

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: April 29, 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:** Ms. Tricia Killebrew, Chair-Elect, Administrative Staff Council  
Dr. Beverly Moon, Dean, Graduate and Continuing  
Mr. Cetin Oguz, President, Faculty Senate  
Ms. Elizabeth Swindle, President, Student Government Association

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on April 29, 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 22, 2019.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge recognized outgoing and incoming Cabinet Members: Academic Council representative, Dr. Billy Moore (outgoing) and Dr. Beverly Moon (incoming); Faculty Senate President, Dr. Severine Groh (outgoing) and Mr. Cetin Oguz (incoming); Staff Council Chair, Dr. Christy Riddle (outgoing) and Ms. Tricia Killebrew (incoming); SGA President, Mr. Charlie King (outgoing) and Ms. Elizabeth Swindle (incoming). President LaForge expressed his gratitude to the outgoing members for the service they provided, and he welcomed the incoming members.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from the last week. The Office of Student Life hosted Greek Week, and Dr. Bennett stated the week went very well. President LaForge and Mr. Munroe hosted Dr. and Mrs. Fred Carl, and they provided them an update on campus affairs. Dr. McAdams shared with Cabinet members the first faculty teaching program provided by the Center for Teaching and Learning concluded, and it was a terrific program. President LaForge hosted a breakfast for the newly elected SGA Cabinet, and he enjoyed meeting the new officers. President LaForge welcomed mayors and guests to the first Mayors Health Council First Annual Spiritual Health Luncheon. Dr. Bennett and President LaForge spent time at Cleveland Central High School recruiting. Dr. Bennett gave an overview of Culture on the Quad, and she stated it was an absolutely wonderful event with excellent participation. One change she plans on administering next year is shortening the time of the event. The BPAC held its final concert of the year featuring .38 Special. The Foundation Board met, and 26 members were in attendance. The Board is motivated and open to involvement.

The Retirement and Service Awards Ceremony was executed well; President LaForge asked Mr. Rutledge to express his thanks to Ms. Lisa Giger and her staff. Ms. Swindle and her colleagues were sworn in as the 2019-20 SGA last Friday.

- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The Green and White Awards was a great night of celebrating our student-athletes. Ms. Sara Mumme and Mr. Mattia Schirru were awarded the Charles S. Kerg Senior Student-Athlete of the Year awards. Mr. Brett Warner will represent Delta State with Ms. Mumme as candidates for the GSC Top Ten Awards. The baseball team went 3-1 over the last week, and the team will depart for Alabama this week for the GSC Championship tournament. The softball team begins competition in the GSC Championship tournament on Thursday. The men and women's tennis teams compete in the GSC Championship tournament on Thursday. Mr. Zack Zediker will advance to the Regionals, and he has an excellent chance of competing at Nationals again this year. Mr. Kinnison stated the search for the new men's basketball coach is coming to a close, and the candidate will be announced soon.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on facilities projects. Due to the overbid of the roofing project, Mr. Rutledge had to obtain approval from IHL and the Bureau of Buildings to redistribute the bond funds for our priority projects. The approval was obtained within three days, and the advertisement for the project has been posted. The work on the project should begin by the first of June. A pre-construction meeting for Walter Sillers Coliseum is scheduled for Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Rutledge received approval for the MDOT sidewalk project last week, and the project will commence in July. The lighting project in Bailey will be finished in three to four weeks. Mr. Rutledge asked Cabinet members to give him feedback on any events Aramark caters until their contract ends.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet Members some of the meetings and events planned for the week. President LaForge will depart today for NCAA DII Planning and Finance Committee DII President's Council meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday. Thursday begins the Spring 2019 Commencement celebrations with the Honorary Degree Recipient dinner honoring Mr. Ned Mitchell. Following the Honorary Degree Recipient dinner will be the Student Hall of Fame dinner and the DMI Graduation Jam will be at Hey Joe's beginning at 9:00 p.m. Dr. McAdams reminded Cabinet members Commencement occurs Friday with ceremonies at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. 504 students applied for graduation this spring, and 378 students will walk during the two ceremonies. The 10:00 a.m. ceremony will consist of 168 graduate students and the College of Business and Aviation undergraduate students. The 2:00 p.m. ceremony will consist of 210 College of Arts and Sciences and College of Education and Human Sciences undergraduates. The speaker at both ceremonies will be Delta State alumnus, Mr. Josh West. President LaForge departs on Saturday for an international teaching trip to Bulgaria. The next Cabinet meeting will be Wednesday, May 22.

