

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: March 27, 2019

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Dr. Severine Groh, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Charles McAdams, Dr. Billy Moore, Mr. Rick Munroe, Dr. Christy Riddle, Dr. Michelle Roberts, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: Mr. Charlie King

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on March 27, 2019. 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. Munroe, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on March 4, 2019.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from the last several weeks. President LaForge shared the outstanding experience of having Mr. Steve Forbes on campus for the Colloquia Lecture Series, and he thanked Cabinet members for their help in hosting him. President LaForge attended a second meeting on the Music Association Conference being held in Cleveland. President and Mrs. LaForge attended the AASCU Presidential Mission to Argentina. During the mission, President LaForge and other university presidents met with their counterparts at universities in Argentina and had exciting meetings about potential expansions in our international programs. Once he has had a chance to compile his materials, President LaForge will meet with Dr. McAdams and Dr. Riddle to see if Delta State can expand upon any of these opportunities. Mr. Munroe stated the dinners for the members of the House of Representatives and Senate hosted by Delta State went well very well. President LaForge and Mr. Munroe met with the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. Jeff Smith, and Chairman Smith reassured President LaForge and Mr. Munroe the IHL system would receive bond proceeds. Dr. Bennett gave an update on the successful Women's Conference. Mr. Munroe revealed the three sponsored projects for Spring for Success Giving Day met their goal and additional funds are still arriving. For the next giving day iteration, Mr. Munroe stated the teams need to be better prepared in their role in promotion. President LaForge announced the Board of Trustees approved the CPA auditing firm for the Delta State University Foundation and Delta State's request to bestow an honorary degree at their meeting last week. The 6th Annual Winning the Race Conference finished yesterday. President LaForge plans to meet with the conference co-chairs to debrief in the coming weeks. President LaForge spoke to Dr. AHM Reza's Environmental Regulations class this week.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The men and women's basketball teams finished their seasons. The women's team competed in the first round of the GSC tournament, and they finished 18-10 for the season. The men's team won the GSC tournament and competed in the first round of the

regional tournament, and they finished their season 19-12. The golf team tied for 6th at their last game, and they will compete again at the beginning of April. The men's tennis team stands at 7-3, and the women's team stands at 2-12. The baseball and softball teams have a home series this weekend against the University of Alabama-Huntsville. Spring football will wrap up next Thursday.

- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on facilities projects. Bids for the repair of the academic and facilities' roofs have gone out, and they are set to return on Friday. The Walter-Sillers Coliseum project continues to be held up by the Bureau of Archives and History. The HVAC project will begin once the remaining amount of funds from the Walter-Sillers Coliseum is known. Mr. Rutledge has spoken to two developers about the golf course. A new RFP will be sent out next Wednesday. The President's home construction will begin once the plans are finalized by the architect.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet Members some of the meetings and events planned for the week. The Foundation Task Force committee met this morning. President LaForge travels to Greenwood on Thursday morning to recruit at Greenwood High School. University Advancement will host a reception for the Kyle Educational Trust Board Members and their scholarship recipients on Thursday. President LaForge will visit with the Office of Admissions staff on Friday. Dr. Bennett shared the Admissions' recruiters made 55 visits in the Delta and 46 in the Jackson area last week. The Alumni Association Board meets on Friday. President LaForge will participate in the inauguration of Mississippi College President Blake Thompson on Friday on behalf of Delta State. On Saturday, President LaForge will visit with the football team.

CABINET TOPIC

Budget: Scholarships Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge gave Cabinet members an update on scholarships. In the past, Delta State was spending more on scholarships than what was budgeted. The primary reason the overspending occurred was rising tuition costs. As Delta State's obligations for scholarships increased, the budget amount for scholarships remained the same. Last year, Delta State began accounting for the change in obligations when a tuition increase occurs. For the budget process this year, Mr. Rutledge and the Executive Committee looked for additional ways to save money with regards to scholarships. Savings of \$1,305,122 were created due to caps and limits being placed on the scholarships.

BUSINESS

Action

U.S., State, and Delta State University Flag Protocols policy (new – final reading).....Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett brought to Cabinet for a final reading the U.S., State, and Delta State University Flag Protocols policy. Cabinet members previously approved the protocols, but it was requested that the protocols be made into a policy. A statement was added to the policy stating Delta State ruled to no longer fly the Mississippi State flag. It was replaced with the Mississippi Economic Council's Bicentennial flag indefinitely.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve the U.S., State, and Delta State University Flag Protocols policy for a first reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Grades and Credits policy (revised – final reading)Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the revised Grades and Credits policy for a final reading. Dr. McAdams stated the one substantive change made to the policy was requiring faculty to report midterm grades for individual courses for all students in all courses.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the Grades and Credits policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Faculty Positions policy (revised – first reading)Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet for a first reading the revised Faculty Positions policy. An additional requirement was added to the he rank of Assistant Professor of Practice. This rank is required to have a record of professional practice related to the teaching assignment as well as a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in an appropriate field related to the teaching assignment.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Faculty Positions policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Groh. The motion was approved.

