

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: April 6, 2022

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vicki Bingham, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Mr. Rick Munroe, Dr. Andy Novobilski, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Mr. Jamie Rutledge, Ms. Nakikke Wallace, Dr. Andrew Wegmann, and Mr. William Young (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: Ms. Lucia Chacon Habis, President-Elect, SGA
Ms. Caroline Fletcher, Chair-Elect, Administrative Staff Council
Dr. Leslie Griffin, Representative-Elect, Academic Council
Ms. Vandy Kemp, Senior Consultant, Prosper & Partners
Mr. Colber Prosper, CEO, Prosper & Partners

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on April 6, 2022. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Lovin and seconded by Mr. Rutledge, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on March 28, 2022.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from last week. The Winning the Race occurred last week. President LaForge thanked Cabinet members for their participation. President LaForge participated in the NCAA DII Implementation Committee meeting. President LaForge and Dr. Novobilski met with Dr. Jana Donahoe to discuss the Social Work Department's upcoming accreditation site visit. President LaForge and Dr. Novobilski met with consultants hired by the Woodward Hines Foundation to evaluate Delta State's IMPACT program. President LaForge thanked Cabinet members for attending the retirement reception for Ms. Mary Helen Varner. The NCAA hosted the DI Basketball Final Four Tournament in New Orleans over the weekend, and President LaForge attended.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The campus-wide roofing project should be completed by April 15. Mr. Rutledge has a meeting this week to discuss plans for the parking lot behind Cain-Tatum Hall and Fugler-Hammett Hall, and the project should start soon. The university has accepted bids for the water damage project in Broom Hall. Mr. Rutledge has a meeting with the Mississippi Department of Transportation next week to discuss the sidewalk project. The Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning received an extension for utilizing the FY22 Repair and Renovation funds.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The football team continues with their spring practices on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. The men's and women's tennis teams hosted University of

Montevallo last week. The men's team won, and the women's team was defeated. Both teams will compete against Lee University in Greenville this Saturday, and they will host University of West Alabama on Sunday in Cleveland. The golf team competed in the Argonaut Invitational last week and finished in ninth place. They will compete in the Gulf South Conference Championship next week in Mobile, AL. The baseball team won their series against Union University last weekend, and they won against University of Arkansas-Monticello last night. They compete against Southern Arkansas University at home tonight, and host Mississippi College this weekend. The softball team won one game of their series with Union University over the weekend, and they host Mississippi College this weekend. The Athletics Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony is Friday night at GRAMMY® Museum Mississippi, and 16 former players and coaches will be inducted.

- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. President LaForge participated in the bi-monthly teleconference with Commissioner Al Rankins and IEOs to discuss COVID-19 related issues. The GSC Board of Directors met on Tuesday. Delta State's Pageant Board, along with SGA, hosted the Most Beautiful Pageant last night, and 17 students participated. Ms. Shukira King won Most Beautiful and Most Photogenic. President LaForge met with Mr. Munroe, Ms. Amanda Robinson, and Ms. Corley Mullins this morning to discuss the Spring Alumni Board and Foundation Board meetings. The Office of Admissions hosted the Spring 2022 Preview Day today, and President LaForge provided a welcome to the attending high schools. The Office of Student Life is hosting Springfest in Wyatt Gym this afternoon. The Robert E. Smith School of Nursing has their Spring Awards Ceremony on Thursday. Leanne Morgan performs at the BPAC on Thursday evening. The Alumni Association Board and the Foundation Board will meet on Friday. A lunch will be held for both boards at 12:00 p.m. in the President's Dining Room of Young-Mauldin Cafeteria where President LaForge will provide a university update. Go Green Weekend begins on Friday: Office of Admissions has another Spring Preview Day on Friday; Athletics has several sporting events throughout the weekend; and, the Alumni Association Board will host a Past Presidents dinner on Saturday.

CABINET TOPIC

360° Review of Hindrances to Student Success.....Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin shared with Cabinet Members that he was charged with conducting a 360° review of the Division of Student Affairs to identify hindrances to students being successful at Delta State. He sought consultation from Mr. Colber Prosper and Ms. Vandy Kemp from Prosper & Partners to help him conduct the review. Mr. Prosper and Ms. Kemp shared with Cabinet members events that have threatened and changed traditional higher education: early enrollment of females; increase of minority students; market shift resulting in competition; technology revolution; COVID-19 pandemic; and, an enrollment decline. Traditional higher education, as we knew it, has changed; and, the university has to rethink and reshape our institutions over the next few years. Mr. Prosper and Ms. Kemp approached Delta State's 360° review of Student Affairs by asking specific questions:

- Why is Delta State here?
- What are the points of contact between Student Affairs services and students?
- What is a student's experience for those interactions, and how do we know?
- How do Student Affairs staff assure high quality and a positive impact of their services?
- What is the profile of a high school senior or transfer student most likely to succeed at Delta State?
- What are risk factors that impede their trajectory?

