

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: August 15, 2016**

**Members in attendance:** President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Mr. Keith Fulcher, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Dr. Chris Jurgenson, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Christie Rocconi, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

**Members not in attendance:** Ms. Allie Rose Parker

**Guests:** Mr. Abulfaz (Abu) Hajizada, Student, Student Success Center  
Mr. Ryan Kwan, Graduate Assistant, Student Success Center  
Ms. Elise Mallette, Coordinator, International Services  
Ms. Anna Mammedova, Student, Student Success Center  
Dr. Christy Riddle, Director, Student Success Center  
Ms. Tymeed Winslow-Martin, Assistant Advisor, International Services

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on August 15, 2016. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Dr. Jurgenson, seconded by Dr. Bennett, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on August 8, 2016.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- Dr. McAdams recognized and thanked Dr. Christy Riddle and her staff for their hard work and dedication in implementing a wonderful camp for the ten faculty members from the Anyang Institute of Technology in China. The Student Success Center plans to offer the summer camp program again next year for both faculty and students. As a result of the first camp, a faculty member from Anyang Institute of Technology wants to continue their education in our Accounting program. Dr. McAdams also recognized their accomplishments and work with International students' admissions. Enrollment for International students has increased since last year. The work put into the admissions process is very tedious due to compliance with federal government regulations. Dr. Riddle said the projected enrollment of international students for Fall 2016 is 69 new students and 70 returning students. Dr. Riddle stated her team has been working for many years to create a host family program for our international students, and it will happen this year. With the help of the Cleveland community, all incoming international students will receive welcome baskets with toiletries and other necessities.
- For the fall semester, President LaForge will host two guests as part of the Colloquia Distinguished Speakers Lecture Series. The first is scheduled on September 20 with Judge Gustavo Gelpi. Judge Gelpi will speak on police reform in the United States. The second is November 9 with Congressman Bennie Thompson. He will give a post mortem of the 2016 national presidential election.

- The NCAA released an article regarding hosting championships and stipulations put on states to host said championships. Certain parts of the country cannot host championships due to negative influences. The state of Mississippi cannot host championships due to the state flag and HB1523, the “Religious Freedom” bill. The NCAA has a strict review process for any school requesting to host a post season tournament.
- President LaForge asked Mr. Fulcher to give an update on the Campaign Feasibility Study presentations. Mr. Fulcher stated the committee has been pleased with the two presentations thus far, and they will review two more presentations this week. The committee is looking for the firm whose presentation most closely matches the vision of the university.
- President LaForge attended the Cleveland Music Foundation Board meeting last week. The number of visitors to GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi in July exceeded projections.
- President LaForge announce and expressed his excitement for the re-opening of the Wiley Planetarium. President LaForge and other administrators viewed the planetarium last week, and were told that it will be open to the public soon. This state-of-the-art facility will be a great recruiting tool for Delta State.
- The Desoto County Alumni Association Chapter held a meeting on Saturday at the BankPlus Training Center in Southaven. Mr. Fulcher stated this event is always greatly attended. Several incoming Delta State students were in attendance, as well. Mr. Fulcher stated the alumni base in Desoto County has tripled in the last twenty years.
- President LaForge gave a welcome to the TFA Fellows program this morning. This program is a Robert M. Hearin Foundation grant-funded program. Through this program, TFA alumni will receive a Graduate Assistantship while serving the community through service projects.
- President LaForge and other Delta State officials participated in a video conference this morning with Ms. Antoinette Malveaux of Casey Family Programs. President LaForge said it was a very good call. They are interested in continuing Delta State’s work with local schools and the community. Their first partnership with Delta State is in support of our Winning the Race Conference by providing financial support to the conference for the next three years.
- President LaForge gave an update on this week’s events: the IHL Board meets on Thursday; the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce is hosting a Welcome Back Reception for faculty and staff at The Warehouse Thursday evening; Move-In Day is Sunday, beginning at 1:00 p.m., and, classes start back on Monday, August 22.

