

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT'S CABINET
Minutes

Meeting date: July 16, 2018

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Dr. Severine Groh, Mr. Charlie King, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Mr. Rick Munroe, Dr. Michelle Roberts, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

Members not in attendance: Dr. Billy Moore and Dr. Christy Riddle

Guests: Ms. Emily Dabney, Registrar and Director, Institutional Research and Planning
Ms. Chrisa Mansell, Assistant Director, Institutional Research and Planning

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on July 16, 2018. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Rutledge and seconded by Mr. Mayers, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on July 2, 2018.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge gave an overview on the Cleveland Board of Aldermen's meeting. He stated it was a good meeting, and his remarks were well received. In addition to providing a general campus update, he also updated the Board on the RFP process for the Golf Course. Development prospects will not be known until a feasibility study can be completed. General concerns raised by the Board of Aldermen were drainage and property value.
- President LaForge continued his cultivation meetings and phone calls with campaign prospects over the last couple of weeks. President LaForge met with Mr. Jack Nichols, the attorney for the Creekmore family, and he had a phone call with Dr. David Abney to update him on Delta State affairs.
- President LaForge attended the Meet and Greet session of the DMI Summer Camp to welcome students to Delta State, and he was able to attend their final showcase at the end of the week.
- The Cleveland Music Foundation held its quarterly Board of Directors meeting last week. GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi continues to prosper, and they have several big events coming up.
- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. Men's basketball has an opening for an Assistant Basketball Coach. All camps are complete for the summer. The football team arrives on campus next week to begin practice. This weekend, Delta State will host, for the first time in four years, the Mississippi Swimming Long Course State Championship. Mr. Mayers stated more than 300 swimmers have registered for the event.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The last punch list for Zeigel Hall will be completed this week, and furniture is set to arrive. Young-Mauldin Cafeteria continues to show

progress. Mr. Rutledge is optimistic it will open the day after Labor Day. Beginning this week, the traffic signal poles will be replaced at the intersection of Fifth Avenue and Highway 8. Due to a change order in the cost of asphalt, the Statesmen Boulevard project was able to release \$150,000 to be used to pave the baseball parking lot.

- Dr. Bennett informed Cabinet Members the final Orientation session occurred today. She stated it was a great turnout with 75 transfers, 70 freshmen, and 30 walk-ins.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the week. The NCAA DII President’s Council will have a teleconference on Wednesday to discuss new Regular Season media agreements. Mr. Munroe announced that the Greater Jackson Alumni meeting will be held at the Jackson Yacht Club beginning at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday. The Alumni staff expect over 100 attendees for the event.

CABINET TOPIC

Data/Information Needs.....Dr. McAdams

Dr. McAdams introduced Ms. Emily Dabney and Ms. Chrisa Mansell to Cabinet Members. At the 2017 Cabinet Advance, Cabinet Members were asked what data they needed to make informed decisions. The compiled list was discussed in the Executive Committee, and Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet in October 2017 a spreadsheet on Cabinet Data/Information Needs – Data Readily Available. At that time, he shared with the Cabinet that Ms. Dabney was working on updating Delta State’s Mini Factbook, which she has now completed. Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet Members the Mini Factbook, which includes information on student enrollment, degrees awarded by type and college, new students entering Delta State, and employees. For anyone looking for specific data, they can look to the Institutional Research and Planning’s webpage, under University Facts and University Resources. Under these tabs, links are available to several outside institutional research websites including IPEDS, IHL, NCES, Delta State’s EAC Report Cards, as well as information on Delta State’s IHL profile and first-time, full-time freshmen graduation rates. Dr. McAdams stated it is easy to drown in data, but be starved for information. With regard to our capacity and resources, we must focus on what data is truly needed to make informed decisions on a regular basis or measure our progress on strategic priorities. President LaForge asked Cabinet Members if the information provided and made available to them was sufficient. Dr. Roberts stated that additional information was needed with regards to an in-house document that answered top-level administrative questions, such as housing statistics and enrollment. The document would need to showcase trend data for three to five years. As a next step, Dr. Roberts offered to work with Institutional Research and Planning on this document, and discuss top-level administrative questions with the Executive Committee.

BUSINESS

Action

Awards - Staff policy (revised - first reading)Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett brought to Cabinet the revised Awards - Staff policy for a final reading. This policy details the protocols for choosing a recipient of the H.L. Nowell Outstanding Support Staff Award. Two major revisions were made to the policy: 1) the award committee will have representation from service maintenance personnel, and 2) the nominee must be approved by their direct supervisor and vice president.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve the revised Awards - Staff policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Appendix 7: Approval to Plan a Master of Fine Arts degree in Integrated Visual Arts.....Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet for approval Appendix 7: Approval to Plan a Master of Fine Arts degree in Integrated Visual Arts. The Master of Fine Arts degree in Integrated Visual Arts program would be a 60-credit Low Residency/High Residency hybrid where students would matriculate as a cohort. All students would be required to take four new technology courses, acting as one of their concentration areas, which is meant to help them integrate technology in the pursuit of traditional artistic practices and to fulfill the interdisciplinary portion of the degree. This will be a two-year intensive program that will fill a gap in academic offerings in the Southeast, cater to non-traditional students, and build on the strengths and diversity of DSU’s art department faculty to empower and challenge students to develop their work and engage with the community. The program would offer both a low-residency track for non-traditional students interested in pursuing a graduate degree without having to take a leave of absence from their jobs and/or families, and a traditional full-time track. Both low residency and campus-based students would gather as a cohort for summer and winter intensives as well as online courses during spring and fall semesters. Currently, there are only two options in the state of Mississippi to pursue a MFA in studio art. There is a need in the state for additional opportunities, especially in the Delta Region. The two options are the University of Mississippi and Mississippi College. Both of these existing programs are residency programs. The art department sent out a questionnaire to 400 people in the Delta area seeking to identify the interest and need for a MFA program. Of the responses received, it was indicated the MFA program would be of value to the area. In order to run the program, \$18,600 would be needed in startup costs for the year 2020-21 to supplement costs associated with bringing in visiting artists during summer and winter intensives for the first year and pay mentors. By year three, an additional faculty member would need to be hired, as well. All other costs should be paid for by tuition. Dr. McAdams will bring Appendix 8 to the Cabinet Members for approval at a later date.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the creation of a Master of Fine Arts degree in Integrated Visual Arts and seconded by Dr. Groh. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Athletic Director searchPresident LaForge