Mr. Prosper and Ms. Kemp began working with Dr. Lovin on this assessment in November, and they immersed themselves into all that is Delta State by conducting more than 40 hours of interviews and performing research. The consultants gathered information and data from the Delta State website,

disaggregated enrollment data from the Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning, a student survey, and use of their knowledge of best practices within the field. During their research, the consultants compared Delta State to 22 peer institutions from data available in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). From data collected in 2020-2021, Delta State's six-year graduation rate is 39% with its peer's rate being 43%. The average full-time undergraduate enrollment of peers is 3,110 and Delta State's enrollment was 1,921. It is imperative Delta State be on par with their peer institutions. Ms. Kemp created a 28-question survey for students that focused on experiences and their opinions about Student Affairs' services. The majority of respondents to the survey were freshmen and seniors. Ms. Kemp shared the positive and negative feedback of the survey, and she shared the institutional strengths and weaknesses she observed. Institutional strengths and opportunities for the university are: positive feelings and affection for Delta State; strong sense of belonging and family; and, a prominent position for higher education in the Delta. Institutional weaknesses and opportunities for the university are: enrollment crisis with no Enrollment Management Plan; limited use of statistical data in planning and decision making; insufficient training and accountability; and, no use of Student Affairs professional standards as a measure. From their review, Mr. Prosper and Ms. Kemp shared the number one priority for Delta State is to create a culture of change and keep students at the core. Staff within the Division of Student Affairs are professional and enthusiastic to rise to the cause; however, they can't be expected to fix all issues immediately. When creating change within the Division of Student Affairs, staff members should use evidence-based data to make decisions. Staff are encouraged not to think about IF a change can be made, but rather how quickly changes can be made. The consultants made overall recommendations to the Division of Student Affairs and individual recommendations to each department within the division. The overall recommendations are: create divisional documents such a mission, vision, and guiding principles; develop an evidence-based multi-year strategic plan for the Division of Student Affairs; collaborate with the Division of Academic Affairs to develop a comprehensive Enrollment Management plan; and, collaborate with the Division of Academic Affairs to develop a robust First Year Seminar and Orientation program. The recommended next steps are to review recommendations at the appropriate level; determine adoption or not; if adopted, create a plan of action with benchmarks and a timeline; assess progress and celebrate successes; and, adjust expectations where necessary. On behalf of Cabinet members, President LaForge thanked Mr. Prosper and Ms. Kemp for their time and recommendations. He stated the bulk of their recommendations align with the university's first two Visioning Principles. Cabinet members will work with Dr. Lovin to on the recommendations, and after they have had time to digest the information, Cabinet members will discuss ways they can help overcome the hindrances to student success.

BUSINESS

Action

Naming ProposalMr. Munroe

Mr. Munroe brought to Cabinet a naming proposal. According to the Naming Opportunities policy, requests to name a building, facility, program, or other space on campus in recognition of a financial gift, recognition of service, or achievement must be approved by the President of the University in conjunction with the President's Executive Committee and majority vote of the President's Cabinet. Considering the sensitivity of the matter under consideration, all stages of the proposal, review and recommendation process must be conducted in confidence.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Novobilski to close the Cabinet meeting and enter into an Executive Session to discuss the naming proposal and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

During Executive Session, Cabinet members deliberated on the naming proposal and made a recommendation to President LaForge.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Munroe to recommend to President LaForge the naming proposal for consideration and action and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to close the Executive Session and reconvene the open Cabinet meeting and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

2022-2023 Holiday Schedule Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge presented to Cabinet Members the 2022-2023 Holiday Schedule prepared by the Office of Human Resources. The proposed holiday schedule is compliant with IHL’s policy of 15 paid holidays. The holidays include: Independence Day, Labor Day, two days for Thanksgiving, eight days for winter holidays, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a spring holiday, and Memorial Day.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the 2022-2023 Holiday Schedule and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Staff Evaluations..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members the performance evaluation timeline. Human Resources will email out the evaluation forms and guidelines on April 14. Supervisors are to conduct evaluations from April 18-29. The Vice Presidents’ review period will be May 2-9. All signed performance evaluations are due to Human Resources by May 10.