**CABINET TOPIC**

**Coliseum Renovation Plans.....Mr. Mayers**

Mr. Mayers gave Cabinet Members background information on Walter Sillers Coliseum. He stated it was built in 1960 for \$10.98 per square foot for a total of \$515,000. The coliseum is 46,000 square feet and has not been updated in many years. There are several issues with the coliseum, including water damage, the roof, mechanical issues, failing boilers, and no elevator. During the pre-planning phase for renovation of the Coliseum, the structural issues from the gutters were uncovered, which led to having to halt the pre-planning phase in order to fix the issues. Mr. Mayers has met with architects to begin discussing renovation plans. Several models have been suggested, which include additional bathrooms, weight room, and classrooms. Once the planning begins again, a meeting will occur with campus officials in order to make sure the facility is capable of hosting any event that is normally hosted in the coliseum. Mr. Rutledge stated Walter Sillers will be included in the next bond cycle, with hopes of beginning renovation/construction in 2019.

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**New policy: Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking (final reading) .....Dr. Bennett**

Dr. Bennett brought to Cabinet the “Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking policy” for a final reading.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve the “Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking policy” for final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. **The motion was approved.**

**New policy: Missing Student (final reading) .....Dr. Bennett**

Dr. Bennett brought to Cabinet the “Missing Student policy” for a final reading. Cabinet members discussed the process/requirement for contacting parents if the missing student is age 18 or older, in regards to compliance with FERPA, as well as the amount of time needed to report a missing student. Due to questions regarding a student’s age and the amount of time needed to report a missing student, the policy will be held over to a subsequent Cabinet meeting.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Bennett to postpone the approval of the “Missing Student policy” for final reading to a later Cabinet meeting and seconded by Dr. Roberts. **The motion was approved.**

**New policy: Timely Warning (final reading) .....Dr. Bennett**

Dr. Bennett brought to Cabinet the “Timely Warning policy” for a final reading. The process for enrolling in the Okra Alert system has been added to the policy. Students will be added to the system upon enrollment to the university, but faculty and staff members will need to add themselves manually.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve the “Timely Warning policy” for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. **The motion was approved.**

**Naming Proposals .....Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet a Naming Proposal initiated by Ms. Darlene Breaux, Academic Affairs Development Officer. The university’s Naming Advisory Committee approved the proposal submitted by Ms. Breaux for pre-approval for programs, rooms, colleges, etc. to show donors the cost of naming certain items. President LaForge would like Cabinet buy-in and input. This proposal is a great tool for Mrs. Breaux to use when contacting donors for academic support, but it is also a great forward-thinking piece to get ready for the Foundation’s Capital Campaign. Final approval for naming a facility must be given by Delta State’s President and the IHL Board.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the Naming Proposal and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. **The motion was approved.**

**Community Request for Equipment ..... Dr. Roberts**

Dr. Roberts informed Cabinet Members of a request made by Mound Bayou to use Delta State’s stage for their September Fest, occurring September 1-2. Delta State charges for facility and equipment use unless it is an event sponsored by the City of Cleveland or the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce. Since Mound Bayou is a municipality of Cleveland, it falls under the umbrella of the Chamber, and the Chamber endorses their event.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Roberts to approve the recommendation to allow Mound Bayou to use Delta State’s stage for their September Fest event and seconded by Mr. Mayers. **This motion was approved.**

**Discussion**

**Convocation Plans .....Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams sent an email to all employees inviting them to attend Convocation and the luncheon, immediately following. A few offices will remain open in order to assist students, but most are encouraged to close. Convocation is the only time that all employees gather together. Dr. Roberts said approximately 175 community members were invited, including Dedicated Statesmen Association, local government officials, Delta mayors, Chamber members, etc. The President’s Office will have reserved seating for special guests and will have volunteers ready to greet them and show them to their seats. At 9:45 am, a pre-event breakfast will take place in the Green Room for Cabinet Members to socialize with one another before Convocation begins. President LaForge will charge all faculty and staff to encourage their students to become involved on campus. Dr. Bennett announced that the cosmetic changes to the H.L. Nowell Student Union will be complete by Friday.