President LaForge distributed a listing of the members of Athletic Director Search committee. This committee is comprised of 13 members including: one president emeritus, one vice president, two athletic department representatives, one foundation board member, two faculty representatives, two staff representatives, one student representative, one retiree, and two community members. All members have agreed to serve on the committee, and Ms. Lisa Giger, ex-officio member, will set the date of the first meeting. The committee will give to President LaForge a recommendation of their top two to three candidates, and President LaForge will choose the best candidate.

Cabinet Advance recap Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts informed Cabinet Members the notes from Cabinet Advance are being finalized and will be distributed via email prior to the next Cabinet meeting. With the finalized notes, a new iteration of Appendix II will be distributed to be worked on this year. President LaForge asked Cabinet Members to provide to Dr. Roberts any feedback or suggested changes to the format of the Cabinet Advance.

Campus visit from IHL Commissioner..... Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts announced that IHL Commissioner Dr. Al Rankins will visit all IHL universities during his first 100 days in office. He is scheduled to visit Delta State on Thursday, August 23. Dr. Roberts distributed a copy of the tentative schedule for the IHL Commissioner’s Listening Tour at Delta State. During his visit, Dr.

Rankins would like to meet with local legislators, Cabinet Members, Academic Council, Staff Council, student leaders, Faculty Senate, and local media, and he will have an open forum for the entire campus community. His tour will end with a reception in his honor with community members and alumni. Dr. Roberts asked Cabinet Members to coordinate the sessions for their areas. A final schedule will be shared with Cabinet Members at a later time. President LaForge stated this is a chance for all campus constituencies to have a face-to-face meeting with the Commissioner.

Sustainability Report..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge presented to Cabinet Members Delta State’s Financial Sustainability Report. This report is a recommendation to IHL on how Delta State can increase its cash position over the next five years. It is required by IHL for each university to have 90 days of cash on hand. As of June 30, 2016, Delta State has 38.35 days of cash on hand. Unauthorized adjustments were made to five universities’ unrestricted cash (including Delta State) by last year’s auditing team. Mr. Rutledge plans to work with the new audit team to see if this adjustment can be reversed, which would increase our days of cash by an estimated 20 days. Mr. Rutledge identified three strategies that will allow Delta State to increase its cash position; however, there is a caveat behind each strategy that shows it will be damaging to the university. First, the 2018-19 budget for Delta State includes a \$350,000 contingency amount that will increase the cash balance by the same amount. Delta State plans to increase this contingency to \$500,000 per year for the next four years. This will generate an additional \$2,350,000 over a five year period. Second, Delta State has used university funds over the past several years, due to the absence of State R&R funds, to renovate and repair campus facilities. Delta State would have to put on hold using university funds for any renovation projects for the next five years, which would generate an additional \$3,250,000; however, the university would not be able to make any substantial renovations or major repairs to our aging buildings without State R&R funds. Third, Delta State has been forced to increase tuition because of the decreased funding received from the State. Due to rising tuition costs, the need for additional scholarships and waivers has increased for our large number of economically deprived students. Recently, the university revised the scholarship policies and procedures with the intent to decrease our overall scholarship expenditures over the next five years. The estimated savings is \$3,250,000. Consequences stemming from our strategies could include a downward spiral in enrollment and buildings rendered unusable due to vast repairs. IHL Commissioner Al Rankins has seen the Financial Sustainability report, and he knows our three strategies can’t be accomplished without terrible consequences. Mr. Rutledge plans to begin bringing any repairs or renovations to the Executive Committee and Cabinet for approval to make sure it is a group decision.

Delta Council’s Annual Meeting..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge distributed a report detailing the annual costs associated with Delta State hosting Delta Council’s Annual meeting. The information provided shows what it takes to host an event of this magnitude. President LaForge plans to meet with key personnel at Delta Council to share this information with them and to request that Delta State be listed as a partner of the event, which is similar to what other organizations provide to Delta State for usage of our facilities.

Convocation plans.....Dr. McAdams

Convocation is scheduled for Thursday, August 16 at 3:00 p.m. in the BPAC. Dr. McAdams will serve as emcee and will introduce guests and speakers. The Faculty Senate president, Dr. Groh, and Staff Council chair, Dr. Riddle, will introduce new faculty and staff members. As in past years, all new employees will be showcased through a PowerPoint presentation prepared by Human Resources. Dr. Bennett will introduce the elected members of the Student Government Association, and President LaForge will deliver his State of the University address. Dr. McAdams and Mr. Rutledge are working on having a ribbon cutting ceremony for Zeigel Hall prior to or immediately following Convocation.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Summer Session II, July 2 – August 2
- New Student Week, August 12-18
- Convocation, August 16, 3:00 p.m., BPAC
- Welcome Back luncheon, August 17, 12:00 noon, Second Floor, H.L. Nowell Union
- Day and Night classes begin, August 20

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, August 13 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.