Enrollment Update/Overview Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin reviewed with Cabinet members the enrollment update and overview from Thursday, March 31: 260 confirmed students; 692 admitted students; 1,114 incomplete applications (missing documents); 525 online applications started; and, 17,847 prospects — for a total of 20,438 students being targeted for undergraduate admissions. Dr. Lovin shared that the confirmed number of students for Fall 2022 has now increased to 280, and he announced that one of the recruiters recently resigned.

SACSCOC Update Dr. Novobilski

Dr. Novobilski shared with Cabinet members an update on the university’s SACSCOC reaffirmation process. The monitoring report on student financial aid was successfully submitted last week. SACSCOC sends confirmation of receipt in writing, and the university should receive a response soon. Prosper & Partners worked diligently with Ms. Chrisa Mansell in the Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning to create university data reports. This data will be used to support the potential topics for the university’s next QEP: 1) updating and upgrading the First Year Seminar program, 2) career and professional preparation, and 3) onboarding and orientation. Dr. Moon will visit with the Cabinet next week to discuss the strategic planning process. Dr. Novobilski announced six Delta State employees will attend the 2022 Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation this summer.

Legislative Update Mr. Munroe

Mr. Munroe provided Cabinet members with an update on Mississippi’s legislative session. Sunday, April 3 was Sine Die. All four of Delta State’s line items were funded; however, some funds were realigned for the second year in a row. The university will receive \$570,000 in Repair and Renovation funds with the possibility of some additional funds. The bond bill did not pass; however, “bond” projects will be funded

with Capital funds. Mr. Rutledge stated this allows projects to begin faster. The Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) system received a 13.8% increase in State appropriations. President LaForge asked Mr. Munroe to find out why funding for the university's line items were realigned without our knowledge.

FY23 Budget Update Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet members he hopes to have the final figures from the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) for our State appropriations and Repair and Renovation funds by Friday. Currently, the university is set to receive \$570,000 in Repair and Renovation funds with a potential pool of additional funds on the table. The IHL system received a 13.8% increase in State appropriations, so Delta State will receive an increase. The Department of Finance and Administration will receive the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, and they will allocate the funds to other agencies, as needed. At the next Cabinet meeting, Mr. Rutledge will bring recommendations for funding additional Phase I and Phase II priorities.

Additional Information

- Mr. Rutledge announced he hired a new Director of Accounting. Mr. Rutledge and Mr. Kelvin Davis will attend the Southern Association of College and University Business Officers Annual Meeting in San Antonio, TX to discuss our partnership with Sodexo.
- Dr. Lovin encouraged Cabinet members to attend the Division of Student Affairs Awards Ceremony on Monday, April 18. All award ceremonies for the Division of Student Affairs have been combined into one ceremony. Also, Dr. Lovin announced the Student Hall of Fame process is complete.
- Mr. Young announced the Big Green Event has approximately 235 student volunteers to complete 20 projects. Mr. Young has been visiting project sites this week. SGA has revamped Student Senate and revised the Senate seats available. Applications are open. Mr. Young asked Cabinet members to encourage students to apply.
- Mr. Young requested confirmation on the number of tickets students are to receive for the May 2022 Commencement ceremony. At a previous meeting, Cabinet members were informed that graduating students would receive seven tickets; however, the Registrar's Office has notified graduating students that they will receive five tickets.
- President LaForge commended Mr. Young for the great job he does as an ambassador for students.
- Dr. Wegmann announced that one of his students, Mr. Brady Keaton, will be attending University of Mississippi Law School.
- Dr. Novobilski shared with Cabinet members information about the FedEx Takeover Day Luncheon that took place yesterday. The purpose of the luncheon was to honor and thank FedEx for their support of the Department of Commercial Aviation in the College of Business and Aviation. Dr. Novobilski announced FedEx has awarded \$300,000 in scholarships to Delta State students.
- President LaForge announced Dr. David Abney will attend the Spring Commencement ceremony to help hood honorary degree recipient Walt Bettinger.
- Dr. Novobilski stated that the Woodward Hines Education Foundation greatly appreciates what Delta State is doing with our IMPACT Program. To show their appreciation, they introduced the School of Nursing to the Bower Program, which then provided \$635,000 for a bridge program for those students interested in nursing.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Most Beautiful Pageant, April 5, 7:00 p.m., BPAC
- Leanne Morgan, April 7, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Go Green Weekend, April 8-9

- Division of Student Affairs Awards Ceremony, April 18, 7:00 p.m., BPAC
- Student Affairs' "Takin' Care of Business Day," April 19, April 22, April 26
- SGA's Big Green Event, April 23
- Campus Forum, April 26, 2:00 p.m., Jacob Conference Center

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Wednesday, April 11, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Delta State's Strategic Planning Process for 2019-2024 (Dr. Novobilski)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:21 p.m.