

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: March 4, 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:** None

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on March 4, 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 February 26, 2024.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- Dr. Ennis gave an overview of the activities and events from last week. Dr. Ennis participated in an interview with Mr. Jim Gregory for Magic 107.5 radio show. As part of his internal relations, Dr. Ennis hosted Ms. Sydney Pittman, January Employee of the Month, for lunch. Dr. Ennis hosted the Town Hall Meeting for February. Coleman Lew Canny Bowen was on campus to visit with the search committees for the six searches and other campus constituency groups. The F. E. Woodall Conference was held on March 1, and it was well attended.
- Dr. Craft and Mr. Wakefield gave an update on Facilities Management projects. Delta State representatives have held numerous meetings with the Bureau of Buildings and the insurance company to discuss the damage to the roofs on campus. The University has two quotes on the work to be completed, and Dr. Craft is hopeful to have closure soon to begin repairs. A small repair was made to the roof of Jobe Hall to fix the leak over the stage in the Auditorium. The air conditioning unit for the Planetarium quit working. The boiler punch list for the Nowell Union is complete.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The men's and women's basketball teams advance to the GSC tournament. The first round of games is Tuesday with the women's team at Union University and the men's team at University of West Alabama. The Derrall Foreman Golf Invitational Tournament began today at Cleveland Country Club and continues through tomorrow. The softball team hosts Henderson State University on Tuesday. The tennis teams host Ouachita Baptist University on Saturday. Also, Athletics sponsored a blood drive to be on campus on Tuesday from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. all students, faculty, and staff.
- Ms. Rooks gave an update on student activities. The application to be a job site for the Big Green Event is open. SGA held an interest meeting for students interested in running for the SGA Executive Cabinet.

Ms. Rooks will host a meeting for students attending the Student Legislative Day at the Capitol to discuss the logistics of the event.

- Dr. Ennis shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. Dr. and Mrs. Ennis will host a reception at their home tonight for the Inauguration Steering Committee and other volunteers. Dr. Ennis, Dr. Roberts, and Dr. Craft are meeting on Tuesday to discuss a project for the residence halls utilizing public and private partnership. The Cleveland-Bolivar County Board of Directors meet on Tuesday for their monthly meeting. Dr. Ennis will speak to potential donors at an event in Greenville on Thursday evening hosted by Delta State alumnus Mr. Steve Azar. Foreigner will perform to a sold-out crowd at the BPAC on Thursday night. The Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition Opening Reception is Thursday at 5:00 p.m. Spring Break for faculty and students in next week, March 11-15.

**CABINET TOPIC**

None

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

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

Mr. Wakefield proposed to Cabinet members the four-day work week schedule for Summer 2024. The proposal comprises a work week beginning on Monday and concluding on Thursday with employees arriving at 7:00 a.m. and leaving at 5:30 p.m. Employees will have a 30-minute lunch break. The summer work schedule will start on Monday, May 13 and end on Thursday, August 8. Cabinet members discussed the costs and benefits of the four-day work week during the summer months. Several Cabinet members expressed a potential harm to the University in recruitment with not having offices opened on Fridays. Other Cabinet members discussed the popularity of the four-day work week among staff members and its boost to staff morale. Dr. Ennis requested further discussion and information on the four-day work week. A vote will occur at the March 18, 2024 Cabinet meeting.

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

Mr. Wakefield shared tuition and fees information from last fiscal year with Cabinet members to prepare them for an upcoming discussion on deciding the tuition rate for FY25. The tuition rate did not increase for FY24, and enrollment did not increase due to the consistent tuition rate. To assist with the tuition rate discussion, Dr. Lovin will provide the University's capacity to pay information from the Office of Student Financial Aid. Ms. Rooks shared with Cabinet members students object more to fees than the cost of tuition. Dr. Ennis announced all fees for FY25 are suspended, and all fees have to be brought forth during the budget process for approval by Cabinet. Mr. Wakefield informed Cabinet members a decision on the tuition rate needs to occur by April 1. No action was taken on FY25 tuition and fees.

**Ad Hoc Committee on Budget Sustainability recommendations ..... Dr. Ennis**

Dr. Ennis shared with Cabinet members a recommendation made by the Ad Hoc Committee on Budget Sustainability. Cabinet members discussed and approved the recommendation.

The committee recommends that course programming be planned using data. Specifically, program coordinators should develop a course rotation document that lists all courses in their program, when that

course is normally offered, and any special considerations for each course (e.g., service commitments, requirements for other programs or minors). Further, program coordinators should work with OIT to develop an ARGOS Student-Course Matrix Report, which shows all students in the program and which courses they have taken, allowing coordinators to justify offerings by estimating the number of majors needing the course.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Jurgenson to consider the recommendation by the Ad Hoc Committee on Budget Sustainability and seconded by Dr Lovin.

Dr. Griffin requested the recommendation be transferred to Academic Council. The recommendation will require a process created and managed. Once action has been taken and an update is available, it will return to Cabinet.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Griffin to transfer the recommendation made by the Ad Hoc Committee on Budget Sustainability to Academic Council for review and seconded by Mr. Gladden. The motion was approved.

**Positions for Justification..... Dr. Ennis**

Dr. Ennis brought forth the open-position justifications list. Several positions on the open-positions justifications list have been approved previously and/or filled. Dr. Ennis stated any position with a justification form can be brought forth for hiring approval. Final approvals will be made by Dr. Ennis. No action was taken.

