

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: November 18, 2019

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Ms. Tricia Killebrew, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Charles McAdams, Dr. Beverly Moon, Mr. Rick Munroe, Mr. Cetin Oguz, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Mr. Jamie Rutledge, and Ms. Elizabeth Swindle (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: Ms. Chrisa Mansell, Assistant Director, Institutional Research and Planning
Dr. Jon Westfall, Assistant Professor, Counselor Education and Psychology

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on November 18, 2019. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Ms. Swindle and seconded by Mr. Rutledge, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on November 11, 2019.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from the past week. President LaForge and his guests attended a wonderful BPAC performance of the Tedeschi Trucks Band, and President LaForge hosted his fifth Faculty and Staff Luncheon for the semester. The Colloquia Distinguished Speaker Lecture Series featuring Governor Haley Barbour and Mr. Jere Nash went very well, and President LaForge thanked Cabinet members for promoting the event and building a crowd. President LaForge met with retired dentist Dr. Hugh Smith last week to discuss campus life. Dr. McAdams attended the College of Business and Aviation Fall Scholarship Ceremony last week, and he stated it was a nice ceremony. The Cleveland Music Foundation Board met last week. President LaForge had interviews with the Bolivar Commercial and Delta TV News last week to discuss Delta State's finances, and he shared Delta State is on track to overcome any deficits. At the end of the week, President LaForge visited the Art Department and Delta State's Congressional Fellow, Mr. Peter Meharg, and he spoke at the National Society of Leadership and Success Summit.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The Walter Sillers roofing project is on schedule, and it was given additional days due to rain delays. The HVAC system was installed, and the temporary sound system for this season will be ordered by the Bureau of Buildings today. The contractors for Fielding Wright Art Gallery/Holcombe-Norwood Hall began repairs on the water damage. The roofing project on the Facilities Management Building will begin December 3. Mr. Rutledge was informed the bond request made by IHL in the upcoming legislative session will be for four years, and Delta State is set to receive \$26 million in that time. Delta State's priorities during those four years include campus repairs, ADA compliance, the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing addition,

Walter Sillers renovation, and a campus wide electrical upgrade. The feasibility study contract has been signed by all parties. The President's home is ahead of schedule, and sheet rock will go up starting in December. The Young-Mauldin Cafeteria won the Mississippi Architecture Association Design Award for Renovation and Restoration.

- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The football team finished their season on Saturday with a loss to Mississippi College. The men and women's basketball teams went 2-0 over the weekend. The men's team competes tonight against Mississippi University for Women, and both teams play Saturday at University of Montevallo. The women's soccer team advanced to the first round of the GSC Tournament, but they succumbed to Mississippi College. The swimming and diving teams host the Delta Dive Invitational this weekend. The Coaches Club Luncheon is tomorrow at noon at the Cleveland Country Club.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet Members some of the meetings and events planned for the week. President LaForge will communicate with the Executive Director and the President of the Board of the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce this week to give them an update on the feasibility study for the Delta State golf course. The IHL Board of Trustees meets Thursday at Mississippi Valley State University. Following the Board of Trustees meeting, Delta State's Alumni Advocacy group will meet with IHL staff member, Ms. Kim Gallaspy, to discuss their role for the upcoming legislative session. On Friday, President LaForge and Ms. Heather Miller will attend the Robert M. Hearin Support Foundation's Beneficiaries meeting.

CABINET TOPIC

Enrollment and Retention ReportDr. McAdams

Dr. McAdams shared with Cabinet members the official press release on enrollment figures for the IHL system was released last Friday, and he brought Ms. Chrisa Mansell to Cabinet to provide an update on enrollment and retention. Ms. Mansell shared the total enrollment for Fall 2019 is 3,761; the final headcount was taken on November 1, and it is an increase of 1.2% from November 1, 2018. Ms. Mansell indicated the credit hours attempted for Fall 2019 are less than Fall 2018 by 1.9%. The largest increase from Fall 2018 to Fall 2019 was a 25.5% increase in first-time graduate enrollment, and the number of Dual Credit students had an increase of 70. The five-year trend data for Delta State's enrollment shows a slight decline from Fall 2017 to Fall 2018 first-time, full-time freshmen, and Ms. Mansell shared the decline is due to the change in capture dates. The first-time, full-time freshmen cohort for 2018 returned 191 students in Fall 2019 or a 67.5% return. This return is a 0.5% increase from the Fall 2017 cohort. The first-time, full-time transfer cohort for Fall 2018 returned 290 students in Fall 2019 or a 75.9% return. This return is a 6.5% increase from the Fall 2017 cohort. President LaForge asked Ms. Mansell to share her thoughts on the trends to see if anything stood out to her, and she wanted to make sure all Cabinet members are aware our increase in enrollment is largely due to Dual Enrollment students. From the suggestion of Dr. Moon, Ms. Mansell is going to provide the clearing house data on students who transfer out of Delta State.

