

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: September 18, 2023**

**Members in attendance:** Dr. Dan Ennis, Dr. Ellen Green, Dr. Christopher Jurgenson, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Ms. Holly Ray, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Haley Rooks, and Mr. Larry Wakefield (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

**Members not in attendance:** Mr. Rick Munroe and Ms. Holly Ray

**Guests:** Dr. Edwin Craft, Associate Vice President for Finance and Administration  
Mr. David Gladden, Chief Financial Officer, University Advancement  
Ms. Corley Mullins, Director, Alumni Affairs

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on September 18, 2023. 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 September 5, 2023.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- Dr. Ennis welcomed Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Leslie Griffin to her first Cabinet meeting. Dr. Ennis congratulated Mr. Rick Munroe on being named Vice President for University Advancement at Valdosta State University. Dr. Ennis announced Mr. David Gladden will serve as Interim Vice President of University Advancement. Dr. Edwin Craft was appointed by Dr. Ennis as the chair of the search committee for the Vice President for University Advancement and External Relations.
- Dr. Ennis gave an overview of the activities and events from last week. Dr. Ennis had lunch with potential donors from Double Quick. The BPAC hosted the Commodores for the first performance of the season. Dr. Ennis was invited to welcome attendees to the Inherited Legacies program. Dr. Ennis met with Mr. Tommy Goodwin of the South Delta Planning and Development District. Dr. Ennis had lunch with two Delta State Foundation Board members, Mr. Patrick Davis and Mr. Peter Woods. To celebrate her selection of August Employee of the Month, Dr. Ennis treated Ms. Trebia Daniels to lunch, along with Dr. Leslie Griffin and Ms. Kelsey Overstreet. Citizens of Coahoma County, in conjunction with Coahoma Community College, hosted a welcome event for Dr. Ennis in Clarksdale. Dr. Ennis attended the books signing event at Story Books in downtown Cleveland for Ms. Nyani Nkrumah, and he hosted a reception in her honor at the President's home. Dr. Ennis participated in the Constitution Day lecture. Dr. Ennis attended the monthly meeting of the Faculty Senate. A Vision Event for the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing was hosted by Dr. Sarah Broom in Jackson. Delta State celebrated its 98<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a program in the Lena Roberts Sillers Chapel, and the Delta State Foundation held a day of giving. The Office of Admissions held a Statesmen Showcase for potential

students. 121 students and their families attended. Dr. Lovin stated it was a good day, and staff took notes on ways to enhance the event for next year.

- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The Gulf South Conference is undergoing changes to membership. Trevecca Nazarene University, a DII school, will become a full member of the conference in the 2024-25 academic year. Trevecca Nazarene University doesn't have a football team, but their basketball and baseball programs are strong. At the end of this academic year, Shorter University is leaving the conference, and North Greenville University is leaving the conference at the end of the 2024-25 academic year. The golf team is competing today and tomorrow at Northeastern State University in Oklahoma. The men's and women's soccer teams hosted Spring Hill College and University of West Florida over the weekend, and they travel to Union University on Friday. The swimming and diving teams host Millsaps College on Friday. The men's and women's tennis teams compete in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association tournament this weekend in Florida. The cross country team competed at University of Montevallo over the weekend, and their next meet is September 30 against Blue Mountain College. The football defeated Mississippi Valley State University on Saturday, and they host Shorter University this Saturday.
- Mr. Wakefield gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The MDOT sidewalk project is progressing; however, it has led to water leaks due to broken pipes. All water leaks should be fixed at this time.
- Ms. Rooks gave an update on student activities. The freshmen student council, First Freshmen, meets for the first time this evening. Also, the interest meeting for the Miss Delta State University pageant will take place tonight.
- Dr. Ennis shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. Dr. Ennis travels to Biloxi on Wednesday for the IHL Board Retreat and he will provide a university update to the Board on Thursday. Air Supply performs at the BPAC on Thursday evening. The kickoff event for the Centennial Campaign is Friday evening at 6:00 p.m. at the President's home.
- Ms. Mullins shared with Cabinet members the schedule for Pig Pickin' weekend. The swimming and diving alumni and baseball alumni are having reunions this weekend. The Memphis Barbecue Network sanctioned BBQ competition begins on Friday. Student tailgating begins at 7:00 p.m. on Friday in Statesmen Park, and the park closes at midnight. The Coach Bill Marchant Golf Tournament is Saturday at the Cleveland Country Club beginning at 8:00 a.m. Pig Pickin' Pilates with Balance Fitness begins at 10:00 a.m. in Statesmen Park on Saturday. Tailgating and food vendors begins at 12:00 p.m. in Statesmen Park, and live entertainment begins at 1:00 p.m. The pep rally begins at 3:45 p.m., and the gates to McCool Stadium open at 4:00 p.m. Presentation of the Mississippi Barbecue Network BBQ Competition Awards is at 5:00 p.m., and kickoff of the football game is at 6:00 p.m. BBQ tickets and t-shirts are available for purchase at the Hugh Ellis Walker Alumni-Foundation House or online. Mr. Kinnison requested Ms. Mullins speak with tailgating groups about the volume of music played behind the north endzone during the game.

