

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: April 22, 2019**

**Members in attendance:** President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Dr. Severine Groh, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Charles McAdams, Dr. Billy Moore, Mr. Rick Munroe, Dr. Christy Riddle, Dr. Michelle Roberts, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

**Members not in attendance:** Mr. Charlie King

**Guests:** Dr. Edwin Craft, Chief Information Officer  
Ms. Michelle Johansen, Coordinator, Quality Enhancement Program  
Ms. Tricia Killebrew, Chair-Elect, Administrative Staff Council  
Dr. Beverly Moon, Dean, Graduate and Continuing Studies  
Ms. Arlene Sanders, Chair, Diversity Committee  
Dr. Temika Simmons, Director, Local Government Leadership Institute

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on April 22, 2019. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Mr. Rutledge and seconded by Dr. Groh, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on April 15, 2019.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge announced, Dr. Felicia Nave, is the Board of Trustees' preferred candidate for the Alcorn State University President. Dr. Nave currently serves as Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for North Carolina Central University in Durham, N.C. Dr. Nave graduated with a bachelor's degree from Alcorn State University and holds a master's degree and a doctorate degree from the University of Toledo.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from the last week. President LaForge and Dr. Bennett held the final Town Hall Greek meeting with the Panhellenic Council last week as a way to convey support for the organizations and their recruitment efforts. President LaForge thanked Cabinet members for their participation in the Presidential forums. Cabinet members recognized the great feedback and participation from faculty, staff, and students. President LaForge and members of the Executive Committee attended the IHL Board meeting last week. The Board of Trustees approved Delta State's awarding of degrees at the 2019 Spring Commencement ceremonies and the tuition and board rate increases were approved, as well.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The golf finished their season last week at the GSC Championship with a fourth place finish. Mr. Zack Zediker captured his second consecutive GSC Men's Golf Individual title and will advance to regionals. The baseball and softball teams compete in their last

regular season series this weekend against Mississippi College. Conference games for baseball begin May 3. The annual Green and White Awards ceremony occurs tonight in the BPAC. A reception for athletes and guests begins at 5:00 p.m. and the ceremony begins at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Kinnison will have the preferred candidate for the Head Coach of the men’s basketball team on campus Thursday.

- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on facilities projects. The bid opening for the roofing project came in over the bid price. Due to state laws, the university has to decline the bids and rebid. The Walter Sillers Coliseum project is still on schedule with a bid opening on May 7. The MDOT sidewalk project will begin in June or July. The walls of Broom Hall will be the first project from the R&R priority list. The bond funding priority list will be completed this week, and it will be discussed at the next Cabinet meeting. Three developers came for the walkthrough of the golf course last week. Mr. Rutledge plans to award the project the first week in June. The construction on the President’s home will begin May 1.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet Members some of the meetings and events planned for the week. President LaForge and Mr. Munroe will meet with Dr. Fred Carl on Tuesday for a campaign update and campus tour. On Wednesday, President LaForge will host the newly elected SGA Cabinet for breakfast. President LaForge will speak at the Mayor's Health Council First Annual Spiritual Prayer Luncheon on Wednesday. On Thursday, President LaForge and Dr. Bennett will recruit potential students at Cleveland Central High School. Dr. Bennett reminded Cabinet members of Culture on the Quad on Thursday, and she announced the rain location for the event would be Wyatt Gym. President LaForge will meet with Dr. Temika Simmons and Dr. Charles Westmoreland on Thursday to debrief on the Winning the Race Conference. The final performance, .38 Special, for the 2018-19 BPAC season occurs Thursday evening. The Delta State University Foundation Board meets on Friday, and the Retirement and Service Awards Ceremony takes place at 2:00 p.m. Friday afternoon.

**CABINET TOPIC**

**Ways to increase participation/involvement/contributions of/from black community members and black alumni..... President LaForge**

During the Cabinet’s annual Cabinet Advance in July, the topic of ways to increase participation/involvement/contributions of/from black community members and black alumni was raised, and the topic was added to the Cabinet topic list for the year. President LaForge created a task force comprised of Ms. Arlene Sanders, Dr. Temika Simmons, and Ms. Michelle Johansen to look into this topic and bring a report to Cabinet. Ms. Sanders shared with Cabinet the task force found 11 challenges the university faces with regards to the black community members and black alumni participating and being involved; however, the task force offered eight recommendations on how to address the challenges. One way to engage more members of the black community and black alumni is to be intentional and to create those individual and group experiences alumni can connect to after graduation. A few of the recommendations made by the task force include: revisiting the need for a Chief Diversity Officer; engaging the community around the GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi; providing better support and campus climate to existing programs i.e. QEP events, Diversity Committee events, and Winning the Race Conference; offer a one to three hour course requiring a minimal amount of involvement in QEP events and Diversity Committee events; create a center for African American students; and, work with the Center for Teaching and Learning to provide classes and training for faculty to teach and support students of color. President LaForge thanked the members of the task force for presenting their recommendations to Cabinet, and he informed them Cabinet would discuss their recommendations and respond with a plan of action.

