

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT’S CABINET
Minutes

Meeting date: May 1, 2023

Members in attendance: Dr. E. E. Caston, Dr. Joshua Armstrong, Dr. Caroline Fletcher, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Ms. Lucia Chacon Habis, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Mr. Rick Munroe, Dr. Andy Novobilski, and Dr. Michelle Roberts (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: Mr. Larry Wakefield

Guests: Dr. Edwin Craft, Associate Vice President for Finance and Administration
Dr. Christopher Jurgenson, President-Elect, Faculty Senate
Dr. Ellen Green, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Ms. Holly Ray, Chair-Elect, Administrative Staff Council
Ms. Haley Rooks, President-Elect, Student Government Association

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President’s Cabinet was held in the President’s Conference Room on May 1, 2023. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Caston presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Lovin and seconded by Dr. Novobilski, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on April 17, 2023.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- Dr. Caston recognized outgoing and incoming Cabinet Members: Academic Council representative, Dr. Leslie Griffin (outgoing) and Dr. Ellen Green (incoming); Faculty Senate President, Dr. Josh Armstrong (outgoing) and Dr. Christopher Jurgenson (incoming); Staff Council Chair, Dr. Caroline Fletcher (outgoing) and Ms. Holly Ray (incoming); and, SGA President, Ms. Lucia Chacon Habis (outgoing) and Ms. Haley Rooks (incoming). Dr. Caston expressed his gratitude to the outgoing members for the service they provided, and he welcomed the incoming members.

CABINET TOPIC

None

BUSINESS

Action

Faculty Tenure policy (revised – final reading).....Dr. Novobilski
Dr. Novobilski requested to delay the final reading of the Faculty Tenure policy until the next Cabinet meeting.

Course FeesDr. Novobilski

Upon the approval of Academic Council, Dr. Novobilski brought to Cabinet the Course and Optional Fee Requests for the 2023-2024 academic year. Departments requesting changes in their course fees are: Art Department; Division of Family and Consumer Sciences; Division of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation; Division of Teacher Education, Leadership, and Research; and the School of Nursing.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Novobilski to approve the Course Fees for 2023-24 and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved with one abstention.

Degree Completion Compensation – Non-faculty (revised – first reading)..... Mr. Wakefield

In the absence of Mr. Wakefield, Dr. Edwin Craft brought the Degree Completion Compensation – Non-faculty policy for first-reading. Several edits were made to the policy including: the addition of Education Specialist completion compensation; requirement of employees being in good standing with the university; part-time, benefit eligible employees will receive increases on a pro rata basis; and Employment Action Forms must be submitted by May 10. Dr. Craft discussed the compensation for Educational Specialist, and Cabinet members stated the award amount should be more than a Master’s Degree but less than a Doctoral Degree. Cabinet members discussed the possibility of adding statements about not providing compensation if a degree doesn’t enhance their position; instilling a cap on the amount of degree completion awards allowed; and, the university and/or department has the discretion to grant a compensation award. Also, Cabinet members discussed having two dates by which employees can submit their Employment Action Form for compensation. Given the number of changes and the additional information needed, Dr. Craft will work with Ms. Lisa Giger and Mr. Wakefield on the revamping the policy. Mr. Wakefield will bring the policy back for a first reading at a future Cabinet meeting.