Faculty Promotions policy (revised – first reading)Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet for a first reading the revised Faculty Promotions policy. An additional requirement was added to the he rank of Assistant Professor of Practice. This rank is required to have a record of professional practice related to the teaching assignment as well as a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in an appropriate field related to the teaching assignment.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Faculty Promotions policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Groh. The motion was approved.

Notification of Rights under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions policy (revised – first reading).....

.....Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet for a first reading the revised Notification of Rights under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions policy. The policy was updated to reflect other universities’ policies on FERPA and information found in the Federal Register.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Notification of Rights under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions policy and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Employment Background Checks policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Employment Background Checks policy for a final reading. The University requires a background check for each final candidate for all permanent, temporary, benefit-eligible, non-benefit eligible, full-time and part-time faculty, staff, hourly, adjunct teaching, and security- or safety-sensitive positions. Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet members the policy received extensive revisions to reflect current practices. The university may make a contingent offer of employment to an individual prior to the completion of a background check, but every effort to complete the background check prior to the first day of employment will be made.

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

Employment of Foreign Nationals policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Employment of Foreign Nationals policy for a final reading. Employment at Delta State University is subject to verification of an applicant’s eligibility for employment

as required by immigration laws. Applicants for employment at Delta State University may be asked whether they will be able to provide evidence of legal permissions to work in the U.S. Offers of employment will be contingent upon the ability to obtain appropriate work authorization in a timely manner. To reflect current practices, new definitions and language were added to the policy. Page 2, second paragraph. Dr. Riddle made a suggestion for a deletion to the policy on page two, paragraph two of the policy; there is not a need for foreign employees to provide a copy of a DS-2019.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the revised Employment of Foreign Nationals policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Roberts. The motion was approved.

Employment of Relatives policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Employment of Relatives policy for a final reading. The employment of a family member of a present employee or the appointment of a present employee to a new/different position is prohibited when such employment/ appointment would create a situation where one family member would be in a supervisory position over the other family member and/or influencing progress, performance, or welfare. Dr. Moore made a suggestion to have the Office of Human Resources approve exceptions to the policy instead of the corresponding vice president. President LaForge made the suggestion to have the Office of Human Resources be consulted about exceptions prior to the corresponding vice president approving it. Also, he asked Mr. Rutledge to add in anti-nepotism in parentheses to the title of the policy.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the Employment of Relatives policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Moore.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to table the Employment of Relatives policy until a later date due to the substantial number of changes that need to be made to the policy and seconded by Dr. Moore. The motion was approved.

Years of Service policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Years of Service policy for a final reading. This policy applies to full-time and part-time employees, including administrative staff, support Staff, and faculty, who work at least 20 hours or more per week and who have been in benefit-eligible positions at Delta State University. Adjunct, temporary, intermittent, time-limited, graduate assistants, and student worker service does not qualify as regular service. The Office of Human Resources will determine those who will recognition for their years of service by April 15 each year.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the Years of Service policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. McAdams. The motion was approved.

Employment Eligibility (I-9) policy (revised – first reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Employment Eligibility (I-9) policy for a first reading. The policy was revised to bring it up to date with current practices. Mr. Rutledge will bring the policy for a final reading on April 10, and he asked for suggestions to be sent to him prior to its return.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the revised Employment Eligibility (I-9) policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Moore. The motion was approved.

Employment of Retirees policy (revised – first reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Employment of Retirees policy for a first reading. The policy was revised to bring it up to date with current practices and to be compliant with the Public Employees' Retirement System. Mr. Rutledge will bring the policy for a final reading on April 10, and he asked for suggestions to be sent to him prior to its return.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the revised Employment of Retirees policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Roberts. The motion was approved.

Wage and Salary Administration – Non-Faculty policy (revised – first reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Wage and Salary Administration – Non-Faculty policy for a first reading. The policy was revised to bring it up to date with current practices and to be compliant with state and federal laws. Mr. Rutledge will bring the policy for a final reading on April 10, and he asked for suggestions to be sent to him prior to its return.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the revised Wage and Salary Administration – Non-Faculty policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Riddle. The motion was approved.