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**Course and Optional Fees for 2019-20..... Mr. Rutledge**

On the recommendation of the Academic Council, Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the Course and Optional Fees for 2019-20. Most fees are increasing, but a few are decreases or new fees. Once approved by Cabinet, these fees will be submitted to IHL for approval.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the Course and Optional Fees for 2019-20 and seconded by Dr. McAdams. The motion was approved.

**Employment Eligibility (I-9) policy (revised – final reading)..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Employment Eligibility (I-9) policy for a final reading. The policy was revised to bring it up to date with current practices. Federal law requires all employers to verify the identity and employment eligibility of all persons hired to work in the United States; therefore, requirements are met through proper completion of the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 designated by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the Employment Eligibility (I-9) policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Groh. The motion was approved.

**Employment of Retirees policy (revised – final reading) ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Employment of Retirees policy for a final reading. The policy was revised to bring it up to date with current practices and to be compliant with the Public Employees' Retirement System.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the Employment of Retirees policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Groh. The motion was approved.

**Wage and Salary Administration – Non-Faculty policy (revised – final reading)..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Wage and Salary Administration – Non-Faculty policy for a final reading. The policy was revised to bring it up to date with current practices and to be compliant with state and federal laws.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the Wage and Salary Administration – Non-Faculty policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. McAdams. The motion was approved with one abstention.

**Professional Dress Code and Personal Appearance policy (revised – first reading) ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought the Professional Dress Code and Personal Appearance policy to Cabinet for a first reading. Mr. Rutledge thanked Dr. Riddle and members of the Administrative Staff Council for helping him evaluate the policy. As stated by the policy, supervisors will be held accountable for enforcing the policy with their employees.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the Professional Dress Code and Personal Appearance policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Riddle. The motion was approved.

**Hiring Requests ..... Cabinet Members**

In response to the Cabinet's decision that all requests to search for and fill vacant positions will be

considered on a case-by-case basis by the Cabinet, Dr. McAdams and Mr. Munroe brought to Cabinet positions for consideration. The positions presented do not impact the salary savings identified previously to address the budget shortfall.

**Academic Affairs request**

Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire a Library Associate.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. McAdams to search for and hire a Library Associate and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

**University Advancement request**

Mr. Munroe presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire an Academic Development Officer.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Munroe to search for and hire an Academic Development Officer and seconded by Dr. McAdams. The motion was approved.

**Discussion**

**Technology Update and OIT Recognition..... Mr. Rutledge**

Cabinet members congratulated Dr. Edwin Craft on his receiving the 2018 Innovation Award in Technology Management from Ellucian. Dr. Craft was the first recipient of this award, and he was awarded this honor for his work in virtual reality and augmented reality with the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing. Dr. Craft gave Cabinet members an update on a few areas of OIT. Dr. Craft and his staff created a folder in Argos specifically for Cabinet members containing data reports on first time freshmen, president’s and deans’ list by terms, scholarships awarded data block, three year scholarship trends, and a three year data trend for tuition. This information is important to have on hand in decision making processes. Dr. Craft shared with Cabinet members a main focus for OIT staff is campus security. A large focus of campus security is cyber security. One aspect utilized in cyber security is Cisco’s Umbrella used to block unsafe websites. Also, OIT has partnered with InfoSec Institute to bring a comprehensive security training program focused on identifying and preventing security risks and threats. A way OIT focuses on campus security offline is a system of 380 cameras spread throughout campus to monitor activity. OIT staff have also been working on the university’s connection to Internet 2 beginning this summer, and the university’s redundant internet connection for a diverse route off campus was installed last week.

**Budget Update ..... Mr. Rutledge**

The final phase of the budget planning process is Phase III – Ongoing Operations. The budget worksheets have been distributed to the vice presidents, and the worksheets are due to Mr. Rutledge by April 26. For the FY20 budget planning process, Mr. Rutledge stated the university had to find a way to reduce the budget by \$1.2 million, and this included cutting scholarships. The FY20 budget will have an increase due to a State mandated increase to PERS and health insurance paid by the university; however, the State funded this increase through State appropriations.

**Additional information**

- The College of Business and Aviation Spring Awards Luncheon is Thursday at noon in the Multi-purpose room of the cafeteria.
- Dr. Bennett announced the Greek Awards are tonight at 5:30 p.m. in the State Room.

- Dr. Riddle announced today is the final day for staff members to apply for the DSU LEADS program.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Culture on the Quad, April 25, 12:00 p.m., Quadrangle
- 38 Special performance, April 25, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Foundation Board meeting, April 26, 12:30 p.m. Lunch, Alumni-Foundation House
- Retirement and Service Awards Ceremony, April 26, 2:00 p.m., Union
- Student Hall of Fame Banquet, May 2, 7:30 p.m., Union
- Spring Commencement, May 3, 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., BPAC

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, April 29 at 9:00 a.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Budget: Phase III (Mr. Rutledge)

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3: 30 p.m.