BUSINESS

Action

Vapor and Tobacco Free Environment policy (revised – final reading)Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett brought the revised Vapor and Tobacco Free Environment policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Director of Development, Dr. Nerma Moore, secured a grant from Mississippi Blue Cross Blue Shield to help with the Delta State's initiative of a vapor and tobacco free campus. Dr. Bennett made the required changes to the policy suggested by Cabinet members, and she made several changes to the policy required

by Mississippi Blue Cross Blue Shield. Cabinet members suggested making editorial changes to policy to ensure it matches Delta State’s policy template including changes to the policy statement and removing the grace period statement from the body of the policy.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve the revised Vapor and Tobacco Free Environment policy and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was postponed until the next Cabinet meeting.

Tests and Examinations policy (revised – first reading)Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the revised Tests and Examinations policy for a first reading. Dr. McAdams shared the policy was changed to reflect current practice. The final examination schedule for the academic year is published on the Registrar’s Office webpage. It is possible that some students may have two classes scheduled for exams at the same time. In such instances, students should provide documentation (the exam schedule and the student’s class schedule) two weeks prior to final exam week to both class instructors who will make alternate arrangements for the student’s examinations. If a student has more than two final examinations in one day, students may follow the same procedure as examinations at the same time. Cabinet members suggested editorial changes to the documents by eliminating the additional Related Documents section.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Tests and Examinations policy and seconded by Ms. Swindle. The motion was approved.

Search and 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, Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet positions for consideration. The positions presented do not impact the salary savings identified previously to address the budget shortfall for this fiscal year. Dr. McAdams reported to Cabinet he approved six non-Fund 10 staff members to be hired including two substitute teachers for the Child Development Center and four student employees for the GIT Center.

Finance and Administration Staff Requests

Mr. Rutledge presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire an Accounts Payable and Procurement Coordinator and a Grants Accountant. Both positions are currently filled and will be vacated in December.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the searching and hiring of an Accounts Payable and Procurement Coordinator and a Grants Accountant and seconded by Dr. McAdams. The motion was approved.

Student Affairs Staff Requests

Dr. Bennett presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire a Director of Counseling and Health Services. The current director plans to retire in December.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve the searching and hiring of a Director of Counseling and Health Services and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Campus Forums survey Ms. Killebrew and Mr. Oguz

Following the Campus Forums held on October 31, 2019, the Chair of the Administrative Staff Council and the Faculty Senate President created an anonymous survey for faculty and staff to share their perceptions of the forums. Ms. Killebrew and Mr. Oguz acquired the help of Dr. Jon Westfall to compile the answers of the survey and help present the findings to Cabinet members. The survey was completed 177 times, and 72.8% of respondents attended one of the forums. The majority of respondents not attending a forum were unable to attend due to a prior commitment. Faculty and staff were able to give their perception on the Executive Committee with regards to overall leadership and transparency, and they were able to share if their confidence in the Executive Committee increased or decreased after the forum. Respondents gave recommendations on future forums and communications including more regular communication be provided to the campus community including monthly reports between forums and more frequent visits to Administrative Staff Council and Faculty Senate by the Executive Committee.

Budget Update Mr. Rutledge

The Executive Committee will review monthly and quarterly three specific areas to ensure Delta State’s cash increases by the required \$1.5 million: 1) Fund 10, 2) auxiliary funds, and 3) designated funds. Delta State received 33% of its total revenue for the year in the first quarter, and spent 26% of its expenditures for the year in the first quarter. The expenditures are elevated in the first quarter due to contractual services which includes scholarships. At the end of the first quarter, Delta State has 34 days of cash. Mr. Rutledge will bring the quarterly report he submits to IHL to the next Cabinet meeting. Mr. Rutledge is finalizing the written portion of the Cabinet approved plan to revitalize Delta State’s budget in order to send it to IHL; this will be a monthly breakdown of the plan. President LaForge shared he had an exit interview with auditors from Clifton Larsen Allen on Delta State’s FY19 audit. The auditors stated all information was received timely and it was accurate; the overall audit went very well.

Additional information

- President LaForge shared a memorial service will take place Tuesday evening at 6:00 p.m. in the Lena Roberts Sillers Chapel to honor the lives of Delta State students, Mr. Drew Rexrode and Ms. Rihanna Billings.
- President LaForge announced Cabinet will not meet the week of November 25. The next Cabinet meeting will be Monday, December 2.
- Mr. Rutledge announced the Bureau of Buildings released the RFP for the addition to the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing, and fifteen firms responded. Delta State is working with the Bureau of Buildings to narrow down the selection for architects to three firms. Delta State is also working with the Bureau of Buildings on starting our bond fund projects.
- Ms. Swindle announced SGA is creating an online question/complaint box for students. She and her cabinet are working with our student government associations across the state to see how it was implemented at other schools.
- Ms. Killebrew announced 73% of current students pre-registered for Spring 2019.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Thanksgiving Holidays for Faculty and Students, November 25-29
- Thanksgiving Holidays for Staff, November 28-29
- Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, December 3, 3:00 p.m., Leroy E. Morganti Atrium

- Fall Exams, December 9-12
- Fall Commencement, December 13, 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., BPAC
- Christmas Holidays, December 23 – January 1

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, November 25 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Free Speech on campus (Drs. Bennett and McAdams)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.