

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: March 18, 2024

Members in attendance: Dr. Dan Ennis, Dr. Edwin Craft, Mr. David Gladden, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Dr. Christopher Jurgenson, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Ms. Holly Ray, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Haley Rooks, Ms. Ashley Tanksley, and Mr. Larry Wakefield (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: Ms. Lisa Giger, Director, Human Resources
Dr. Merideth Van Namen, Chair, Strategic Planning Committee

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on March 18, 2024. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Ennis presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Lovin and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on March 4, 2024.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- Dr. Ennis gave an overview of the activities and events from the last two weeks. Dr. Ennis and other Delta State representatives participated in a call regarding the potential renovation of Cleveland Hall and Ward Hall to make them competitive with other universities' housing. To achieve the renovation, the project would utilize State funds and private funds. The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors met for their monthly meeting. Dr. Ennis attended a Delta 2025 event in Greenville, MS. Foreigner performed at the BPAC to a sold-out crowd. The Art Department hosted the Annual Juried Student Art Awards Ceremony and Reception last week. Dr. Ennis and Dr. Roberts met with several legislators last week.
- Dr. Craft and Mr. Wakefield gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The campus roofing needs \$3 million to cover the remaining damage. The University cannot utilize the emergency contract for repair anymore, and we are required to start a regular contract. Dr. Craft has a call with the Department of Finance and Administration and IHL tomorrow to see what the University's next steps are for completion. The gutters on Broom Hall have rusted over and need replacing. The Dectron units in the Mayers Aquatics Center need to be replaced. Also, Facilities Management has a new power-wash trailer to assist in cleaning up buildings around campus.
- Ms. Rooks gave an update on student activities. Student Legislative Day is Thursday. SGA will host an interest meeting for elected SGA positions tonight, and campaigning begins tonight after the meeting. The Most Beautiful Pageant is in April, and the last day to sign up is today. Also, SGA is promoting The Big Green Event and garnering student participation.

- Mr. Kinnison provided an update on Athletics. The baseball and softball teams have mid-week games and host University of West Florida this weekend. The golf team is competing at Tennessee Tech University today. The swimming and diving teams competed well at the NCAA DII Swimming and Diving Competition with several top ten finishes. Also, Delta State’s male divers finished top three nationally. Spring football practice begins today, and it will continue throughout the month with three practices a week.
- Dr. Ennis shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. Dr. Ennis was interviewed by Dr. April Mondy and Mr. Elijah Mondy for their radio station this morning. The Enrollment Group will meet on Tuesday. The IHL Board of Trustees have their monthly meeting on Thursday. The Foundation will host a reception for the Kyle Educational Trust Board of Directors and their scholarship recipients on Thursday.

CABINET TOPIC

None

BUSINESS

Action

Program Closure policy (new – final reading) Dr. Griffin

On the recommendation of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the new Program Closure policy to Cabinet for a final reading. A program closure is defined as a program closed to admission or entry. Delta State University has the responsibility to guide students to graduation if the University deems it necessary to close an academic degree or certificate program due to problems with enrollment, finances, program quality, or alignment with the institution’s mission or strategic plan. At the charge of Dr. Ennis, Dr. Griffin and other members of the academy created the Program Closure and Teach Out policies.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the Program Closure policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Roberts to change the Program Closure policy to Academic Program Closure policy and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Teach Out policy (new – final reading)..... Dr. Griffin

On the recommendation of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the new Teach Out policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Delta State University has the responsibility to create a teach-out plan in the event of a program or institutional closure. This policy outlines the elements required in a teach-out plan, which may include a teach-out agreement. A change was made to the Student Academic Teach Out Map form. Students must notify an advisor and Department/Division chair within five business days of any problems with their schedule.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the Teach Out policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Counseling Services policy (revised – final reading) Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin brought the revised Counseling Services policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Delta State University provides access to confidential Counseling Services to current students, faculty, and staff. Dr.

Lovin shared the minor adjustments made to the policy; all were grammatical or stylistic in nature.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the Counseling Services policy for a final reading and seconded by Ms. Ray. The motion was approved.

Leave for Death in the Immediate Family policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised Leave for Death in Immediate Family policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Delta State University establishes guidelines for providing time off to employees for absences related to the death of immediate family members. The definition of a child was updated. An employee may use up to three days of earned major medical leave per calendar year for absences due to a death in the immediate family, and personal leave does not have to be used prior to use of major medical leave for this purpose. The revisions made to the policy were made to be compliant with the Mississippi Code.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the Leave for Death in the Immediate Family policy for a final reading and seconded by Ms. Rooks. The motion was approved.