**Active Shooter Training.....Dr. Bennett**

Bolivar County and Cleveland emergency response organizations will hold a joint training exercise on Wednesday, August 17, beginning at 9 a.m. at Walter Sillers Coliseum on Delta State’s campus. The training will include testing communications systems and making sure all systems and controls are updated. A text alert and email will be sent to faculty, staff, and students to let them know the training is taking place.

**Mississippi Today Event ..... Dr. Roberts**

On August 30, *Mississippi Today* will host an event at the GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi to spread the word about their new online publication. On August 31, Delta State will host a “Colloquium-like” event in Jobe Hall Auditorium. Mr. Walter Issacson and Mr. Andrew Lack will talk about new media and its impact on the 2016 election, and the event will be moderated by Mr. Jim Barksdale. Several communities, organizations, and all Delta State employees are invited to attend both events. President LaForge asked Cabinet Members to help garner attention for the event. President LaForge stated the organization would also like to hire minority interns from our Languages and Literature department.

**Personnel Changes.....Cabinet**

President LaForge asked Cabinet Members to provide updates on personnel changes in their respective areas. Dr. Bennett stated Student Affairs has hired a new Mental Health Counselor and new Police Officers. She has also hired Mr. Michael Lipford as the new Student Development Officer. Mr. Rutledge has hired a new Comptroller, Ms. Beverly Lindsey, and will hire a new Assistant Comptroller in a few days. Interviews are taking place for a new Facilities Management Director, and they will have a vacancy in the Arts Education Coordinator position at the Bologna Performing Arts Center. The Foundation is looking for a new Assistant Director of Alumni Affairs and Social Media Coordinator. Mr. Fulcher stated that the Campaign and Research Coordinator position has been filled by Ms. Abbey Atwill. The Athletic Department has hired Ms. Raina Stiffler as the new Assistant Softball Coach and Mr. Luke Sheekey, Head Women’s Soccer Coach. The College of Education and Human Sciences has hired Mr. Tim Colbert as the new Interim Chair of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation. Ms. Rocconi gave an update on Staff Council positions voted on at the beginning of August. Ms. Caitlyn Thompson is Chair-Elect, Ms. Julie Jackson is Secretary/Treasurer, Mr. Jeff Slagell is Ombudsperson, and Ms. Marilyn Read is Past Chair. Dr. Jurgenson announced the hiring of a professor to run the Wiley Planetarium. Dr.

McAdams stated Dr. Shelby Polk is the new Chair of the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing, Ms. Cora Jackson is the Interim Chair of the Social Work Department, and Dr. Garry Jennings is the Interim Chair for Social Sciences and History.

### **Other Discussion**

- Mr. Mayers asked for clarification on academic scholarship deadlines. Dr. Bennett stated the new deadline for academic scholarships is February; however, this will not affect the recruiting efforts of the coaches.
- President LaForge asked Mr. Mayers how the eligibility process for athletes is working, in conjunction with the Registrar's office. Mr. Mayers stated everything is running smoothly.
- Dr. Roberts asked Mr. Rutledge for an update on the crosswalk signs for Highway 8 and Fifth Avenue. Mr. Rutledge stated the Mississippi Department of Transportation will not have this project complete until the end of October.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on the campus paving project. He said he will have another meeting with the contractors soon to discuss the issues with the seams.
- Mr. Rutledge and his staff are in the process of closing out the books for FY16. He is hopeful that the fund balance will be higher than it has been in several years.
- Dr. McAdams stated Fall 2016 enrollment figures are still showing an increase.
- Dr. McAdams announced that our band was invited to attend the Mississippi Band Masters Association meeting. This meeting is for high school and university band directors. Dr. McAdams stated it is an honor to be invited to attend.

### **INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Chamber Welcome Back Reception for Faculty/Staff, August 18, Warehouse Restaurant, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- Convocation, August 19, 10:30 am, BPAC
- Convocation lunch, August 19, 12:00 pm, H.L. Nowell Union, Second floor lobbies
- Student Move-In Day, August 21, 1:00-5:00 pm, Young Mauldin Dining Hall
- Fall Semester begins, August 22

### **NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, August 22 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.