**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 three positions. All positions will be in the Student Success Center and will be grant funded. The positions are Destination Graduation Advisor, Destination Graduation Activities Coordinator, and Destination Graduation Counselor.

**Finance and Administration requests**

Mr. Wakefield requested to hire a custodian, two housekeepers, and three groundskeepers for Facilities Management; a User Services Manager and Network Technician for OIT; and, a Senior Coordinator for Student Business Services. Also, Mr. Wakefield wants to utilize the salaries from two open Facilities Management positions to increase several positions to a higher hourly wage.

**Hiring Requests Approval..... Dr. Roberts**

Dr. Roberts shared with Cabinet members an overview of hiring request approvals made by Dr. Ennis. In Academic Affairs the following positions were approved for a search: an Administrative Specialist in the Office of Academic Affairs; Gear UP Program Coordinator; Assistant/Associate Professor of Teacher Education; Assistant Professor of Teacher Education; Assistant/Associate Professor of Counselor Education and Psychology; Assistant/Associate Professor and Coordinator/Assessment Director of Counselor Education; Chair of the Division of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation; Assistant Professor of Psychology; Acquisitions/Technology Services Coordinator in the Roberts-LaForge Library; Instructor in

Nursing (two); Learning Specialist in Student Success Center; and, Instructional Designer for the Center of Teaching and Learning.

**Cabinet Art Award ..... Dr. Roberts**

The Art Department has begun collecting funds for their annual art awards for students. The Cabinet award is a \$500 cash award that goes to the student with the second-best piece in the student art show. The artwork selected for the Cabinet Award will be displayed in the President’s Office for one year, and then each piece will become a part of the university’s permanent collection. Dr. Roberts asked Cabinet members to consider donating for the Cabinet award. Ms. Claire Cole will send to Cabinet Members an email with the link for donations.

**Academic Productivity Review..... Dr. Griffin and Dr. Craft**

Dr. Griffin and Dr. Craft shared with Cabinet members the process created to review academic programs each year. The task force assembled by Dr. Griffin created the following metrics for the program review: enrollment for the fall prior to review; a ten-year change in enrollment; a three-year change in enrollment; degrees awarded in three years; weighted credit hour production; revenue/expenses for the program; and, student-to-faculty ratio. Programs are able to provide feedback on the form detailing: the program’s function in supporting the mission of the University; the current assessment of market supply and demand, history of job placement for graduates, and impact on workforce development for the academic program; and relevant comments and other information. If any factual errors are presented in the data, the programs are able to detail those, as well. All 61 programs at the University will fill out the form and submit it for review. The deadline for forms will be the first week in April.

**SACSCOC Update..... Dr. Griffin**

Dr. Griffin shared with Cabinet members. The focus report and other ancillary items were submitted last week. The University’s next steps are preparing for the site visit on April 15-18 and the roll out of the Quality Enhancement Plan. Dr. Griffin announced Dr. Josie Welsh has accepted a position at another university.

**Foundation Reorganization..... Mr. Gladden**

Mr. Gladden shared with Cabinet members the reason for the reorganization was to look for alternative ways to source the services previously provided the Office of Communications and Marketing. All services Communications and Marketing provided for campaigns of Alumni Affairs and the Foundation will be completed in-house. To assist with the added needs, the Assistant Director of Alumni Affairs will become the Alumni and Foundation Communications and Marketing Specialist reporting to the Vice President for University Advancement. Also, the Director of Foundation Relations will become the Alumni and Foundation Events Coordinator reporting to the Director of Alumni Affairs. As a result of the reorganization, the Foundation salaries will increase by \$3,000 per year and, the Alumni Affairs salaries will decrease by \$3,000 every year. The benefits of the reorganization will be a more effective utilization of existing staff to grow revenue and bring in house critical support function for the Alumni and Foundation.

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

Ms. Tanksley provided an update on recruitment efforts. For Fall 2024, the admitted students report is: 950 first-time, freshmen; 109 transfer students; and, 28 graduate students. Also, 137 students have shared their commitment to attend Delta State. Ms. Tanksley shared upcoming recruitment events: Mini Okra Talks on March 9, March 21, and April 4; Admit Social on April 5; and, the Presidential Tour on April 8

through 11. Takin' Care of Business Days begin in April and conclude in July. Dr. Ennis requested to begin Enrollment Group meetings again beginning this month.

**Budget Update** ..... **Mr. Wakefield**  
Mr. Wakefield shared with Cabinet members the cutoff for spending was March 1. Any necessary spending must be approved by the respective vice president. The zero-based budget forms for each area is due on March 15.

**Legislative Update**..... **Dr. Roberts**  
Dr. Roberts provided an update on the legislative session. At this time, 54 bills could affect IHL. The bill recommending the closure of three IHL institutions has been referred for further study, and the bill requesting Delta State open a charter school for K-12 students was referred for further study. The further study on the charter school bill will now include Mississippi Valley State University.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Foreigner, March 5, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition Opening, March 7, 5:00 p.m. Wright Art Center Gallery
- Spring Break, March 11-15
- Student Lunch 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 (Good Friday) Holiday, March 29

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, March 18, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 4:24 p.m.