Military Leave/Veteran’s Re-Employment Rights policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised Military Leave/Veteran’s Re-Employment Rights policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Delta State University employees are entitled to military leave in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994. The definition of Uniformed Services was added to the policy. Also, the policy was revised to be consistent with Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the Military Leave/Veteran’s Re-Employment Rights policy for a final reading and seconded by Ms. Rooks. The motion was approved.

Personal Leave with Pay policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised Personal Leave with Pay policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Personal leave with pay is earned by all regular employees who work 50% time or greater and receive University benefits. Leave is accrued after one month of continuous service and according to employment status and length of annual employment periods. Leave accruals are added to an employee's balance at the end of the month and will be available for use beginning on the first day of the next month. The definitions of immediate family and child were updated. The rules for personal leave apply to all employees except for nine-month faculty. The policy was updated to be compliant with Mississippi Code.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the Personal Leave with Pay policy for a final reading and seconded by Ms. Rooks. The motion was approved.

Four Day Work Week for Summer 2024..... Mr. Wakefield

At the Cabinet meeting on March 4, 2024, Cabinet members discussed the proposed four-day work week schedule for Summer 2024. Dr. Ennis requested further discussion and additional information prior to a vote at today’s Cabinet meeting. At the March 4th meeting, Cabinet members discussed the costs and benefits of the four-day work week during the summer months. Several Cabinet members expressed potential harm to the University in recruitment with not having offices open on Fridays. Other Cabinet members discussed the popularity of the four-day work week among staff members and its boost to staff morale.

Following the March 4th Cabinet meeting, the Office of Human Resources released a survey to staff

members to request their preference in a summer work schedule. The options for a summer work schedule were: Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., one hour lunch; Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., one hour lunch; Monday through Thursday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., 30 minutes lunch; Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., one hour lunch, Friday would be 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Of the 231 responses, 73% wanted the four-day work week with ten-hour days. Staff Council reviewed other colleges' summer schedules, and Ms. Ray shared those options. Another proposal made by Cabinet members was an alternating schedule for staff members. Cabinet members continued to discuss the cost and benefits of the four-day work week for the summer; however, a solution on how to keep the offices open and fully functioning could not be reached.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Roberts to maintain the current work schedule throughout the summer and seconded by Mr. Gladden. The motion was approved.

Tuition and Fees for FY2025..... Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield recommended to Cabinet members to increase tuition by 3% for 2024-25. The increase would provide a projected increase in revenue of \$500,000; however, the revenue projection does not include the scholarship deduction. Dr. Lovin shared students would be able to cover a 3% increase in tuition with regards to their financial aid according to the Office of Financial Aid. Also, Dr. Lovin shared the cost of housing would not increase for 2024-25. Mr. Wakefield shared the cost of meal plans would increase by 8% for residential students; this increase is a part of the University's contract with Sodexo. Cabinet members discussed several options regarding a tuition increase including a 5% increase and not increasing tuition. Also, Cabinet members discussed increasing tuition for students already in the recruitment pipeline and possibly deciding on tuition increases a year or two in advance.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Wakefield to approve a 3% increase in tuition for 2024-25 and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion failed with five oppositions and one abstention.

2024-25 Holiday Schedule..... Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield brought the 2024-25 holiday schedule to Cabinet for approval. According to IHL policy, universities have 15 paid holidays. The holidays set forth by the Office of Human Resources are: Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, two days of Thanksgiving, eight days for a Winter Holiday, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and a Spring Holiday.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Wakefield to approve the 2024-25 holiday schedule and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Mission Statement..... Dr. Griffin

Dr. Griffin invited the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, Dr. Merideth Van Namen, to Cabinet to discuss the revised mission statement. Dr. Van Namen presented the revised mission statement to the University Leadership Council on March 11, 2024. In revising the mission statement, the Committee sought to represent all values of the University and include all academic and non-academic programming. The University Leadership Council recommended a few changes. The new mission statement will guide the Strategic Plan Committee in writing the new strategic plan. Once the mission statement is approved by Cabinet, it will be submitted to IHL for approval.

Proposed Mission Statement

The mission of Delta State University is to provide exceptional programs and opportunities that are current, innovative, and responsive to the diverse needs of those it serves. Delta State University strives to

provide experiences that cultivate intellectual growth and individual enrichment to develop productive members of local, regional, and global communities.

Proposed Mission Statement with revisions by University Leadership Council

The mission of Delta State University is to offer exceptional programs and opportunities that are current, innovative, and responsive to the diverse needs of those it serves. The University provides experiences that cultivate intellectual growth and individual enrichment to develop productive members of local, regional, and global communities.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the proposed mission statement and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. The motion was approved.