**CABINET TOPIC**

**Elevator Speech.....Mr. Munroe**

Mr. Munroe presented to Cabinet members for review a revised version of the Delta State's elevator speech. He asked Cabinet members to provide him with feedback about the information included, and he stated the elevator speech will be an option for the back of the newly formatted business cards. Cabinet members provided feedback including: to mention student life organizations and our global outreach; to change the word offerings to public programs; and, to begin the speech with a good hook. Mr. Munroe will take the suggestions made in Cabinet and work with Communications and Marketing on revising the speech.

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

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

Mr. Rutledge brought the Professional Dress Code and Personal Appearance policy to Cabinet for a final reading. As stated by the policy, supervisors will work with Human Resources to determine the chosen attire for their employees, and supervisors will be held accountable for enforcing the policy with the employees. Blue jeans and Delta State t-shirts are allowed on Thursdays during summer hours. Mr. Rutledge thanked Dr. Riddle and members of the Administrative Staff Council for helping him evaluate the policy.

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

**Academic Offerings policy (revised – first reading) .....Dr. McAdams**

Upon the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the Academic Offerings policy for a first reading. The date a student can present a request for withdrawal was changed to the Friday of the tenth week of the regular semester or the Thursday prior to the last week of class of a summer session. Also, the policy was updated to reflect current practices.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the Academic Offerings policy for a first reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

**Academic Calendar revisions .....Dr. McAdams**

Upon the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet revisions to the Academic Calendar. The revisions made to the Academic Calendar include: the revised withdrawal date, the revised responsibility for faculty to report midterm grades for all students, and information to provide clarity. The updated Academic Calendar will be published on the website for students’ reference.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revisions to the Academic Calendar and seconded by Dr. Groh. 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, Mr. Munroe brought to Cabinet a position for ratification. The position presented does not impact the salary savings identified previously to address the budget shortfall.

**Ratification of Requests**

Motion: Moved by Mr. Munroe to ratify and affirm the following action taken by the Executive Committee, on behalf of the Cabinet, since Cabinet last met on April 22, 2019 and seconded by Dr. Roberts. The motion was approved.

- April 26, 2019 – Request from Mr. Munroe for approval to search for and hire a Director of Prospect Development for the Office of University Advancement. This position will replace the Special Assistant to the President for Donor Relations, and they will work with Mr. Munroe on strategies to continue cultivating President LaForge’s prospects.

**Discussion**

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

For the FY20 budget planning process, Mr. Rutledge stated the university will decrease expenses by \$1.2 million in institutional scholarships; however, the budget will show an increase in R&R funds which was funded by the State, PERS, and health insurance. The State mandated the increase to PERS and health insurance and funded this increase through State appropriations. Mr. Rutledge will present the annual operating budget for Cabinet approval at the May 22 Cabinet meeting. President LaForge commended Mr. Rutledge and his staff for being fair and transparent during the arduous budget process.

**Cabinet Advance..... Dr. Roberts**

Dr. Roberts shared with Cabinet members the tentative dates for the Cabinet Advance and asked them to hold Tuesday, July 9 and Wednesday, July 10 on their calendars. She provided the incoming Cabinet members a breakdown of prior schedules and topics, and she asked for suggestions on new topics and changes to the format of the Advance. One confirmed topic for the advance will be the Campus Master Plan presented by Mr. Rutledge. For any topic or format changes, Dr. Roberts asked Cabinet members to contact her with suggestions.

**Additional information**

- Dr. Riddle announced DSU LEADS received 18 applications, and the committee will select 10 applications for the first cohort. The next step will be for the committee to reach out to the supervisors to verify their approval for the staff member to participate in the program. The cohort will be announced at the Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day.
- The week of the Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day will also be Staff Appreciation Week. Dr. Riddle stated the Administrative Staff Council has prepared a week of offerings for staff as an extra way to say thank you.
- Dr. Moore announced the College of Business and Aviation awards banquet occurred last Thursday. The new time garnered excellent attendance. Also, Mr. Brett Oleis received the College of Business and Aviation Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year.
- Mr. Rutledge announced Mr. Kelvin Davis was honored as one of Mississippi’s Top 50 under 40 by the Mississippi Business Journal. Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members his thanks for what Mr. Davis does for Delta State, and he will work with Communications and Marketing on producing a press release on Mr. Davis and this accomplishment.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- 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 – Wednesday, May 22 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Budget: Phase III (Mr. Rutledge)

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 10:27 am