

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: August 16, 2021**

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

**Members not in attendance:** Mr. Jamie Rutledge

**Guests:** None

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on August 16, 2021. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

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

On motion by Dr. Lovin and seconded by Ms. Wallace, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on August 9, 2021.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from last week. President LaForge participated in the weekly conference call with Commissioner Rankins and the Institutional Executive Officers to discuss COVID-19 related issues. President LaForge was interviewed by WABG's Andranita Williams regarding Delta State's "back to school" preparations. The GSC Board of Directors and GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi Board of Directors met. President LaForge provided an overview of each meeting. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions hosted Express Registration Day, and approximately 60 students attended and were registered for their Fall courses. Panhellenic hosted Formal New Member Recruitment, and each chapter pledged 14 new members. Dr. Lovin shared with Cabinet members an overview of New Student Weekend. President LaForge provided a welcome for the International Student Orientation. Returning students moved into the residence halls on Sunday. Dr. Lovin announced 686 students have been assigned a room within the residence halls. Of that number, 625 students have reported and checked in to their rooms. Of the 61 students who have not checked in, 37 are new students and 24 are returning students. If the student does not contact Ms. Julie Jackson about a late check in by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, the student will be considered a no show.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. Four athletic teams have been on campus for two weeks and have begun their practice schedules. A few of the teams are two weeks from the start of competition. The Athletic Department hosted a Return to Campus Orientation for student-athletes this morning and President LaForge provided a welcome to the group. Mr. Kinnison announced Delta State alumnus Debbie Brock will be inducted into the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in Knoxville on Saturday. She is the third Delta State Lady Statesmen basketball player to be inducted.

- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. President LaForge will participate in a weekly conference call with Dr. Al Rankins and the Institutional Executive Officers on Tuesday to discuss COVID-19 related issues. President LaForge, Dr. Novobilski, and Mr. Munroe have a cultivation lunch on Tuesday. The Institutional Executive Officers and Chief Academic Officers are scheduled to meet on Wednesday to discuss dual enrollment. The IHL Board of Trustees will meet on Thursday via Zoom. Commissioner Willie Simmons and others will host the “Route to America’s Music Festival” on Saturday in Ruleville. The Epsilon Xi Lambda chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. will host their 70<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration “Live on Leflore” block party on Saturday at 5:00 p.m.

**CABINET TOPIC**

None

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

None

**Discussion**

**Convocation - recap..... President LaForge**

President LaForge gave a brief overview of last week’s Convocation activities and provided an opportunity for Cabinet members to share any feedback. Convocation had great attendance in person and virtually via livestream. The livestream was viewed by more than 300 people. Dr. Novobilski thanked the staff in the President’s Office, University Advancement, and all Cabinet members for their hard work in ensuring a successful event. Cabinet members provided feedback on President LaForge’s State of the University address.

**Start of Fall Semester .....Dr. Lovin and Dr. Novobilski**

Dr. Lovin shared with Cabinet members his plan to conduct a review of New Student Orientation and the registration process. He will implement new practices, as necessary, to better each process. Dr. Novobilski has received several requests from faculty members for larger classrooms to accommodate for social distancing. Ms. Haley Pinion is working on these requests. Also, Dr. Novobilski was made aware of students reaching out to different departments to inquire about the protocol to follow if diagnosed with COVID-19 and cannot attend class. All faculty and staff should instruct students to read the COVID-19 Protocols for Students and contact Ms. LaJoyce Stewart in the Health Center.

**Enrollment Update .....Dr. Lovin and Dr. Novobilski**

Dr. Lovin and Dr. Novobilski provided Cabinet members with an update on enrollment. As of August 16, 1,730 undergraduate students and 693 graduate students have registered for Fall 2021. At this time last year, 1,796 undergraduate and 633 graduate students were registered for Fall 2020. The rosters for Dual Enrollment courses will be available in the new couple of weeks. Dr. Lovin informed Cabinet members he is working with OIT to develop new enrollment reports in Argos that provide him with a three-year trend of data. The report will be updated, as needed, with new filters of information including new undergraduate students, returning undergraduate students, new graduate students, and returning graduate students. Dr. Novobilski shared with Cabinet members the university has 102 international students enrolled as of last week. Not all international students have arrived on campus yet due to issues with immigration.

**Mourning Bands for Police Department ..... Dr. Lovin**

Dr. Lovin shared with Cabinet members the uniforms for the Delta State police officers will have mourning bands on them until the end of the month. The mourning bands are in memory of local police officers and sheriffs who have passed away recently.

**Additional Information:**

- Dr. Wegmann informed Cabinet members an event for Constitution Day will be the week of September 13.
- Mr. Young announced a new gaming system has been added to the student game room in the H. L. Nowell Union.
- Mr. Young announced applications for Student Senate, Student House of Representatives, and Student Court will be released soon.
- Ms. Wallace announced the Okra Works Part-Time Job Fair is scheduled for August 25.
- Mr. Munroe announced the next Vision event will be held Thursday, August 26 in Madison, MS.
- Dr. Lovin had a meeting with the presidents and vice presidents of all Greek organizations on campus to listen to their plans and aspirations. He looks forward to working with each group.
- Dr. Lovin and Mr. Merritt Dain are scheduled to meet with Bayou Academy Headmaster Curt McCain this week to discuss ways to enhance the relationship between Delta State and Bayou Academy.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Classes begin, August 16 (night) and August 17 (day)
- Welcome Week, August 16-August 20
- ~~Popsicles with the President, August 17, 3:00 p.m., President's Home~~ POSTPONED
- Employee Benefits Fair, August 24, 10:00 a.m., H.L. Nowell Union
- Delta State football vs. Bethel University, September 2, 6:00 p.m., Parker Field

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, August 23, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – SGA Cabinet to President's Cabinet (Dr. Lovin and Mr. Young)

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 2:26 p.m.