program Productivity Policy, placing additional viability requirements on academic programs and rendering the Geology degree program at risk of mandatory closure; and

WHEREAS, the faculty have developed a comprehensive yet streamlined Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Geospatial and Earth Sciences that integrates Geology and Geospatial Science curricula and provides students with essential skills for careers in related fields; and

WHEREAS, this new program is projected to maintain sufficient enrollment to remain in compliance with SCHEV's new Program Productivity Policy;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, a decision has been made to discontinue the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)/Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geology and remove it from the Radford University degree inventory;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President and/or his designee(s) are hereby authorized to submit any and all documentation that may be required to receive approval of the discontinuance of the program to the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia.

**RADFORD UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT SUCCESS
COMMITTEE**

December 4, 2025

**RESOLUTION FOR DISCONTINUANCE OF THE BACHELOR OF ARTS
(B.A.)/BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.) IN GEOSPATIAL SCIENCES**

WHEREAS, the Department of Geospatial and Earth Sciences in the Artis College of Science and Technology at Radford University proposes to discontinue the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)/Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geospatial Sciences; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, the Department of Geology and the Department of Geospatial Sciences merged into the Department of Geospatial and Earth Sciences. This combined department currently offers two degree programs - the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)/ Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geology and the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)/ Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geospatial Science - which share several common courses; and

WHEREAS, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) has implemented a new Program Productivity Policy, placing additional viability requirements on academic programs and rendering the Geospatial Sciences degree program at risk of mandatory closure; and

WHEREAS, the faculty have developed a comprehensive yet streamlined Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Geospatial and Earth Sciences that integrates Geology and Geospatial Sciences curricula and provides students with essential skills for careers in related fields; and

WHEREAS, this new program is projected to maintain sufficient enrollment to remain in compliance with SCHEV's new Program Productivity Policy;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, a decision has been made to discontinue the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)/Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Geospatial Sciences and remove it from the Radford University degree inventory;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President and/or his designee(s) are hereby authorized to submit any and all documentation that may be required to receive approval of the discontinuance of the program to the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia.

Minutes



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**RADFORD UNIVERSITY BOARD OF VISITORS
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE MEETING
SEPTEMBER 11, 2025
KYLE HALL ROOM 340
RADFORD VA**

**DRAFT
MINUTES**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair
Mr. William Davis, Vice Chair
Ms. Jeanne S. Armentrout
Ms. Joann S. Craig
Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet
Dr. Matthew Close

OTHERS PRESENT

Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost
Dr. Bret Danilowicz, President
Dr. Rob Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration
Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education
Ms. Penny Helms White, Vice President for Advancement and University Relations Communication
Dr. Dannette Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications
Dr. Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs
Additional Radford University administrators, faculty, and staff

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair, formally called the meeting to order at 8:30 am in Kyle Hall Room 340 on the campus of Radford University.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair, asked for a motion to approve the September 11, 2025, agenda. Mr. William C. Davis so moved, Ms. Joanna S. Craig seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair, asked for a motion to approve June 5, 2025, minutes. Ms. Joann S. Craig so moved, Mr. Jonathan D. Sweet seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATES

Dr. Usher began by presenting an impressive array of academic points of pride, including full accreditation for School Psychology EdS program and the Nursing's JoAnn Bingham Clinical Simulation Center. Radford also hosted over 400 high-achieving high school students from across the Commonwealth, with the Arts and Humanities Gov Schools in Radford and the Gov School for Medicine and Health Sciences in Roanoke. Students and faculty from across the university spent the summer participating in conferences and research internationally, showing the impact of our programs.

Provost Usher presented an overview of the Division of Academic Affairs. With seven colleges, 656 employees, and a budget of \$98M, Academic Affairs is the largest division of Radford University.

The priorities of Academic Affairs are:

- Contribute to the economic and cultural well-being of the region and the Commonwealth
- Support undergraduate and graduate students across their educational journeys so that they meet their goals and contribute to being leaders of thriving communities
- Offer a portfolio of high-quality academic programs in multiple modalities aligned with our mission and that are regularly updated through a Curriculum Lifecycle process
- Engage all students in experiential education that prepares them to be successful in their first jobs and throughout their careers
- Offer undergraduate degree pathways from high school and community college to Radford University, including the Tartan Transfer with VCCS partners
- Offer accelerated and guaranteed admission graduate advanced degree pathways for Radford students and alumni
- Support the development of Radford University in Roanoke as the premier destination for health education in Virginia.
- Create an engaged, inclusive, and supportive community for faculty as teacher-scholars

Academic Affairs had three major responsibilities in the two-year plan, on which we were updated.

Improve academic programming:

- While over the two years, an initial review showed that the overall academic portfolio is the right fit for the needs of our students and the Commonwealth, it is a challenge to have curriculum that evolves. Faculty Senate approved a new Curriculum Lifecycle committee that will be responsible for supporting the curriculum lifecycle. Additionally, the new general education program will better meet the needs of our students. Because of SCHEV pressure and the changes needed to optimize the new general education program, the BOV may see several curricular change proposals this year
- In terrific news, we saw data from the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, showing the economic value of college graduates in Virginia

Increase retention and progression rates:

- We saw preliminary enrollment and retention rates (mirrored in the Enrollment Management presentation), showing the distribution of students, retention rates, and graduation numbers. While the total number of students has met our goal of stabilization (or slight increase), we see shifting patterns of enrollment (with increases in Education and Human Development, and Nursing). Retention rates remained stable, and we heard about the long-term plan to continue helping students persist and graduate

Reposition academic programs and administration to increase efficiency and effectiveness:

- We saw the ten-year pattern of student enrollment and faculty numbers, demonstrating that the university has appropriately been scaling the size of the faculty to meet the needs of our students. Of note, RU has significantly reduced reliance on part-time adjuncts, resulting in savings that can be used to support other areas of academic programming
- We welcome Dr. Rachel Williams as Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts, who started this summer
- There are four leadership positions with active searches underway in Academic Affairs, as Provost Usher continues to reposition the division to meet the strategic needs of the university. We expect to be welcoming these leaders over the next year
 - Dean, College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences
 - Assistant Provost, Graduate Affairs
 - Assistant Vice President for Health Sciences
 - Assistant Vice President for Radford Online
- Despite uncertainty with federal research funding, Radford continues to have good success in securing research funding that aligns with our mission (research and scholarship that engages students and supports the community)

Mr. William Davis asked if there was a special office or entity that worked with our colleges to help us with grants. Dr. Jeanne Mekolichick, who is over Sponsored Programs and Grants Management, shared with the committee that there are things in place to help departments and colleges seek out and apply for grants.

Dr. Betty Jo Foster stated how impressed she was with the 1-18 faculty/student ratio.

There were no Board items that require approval.

FACULTY SENATE REPORT

Facutly Senate Update presentation provided by Faculty Senate President, Dr. Matthew Close.

Highlights from this report were:

- GenEd model rollout with starting timeline of 2027
- AI Core Team
- Internal Governance Review
- Faculty Morale Survey
- COACHE Survey (will report in Dec)

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Betty Jo Foster, Chair, asked for a motion to adjourn the September 11, 2025, Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee Meeting. Mr. Jonathan Sweet so moved, and Mr. William Davis seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:29am.

End of Board of Visitors Materials

