

Developmental Leave Committee Recommendation for Curtis White to Receive Developmental Leave for Fall 2026/Spring 2026

The Developmental Leave Committee has reviewed Mr. White's application for developmental leave to pursue work on and complete his dissertation in the Fall 2026 and Spring 2026 Semesters. He has requested a leave of 15 hours per week in both semesters and shows that the impact of that on his division can be negated with additional adjunct instructional support as he retains his role as Chair.

The focus of Mr. White's work will be to examine the effect of modality on dual credit math instruction and how student success varies by school district socioeconomic status. He hopes the findings of this research will help the college and our dual-credit partner districts make informed choices in selecting modalities that best support socioeconomically disadvantaged student populations. Additionally, he hopes that his findings will provide supporting justification for increased resources and costs that may be necessary for supporting these students in more costly modality choices and additional support services.

We believe that Mr. White has met, or strongly met, all eight criteria of the leaves and absences developmental leave administrative policy. Committee members initially ranked the overall quality and clarity of the proposal widely from generally understandable to exceptionally clear, but after submission of follow-up questions and responses, we felt the clarity had been significantly improved. The proposal shows alignment with the mission, values and goal of the college by supporting Goal V of the Vision 28 Strategic Plan, Institutional Effectiveness and Goal II, Expanding Opportunities, specifically Strategy II.4 and pathway pillar 4 by insuring students are learning in their pathways and creating understanding that will lead to improved instructional quality. This research will align with the departmental goal of informing the division of the best modality for economically disadvantaged students, especially for college algebra dual credit classes which are a requirement for many of the STEM programs. Although there is data that shows a generally lower success rate for online dual credit classes versus face-to-face classes this work will focus on math dual credit classes particularly. Mr. White believes this opportunity will not only allow him to complete his Ph.D. requirements, but also to become a better researcher while compiling data for work on various teams he serves on at the college. His plan for maintaining his role as Chair to support the Math, Engineering, Physics & Computer Science division and using adjunct instructors to fill classes he would not teach while taking the requested developmental leave hours seems workable to the committee and we believe there is strong likelihood of success that he will be able to complete his dissertation in the time frame specified.

Mr. White has provided valuable service to Lee College as a full-time faculty member at Lee College since 2012 and additionally as a Chair since 2020. In addition to his teaching and Chair responsibilities, he has served as Team Lead for teams working under the Gulf Coast Partners Achieving the Student Success Grant and the STEM Accelerator Grant. He has also served on various teams and committees throughout his tenure at the college.

The Developmental Leave Committee has thoroughly reviewed Mr. White's application and his response to follow-up questions and recommends to the President of Lee College that his request for developmental leave be approved. The committee suggests that the leave should be conditional on the approval of Mr. White's dissertation topic by his dissertation committee. We also believe that this work would provide fundamental value for Lee College and our partner ISDs by allowing informed dual-credit class modality choices for at-risk student groups.