

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: August 14, 2023

Members in attendance: Dr. Dan Ennis, Dr. Ellen Green, Dr. Christopher Jurgenson, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Mr. Rick Munroe, Dr. Andy Novobilski, Ms. Holly Ray, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Haley Rooks, and Mr. Larry Wakefield (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: Mr. Mike Kinnison

Guests: Dr. Edwin Craft, Associate Vice President for Finance and Administration
Ms. Dana George, Senior Executive Associate Athletic Director for Compliance, Academics, and Internal Operations

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on August 14, 2023. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Ennis presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Novobilski and seconded by Dr. Lovin, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on August 7, 2023.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- Dr. Ennis gave an overview of the activities and events from last week. Dr. Ennis invited Ms. Maria Ramiz, along with her supervisor and associate vice president, to lunch to celebrate her recognition as Delta State's June Employee of the Month. Dr. Ennis spoke to SGA officers about leadership during their annual retreat. In preparation for America's 250th birthday, Dr. Ennis met with Ms. Emily Havens of GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi and Dr. Bob Santelli of the Center for American Music at Monmouth University to discuss celebration plans. GRAMMY Museum Mississippi will be a part of a consortium of museums to host a traveling exhibit about American music in 2026. The final Takin' Care of Business Day and the Student Move-In Day took place last week. Dr. Ennis traveled to Mississippi Valley State University to visit with Dr. Jerryl Briggs. New Student Orientation occurred last week, and Dr. Ennis welcomed students to campus at their opening event. New Student Orientation provided several great events for students to participate in including a Silent Disco in Kent Wyatt Hall on Friday and the Live on Leflore Block Party on Saturday. The Cleveland Music Foundation Board of Directors met for their quarterly meeting. Dr. Ennis gave his State of the University address during Delta State's annual Convocation with faculty and staff. The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce hosted "Greet and Green" to welcome back faculty and staff. GRAMMY Museum Mississippi hosted an event for the opening of the new "Highway 61: Traveling America's Music Highway" exhibit. Dr. and Mrs. Ennis and the Administrative Staff Council hosted a luncheon for Faculty and Staff. On Sunday, the Athletics Department hosted Meet the Statesmen to introduce campus and community constituents to the 2023-24 student-athletes.
- In the absence of Mr. Kinnison, Ms. George gave an update on Athletics. The soccer teams participated in pre-season scrimmages over the weekend. The men's soccer team scrimmaged against Pearl River

Community College, and the women’s team scrimmaged against Alcorn State University. The Student-Athlete Back to School Assembly is tonight at 7:00 p.m. in the BPAC. All student-athletes are required to attend unless the student has class.

- Mr. Wakefield shared an update on Facilities projects. The Mississippi Department of Transportation sidewalk project continues to advance towards completion. The university will receive a full report tomorrow from the insurance company on the damage caused by the hail storm that occurred in June.
- Ms. Rooks gave an update on student activities. The SGA Cabinet will have their first meeting tonight.
- Dr. Ennis shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. Classes for Fall 2023 began today. Dr. Ennis is teaching Introduction to Literature and First Year Seminar this semester. The Campaign Steering Committee met this morning, and they discussed the launch of the public phase in September. The Flight Operations Annual Welcome Back Cookout is scheduled for Tuesday evening. The Institutional Executive Officers meet on Wednesday for their monthly meeting with Commissioner Al Rankins. The IHL Board of Trustees meet on Thursday for their monthly meeting. The Desoto County alumni will host their yearly meeting and social on Saturday at the Snowden House.

CABINET TOPIC

Cabinet Advance Recap and Next Steps Dr. Ennis

Dr. Ennis provided to Cabinet members the draft Cabinet Advance notes and associated follow up items. He asked them to review the notes to ensure accuracy. All feedback should be reported to Ms. Cole. A full recap of the Cabinet Advance and next steps will occur at an upcoming Cabinet meeting.

BUSINESS

Action

Academic Freedom policy (new – final reading) Dr. Novobilski

On recommendation of Academic Council and the Faculty Senate, Dr. Novobilski brought the new Academic Freedom policy to Cabinet for a final reading. This policy is based on the most current iteration of the American Association of University Professors 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure. Delta State supports open and respectful dialogue, encouraging diverse perspectives and fostering an inclusive intellectual environment. Delta State rejects the idea of compelling any of its community members to adopt or express any belief that violates the individual’s personal and legally protected freedom and/or beliefs. Although academic freedom provides latitude in the classroom and research, it does not justify discrimination, harassment, or the promotion of speech with the sole and deliberate intention of being hurtful. The creation of the Academic Freedom policy was driven by the university’s SACSCOC review.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Novobilski to approve the Academic Freedom policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Budget Update Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield informed Cabinet members that the FY24 Budget Book will be disseminated this week.

Recruitment Update/Overview.....Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin provided an update on recruitment and enrollment. The enrollment reports state enrollment for the fall is 2,381 as of August 11. At this time last year, enrollment was 2,359. Several students continued to register and re-enroll in classes over the weekend. The second, class-cancellation process is scheduled for next week, and the list has 382 students on it.

Institutional Effectiveness and Planning.....Dr. Novobilski

Dr. Novobilski thanked Cabinet members for assisting with finalizing the SACSCOC reaffirmation packet, and he urged Cabinet members to provide any requested documentation to Dr. Welsh as soon as possible. Dr. Novobilski shared with Cabinet members that SACSCOC notified the university of their receipt of our substantive change to the Masters of Education in Counseling program; the program is primarily online now.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Desoto County Alumni meeting, August 19, 5:00 p.m., Snowden House
- Leflore County Alumni meeting, August 22, 6:00 p.m., Museum of the MS Delta
- Employee Benefits Fair, August 23, 10:00 a.m., Nowell Union, 2nd Floor, East Lobby
- Labor Day Holiday, September 4

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, August 21, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:04 p.m.