Academic Program Review Measures..... Dr. Griffin

Dr. Griffin brought the Academic Program Review Measures form to Cabinet for approval. Since the last Cabinet meeting, the median for University metrics was added to the form. Dr. Griffin and Dr. Craft have held two sessions with faculty members to explain the measures and the associated form. Each program will receive the form with their metrics along with a spreadsheet of all 61 programs ranked. Upon receiving the form, each program will fill in the qualitative data and return it to Ms. Chrisa Mansell by March 28.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the Academic Program Review Measures and associated form and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Road Closures Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin requested to close Coahoma Street (in front of the H. L. Nowell Student Union) on two occasions. On April 5, Coahoma Street will be closed for the Freshmen Admit Social until 4:00 p.m. in conjunction with Go Green Weekend. Also, Coahoma Street will be closed on April 25 for Springfest until sometime in the evening.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the road closures and seconded by Ms. Tanksley. The motion was approved.

Cabinet Appendix Items to be moved to University Leadership Council Dr. Ennis

Dr. Ennis stated the appendices are not given much attention due to the length of Cabinet meetings. If approved by Cabinet, the appendices will be moved to the University Leadership Council for review and action. Progress reports will be made by Dr. Lovin.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to move Cabinet appendix items to University Leadership Council and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson.

Dr. Roberts requested Appendix I items for the current fiscal year stay with Cabinet.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Roberts to keep Appendix I items for the current fiscal year with Cabinet and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Hiring Requests Cabinet members

In following the hiring guidance set forth by Dr. Ennis, Cabinet members presented their requests for review. After review by Cabinet members, Dr. Griffin and Mr. Wakefield will meet with Dr. Ennis to provide

additional context as to the need for the given position or positions prior to Dr. Ennis granting or denying hiring approval.

Academic Affairs requests

Dr. Griffin requested to hire the Chair of the Department of Commercial Aviation. The current Chair is retiring.

Hiring Requests Approval..... Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts shared with Cabinet members an overview of hiring request approvals made by Dr. Ennis. In Athletics, the request for an Assistant Coordinator of Media Relations was approved. In Academic Affairs, the Destination Graduation Coordinator, Destination Graduation Counselor, and Destination Graduation Advisor were approved. In Finance and Administration, the following positions were approved: Custodian, Housekeeper, Housekeeper II, Groundskeeper II (2), Groundskeeper III, User Services Manager, Accounts Payable Analyst, Network Technician, and Senior Coordinator of Student Business Services. Dr. Ennis announced all custodial and housekeeper positions will no longer need to be brought to him for approval prior to hiring as the positions have high turnover.

SACSCOC Update..... Dr. Griffin

The committee reviewing Delta State’s SACS-COC reaffirmation has the Focus Report. At this time, the committee has not submitted any questions. Dr. Valarie Morgan was appointed as the SACS-COC Liaison, and Dr. Welsh is training Dr. Morgan prior to her departure. Dr. Griffin created a steering committee to prepare for the on-site visit, and they are meeting weekly. The biggest goal for the University at this time in preparation for the on-site visit is for all campus constituencies to know and understand the QEP.

Fall Move-In Day Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin requested Fall Move-In Day be Saturday, August 17. Also, he would like offices providing student services to be open that day for students and their families. Along with offices providing student services, he requested the food concepts in the Union, bookstore, and post office be open.

Recruitment Update/Overview.....Ms. Tanksley

Ms. Tanksley provided an update on recruitment efforts. As of March 13, 2024, 989 first-time freshmen, 122 transfer students, and 81 graduate students have been admitted to Delta State for Fall 2024. 204 students have expressed their commitment to Delta State; 54 additional students want to be contacted again after a certain date. The Admit Social on April 5 has 84 students planning to attend. The Presidential Admissions Tour received great feedback on Facebook, and an additional tour in May could occur.

Staff Evaluation Process and Timeline Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield shared the staff evaluation process and timeline. The Office of Human Resources will email the Staff Performance Evaluation Forms and Guidelines to supervisors on March 28, 2024. Supervisors conduct evaluations in April 2024. The vice presidents/dean review of evaluations is May 1-8, 2024. All signed performance evaluations are due to the Office of Human Resources on May 9, 2024. The only change made to the process was the addition of absenteeism as part of the evaluation of hourly employees.

Budget Update Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield shared with Cabinet members he will provide an overview of the University budget at the end of March for evaluation of financial standing after nine months.

Legislative Update..... Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts provided an update on the legislative session. Next Monday is the deadline for requests of appropriation bills.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Student Luncheon with Legislators, March 21, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., State Capitol
- An Evening with Travis Tritt, March 21, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Town Hall Meeting, March 27, 3:00 p.m., Jacob Conference Center, Ewing Hall
- Spring Holiday (Good Friday), March 29

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, April 1, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.