**CABINET TOPIC**

None

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**Employment Authorization policy (revised – first reading)..... Mr. Wakefield**

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised Employment Authorization policy to Cabinet for a first reading. The

policy was revised to correlate with IHL policy. The levels of authorization for hiring employees was updated within the policy statement, and the definition of employee was revised.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the revised Employment Authorization policy for a first reading and seconded by Mr. Wakefield. The motion was approved.

**Employment Verification and Reference policy (revised – first reading) ..... Mr. Wakefield**

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised Employment Verification and Reference policy to Cabinet for a first reading. This policy was revised to reflect the current practice of the release of present or former university employee information to outside sources.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the revised Employment Verification and Reference policy for a first reading and seconded by Mr. Wakefield. The motion was approved.

**Equal Employment Opportunity policy (revised – first reading) ..... Mr. Wakefield**

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised Equal Employment Opportunity policy to Cabinet for a first reading. This policy was revised to reflect the current practices. The Equal Employment Opportunity policy assists the university in complying with federal and state mandates and university policies in relation to discrimination. Cabinet members suggested Mr. Wakefield change "he or she" on page two under Equal Education Opportunity to "the student." A question was raised on the ability to change the title of the policy to Equal Opportunity policy or is it required by federal guidelines to be called Equal Employment Opportunity?

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the revised Equal Employment Opportunity policy for a first reading and seconded by Mr. Wakefield. The motion was approved.

**Discussion**

**University Leadership Council..... Dr. Ennis**

Dr. Ennis shared with Cabinet members his plan to revise the campus governance structure. The Executive Committee, which served as an advisory group to the President, will be eliminated. The functions of the Executive Committee will be split between the President’s Cabinet and the newly established University Leadership Council. The University Leadership Council will be presided over by a chair, chosen by representatives on the council, who will serve a two-year term. In the absence of the presiding chair, the President or President’s designee will preside. The University Leadership Council will meet with or without the President, and they will draw from the President’s Office for administrative support. This body will meet bimonthly on alternating weeks of the President’s Cabinet; however, additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the chair or at the request of the President. Matters of governance within the University Leadership Council will be determined by the University Leadership Council in deliberation, be in harmony with university policies and practices, as well as IHL governance, and be adopted by a majority vote. Representation on the University Leadership Council will be determined by the President. The University Leadership Council will provide review and endorsement of major documents that operate across organizational lines such as the strategic plan, statement of ethics, mission statement, vision statement, the university’s budget, and other major documents that might be considered of institutional-level significance. The University Leadership Council will review all operations to identify areas to bring in new or increased revenues and reduce or eliminate expenditures. Under the “Policy on Policy Management,” policy proposals, revisions to policies, or policies under the review cycle will be submitted to the University Leadership Council for consideration prior to submission to the President’s Cabinet. The

University Leadership Council does not take the place of Academic Council with regard to academic policies, curricular changes, degree programs, or the like, and the University Leadership Council does not provide an additional level of review for Academic Council. Dr. Ennis and his staff will put the University Leadership Council into policy, and he will present it next week for approval.

**Octoberfest..... Mr. Wakefield**

Mr. Wakefield shared with Cabinet members that Delta State will serve as an in-kind sponsor for the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce's Octoberfest event based on their use of Delta State's tables, chairs, and tents for the event.

**Budget Update..... Mr. Wakefield**

Mr. Wakefield and his staff are working on the FY25 budget, and they have found some issues within some departments. He and his staff are contacting each department to work through any issues.

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

Dr. Lovin did not have an additional update on recruitment from his earlier report regarding the Statesmen Showcase event.

**Institutional Effectiveness and Planning..... Dr. Ennis**

Dr. Ennis informed Cabinet members that the SACSCOC reaffirmation packet was successfully submitted. He extended his gratitude to the Office of the Provost, Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning, and Dr. Craft for their assistance in wrapping up the report and assistance with submission. The focus report provided by the university's reaffirmation team will be released in October or November, and Dr. Ennis is confident the university will have concerns. The university provided a self-assessment within the reaffirmation report on areas that need addressing. One of the university's next steps, prior to the release of the focus report, is consideration of the university's new strategic plan.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Statesmen Baseball Alumni Reunion, September 22-23
- DSU Centennial Campaign Kickoff, September 22, 6:00 p.m., President's Home
- Pig Pickin' Weekend, September 22-23

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, September 25, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m.