Hiring Requests Cabinet Members

In response to the Cabinet's decision that all requests to search for and fill vacant positions will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Cabinet, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet a position for consideration and ratification. The position presented does not impact the salary savings identified previously to address the budget shortfall.

Academic Affairs Request

Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire an Administrative Secretary for the Local Government Leadership Institute.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the searching and hiring of an Administrative Secretary and seconded by Dr. Moore. The motion was approved.

Ratification of Requests

Motion: Moved by Dr. Roberts to ratify and affirm the following actions taken by the Executive Committee, on behalf of the Cabinet, since Cabinet last met on March 4, 2019 and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

- March 11, 2019 – Request from Dr. Bennett for approval to search for and hire a Financial Aid Counselor in the Office of Student Financial Assistance.
- March 19, 2019 – Request from Dr. Bennett for approval to search for and hire a Recruiter in the Office of Admissions.
- March 19, 2019 – Request from Mr. Munroe for approval to search for and hire a Photographer/Videographer in the Office of Communications and Marketing.

Discussion

Admissions Update.....Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett shared with Cabinet members an update on the Office of Admissions. She gave Cabinet members a handout on updated office operations, the CRM system, and expectations of office staff. The university has 755 admitted freshmen and 197 admitted transfer students at this time compared to 395 admitted freshmen and 46 admitted transfers this time last year. **see handout*

New Student Orientation.....Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett announced June 3, June 24, and July 8 are the new orientation dates. Mr. Michael Lipford is working with faculty members to pre-register students prior to arriving on campus for orientation.

OkraFest.....Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett announced the Student Government Association will host the OkraFest concert featuring Rich Homie Quan and Corey Smith on April 13 at Statesman Park. Current Delta State students can attend the concert for free. Future students that pay their housing fee by April 5 will get a discount and will be a VIP for OkraFest.

Budget Update Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge gave Cabinet members an update on the budget planning process. Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III are completed. At the conclusion of Conference Week, Mr. Rutledge will be able to bring details for the next fiscal year to Cabinet. Delta State’s budget has to decrease by \$1.2 million for the upcoming fiscal year; the tuition increase and any additional appropriations will help in covering the decrease.

Holiday Schedule for 2019-20 Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge presented to Cabinet Members the 2019-20 Holiday Schedule produced by Human Resources. The proposed holiday schedule is compliant with IHL’s policy of 15 approved 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.

Legislative Update Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts and Mr. Munroe gave Cabinet members a legislative update from Conference Week. Governor Phil Bryant signed HB977 into law which authorizes team physicians for out-of-state athletic teams to provide medical treatment and evaluation for players and staff members of the team when participating in sporting events in Mississippi without having to be licensed in Mississippi. During the week, SB2867 is under review to provide that the Board of Trustees and the Department of Finance and Administration may enter into an MOU annually to determine projects to be administered by the eight institutions in the IHL system. Both chambers agreed upon issuing \$85 million of State General Obligation Bonds to the IHL system for capital improvements. Delta State’s portion would be \$7,320,000 for ADA and various R&R projects. Delta State will receive level appropriations from the State with additional funds for PERS and insurance increases. Also, the IHL system will receive approximately \$5 million for salary increases. A possible use of the funds would be certain positions that may not have receive an increase in several years. Currently, Delta State is set to receive \$680,000 to \$820,000 for R&R funds. Delta State’s line items (Delta Center for Culture and Learning, Commercial Aviation, Delta Music Institute, and E-Learning Program) are intact at last year’s levels.

Additional information

- Dr. Roberts announced the heir apparent for each constituency group would begin shadowing the current representative at the next Cabinet meeting.
- Dr. Riddle announce Pre-Registration Week begins Monday, April 1.
- Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members Delta State was recognized as one of the top ten entities that gave to the United Way of Cleveland-Bolivar County during their annual banquet on February 21.
- Mr. Rutledge announce Mr. Kelvin Davis was selected as one of Mississippi’s Top 50 under 40. He will be recognized on April 25. Delta State is buying a table for the event to honor him.

- April 3, FedEx Day – conduct classes for Aviation majors beginning at 11:30 will be the luncheon
- Mr. Munroe announced the new Annual Fund Director will begin next week.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Trace Adkins concert, April 4, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Presidential Forums, April 16 (Staff-10:00am, Students-12:15pm, Faculty-3:00pm)
- Easter Holiday, April 19
- 38 Special performance, April 25, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Retirement and Service Awards Ceremony, April 26, 2:00 p.m., Union
- Spring Exams, April 29-May 2
- Spring Commencement, May 3, 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., BPAC

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, April 1 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Staff Leadership Program (Dr. Riddle)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:39 p.m.