Building Energy and Maintenance Conservation for Summer 2023 Mr. Wakefield

In order to reduce energy consumption, place less load on the electrical grid, reduce the carbon footprint, and decrease costs for the university, the university determined that several buildings will be temporarily placed in an energy and maintenance conservation state. Temperatures in these spaces will have the building temperature set point increased to 80 degrees. Janitorial staff will periodically clean the spaces, but will not clean daily. Garbage service will also not be performed to these buildings daily. If the space is used, garbage should be taken out by the occupants. Facilities management and OIT will work with offices that require assistance in moving for the summer. Residence Halls closed for Summer 2023 are Lawler-Harkins Hall, Fugler-Hammett Hall, Cain-Tatum Hall, Blansett Hall, and Brumby-Castle Hall. Foundation Hall will be open for summer school students and camps. Administrative and academic buildings fully closed for Summer 2023 are Jobe Hall, Broom Hall, and O. W. Reily Health center. Partial closures of administrative and academic buildings for sensitive equipment storage are Zeigel Hall, Gibson-Gunn Hall, Robert E. Smith School of Nursing, and Caylor-White-Walters Hall. The second and third floors of Ewing Hall and Nowell Union will be closed for Summer 2023.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Craft to approve the building energy and maintenance conservation proposal and seconded by Dr. Novobilski.

After further discussion about increased temperatures in the Nowell Union and O. W. Reily Health Center, and the numbers of employees that work in those buildings, Dr. Lovin requested both buildings be removed from the building energy and maintenance conservation proposal.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to remove Nowell Union and O. W. Reily Health Center from the building energy and maintenance conservation proposal and seconded by Mr. Munroe. The motion was approved.

Wayne Blansett Staff Development DayDr. Fletcher

Dr. Fletcher announced the proposed date for the Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day is Thursday, May 25. The Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday with registration, service project drop-offs, doughnuts and beverages, a photo booth, and photo scavenger hunt. At 10:00 a.m., door prizes will be given; service awards given to staff members who have achieved their five, ten, or fifteen years of service to the university; and, a session with leadership development trainer, Mr. Daniel Vassel. Following lunch by Mississippi Grounds, staff members can participate in the annual softball game and other outdoor activities, as well as in a set of new activities including yoga, painting with Mr. Korkut Akacik, ceramics with Mr. Ky Johnston, and tennis with Mr. Kel Lange. At 3:00 p.m., staff are invited to watch *Top Gun: Maverick* in Jobe Hall Auditorium. Dr. Fletcher requested approval to close all offices (if approved by the supervisor) so that staff members can attend. The Administrative Staff Council will ensure all staff members know their options are to: 1) participate in Staff Development Day, or 2) remain in the office. All offices will open at 7:00 a.m., as normal.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Fletcher to approve the date of Thursday, May 25 for the Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day and to allow offices to close (with supervisor approval) in order for all staff to have the opportunity to participate in the events and seconded by Mr. Munroe. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Budget Update Mr. Wakefield

In the absence of Mr. Wakefield, Dr. Edwin Craft provided an update on the university budget. Accounting staff are finalizing the budget-to-actual reports for April and the cash projections for the remainder of the fiscal year to provide to the Executive Committee for review. The university is on schedule to have a balanced budget by June 30. Dr. Craft shared with Cabinet members the university still needs to find cost savings to balance the budget for FY2024.

Recruitment Update/Overview..... Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin provided a recruitment update to Cabinet members. Currently, 407 students have signed up for Takin Care of Business Days. Office of Admissions staff are steadily registering students. Dr. Lovin shared his appreciation to all deans for assisting in registering students during Takin’ Care of Business Days the last few weeks in April. Dr. Novobilski shared graduate enrollment for Summer I has increased from last year’s enrollment, and graduate enrollment for Fall 2023 is above last year’s enrollment at this time.

Institutional Effectiveness and PlanningDr. Novobilski

Dr. Novobilski shared with Cabinet members the results from the Campus Forum surveys. Faculty and staff provided feedback on focus statements with which they agreed and on a new mission statement. The next steps will be Dr. Josie Welsh reviewing the feedback on the old mission statement and compiling the feedback into a new, revised mission statement for Cabinet members to review. If Cabinet members have any additional feedback on the mission statement, please email Dr. Welsh.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Final Exams, May 1-4
- SGA International Student End of Year Celebration, May 3, 5:30 p.m., President’s Home
- RESSON Recognition Ceremony, May 4, 1:00 p.m., School of Nursing, Room 141
- Spring 2023 Commencement Ceremony, May 5, 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Walter Sillers Coliseum

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, May 15, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:46 p.m.