

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: August 8, 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

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on August 8, 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 July 25, 2016.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge attended the NCAA Division II President's Council meeting last week. This meeting is a forum for discussing major topics affecting the Division.
- Since the last Cabinet meeting, President LaForge met with community members, who are investors in the downtown hotel, to discuss the campus hotel proposal. He shared with them that Delta State cannot sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the proposing group because it would unfairly bind Delta State to a particular investor group. If Delta State leases or sells the land, it will require legislation because the hotel is a commercial, for-profit operation without an educational mission, unlike GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi, which is a non-profit corporation with an educational function. He told them that the proposing group is still interested in going forward and would like to meet with the stakeholders of the downtown hotel to discuss a potential partnership.
- President LaForge asked Mr. Fulcher to give an update on the Greenwood Alumni meeting. Mr. Fulcher stated it was an excellent meeting with great attendance. Also, they had a program to honor the students who were leaving for college.
- The Fourth Annual Football Family Bash took place last Thursday. Mr. Mayers stated the attendance was great and additional seating was needed. The total amount of money raised is not known yet. Also, he stated that the football team reported to campus today for their two week camp, and the soccer teams will report later this week.
- The Ol' Grad Reunion was held on Delta State's campus this past weekend. Mr. Fulcher stated this is the first time in several years the Reunion has been hosted on campus. The group thoroughly enjoyed the reunion being on campus so that they could see new and old aspects of campus. Mr. Fulcher reported one attendee wrote a check for \$10,000 for the university to use at its discretion.
- The Foundation staff is interviewing two groups this week and two groups next week regarding Campaign feasibility studies. Mr. Fulcher said he is pleased with the four finalists coming to campus to present, and he feels it is a positive step in the Campaign.

- President LaForge shared upcoming events for the week. On Thursday, he will attend the Cleveland Music Foundation Board meeting. The Desoto County Alumni meeting will be Saturday in Southaven at the BankPlus Training Center. Mr. Fulcher stated everyone is invited to attend.

**CABINET TOPIC**

**Student Success 2.0 .....Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams explained the next steps in developing a path to improve retention and graduation rates. He said a student is considered successful upon degree completion. Student success should be promoted through a series of initiatives intended to help students create and stay on a path for success. Academic Affairs has implemented “game changers” created by Complete College America to help achieve this goal. The strategies are: (1) fifteen credit hours per semester; (2) co-requisite remediation; and, (3) guided pathways to success. First, by completing fifteen credit hours per semester, students reduce their time to degree and accelerate completion. Also, Mississippi requires students to register and complete fifteen hours in order to maintain eligibility for state financial aid. Second, co-requisite remediation helps provide more time on-task during credit-bearing English and math courses. Instead of having a remedial English or math class, a student would take the college-level course with an additional tutoring portion to keep students on track. Third, a guided pathway to success allows students to stay on track for degree completion with the help of the following: (a) Academic Maps - Each major has a map to show students what classes to take and when to take them; (b) Meta-majors - The Student Success Center has created meta-majors which allows students, who are undecided on their major, to select a “broad range” major in their area of interest to keep them on track with appropriate classes; (c) Math alignment to majors - Mathematicians have stated that the only reason a student should take college algebra is in preparation for calculus for a STEM track. Students not taking a STEM track would take quantitative reasoning or statistics; and, (d) Proactive Advising - Advisors should be proactive when advising students by connecting with them and identifying a clear path to completion. Also, advisors should follow through and check on advisees to see how they are progressing.

To help reach these goals, Delta State has created additional initiatives that all faculty should implement, including: take attendance in all classes, conduct early low-stakes assessments and provide feedback, use an academic map for each advisee, use the Early Alert system for students veering off of their path, and use the new “CRM Advise” software to track progress and communicate with advisees. In order for the game changers and additional initiatives to work, faculty and staff must be committed to this process.

The next steps are to implement the completion strategies and require faculty and staff to engage in the process. Dr. McAdams stated it is our responsibility as campus leaders to help our colleagues understand what is at stake by not following this process and to encourage them to fully implement the strategies. Also, Dr. McAdams would like suggestions on how to improve the strategies to help achieve greater results. The Student Success Task Force has been revamped and is looking to work with the Student Success Center to coordinate university-wide engagement of the next steps, meet twice per semester to assess retention strategies, and examine administrative policies and practices to make sure they are optimal for student success.

Dr. McAdams has one stretch goal in mind for 2017-18. He would like to create a “bridge program” for the period between Summer Orientation and the First Year Seminar program in order for students to have a more cohesive first year experience. (*\*see presentation*)

## **BUSINESS**

### **Action**

#### **New policy: Awarding Degrees Posthumously (final reading) .....Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the “Awarding Degrees Posthumously” policy for a final reading. He stated no changes were made to the policy since the first reading.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the “Awarding Degrees Posthumously” policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Mayers. **The motion was approved.**

#### **New policy: Conflict of Interest (final reading) ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the “Conflict of Interest” policy for a final reading. Mr. Rutledge stated the only change to the policy was removing the responsible office from the Procedures and Responsibilities portion of the policy.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the “Conflict of Interest” policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. McAdams. **The motion was approved.**

#### **New policy: Employee Separation/Transfer Clearance (final reading) ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the “Employee Separation/Transfer Clearance” policy for a final reading. After a discussion on the accountability of employees and the process for returning university keys, Mr. Rutledge stated he will create a procedure to help keep controls in place for the key return process.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the “Employee Separation/Transfer Clearance” policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. McAdams. **The motion was approved.**

### **Discussion**

- None

### **Other Discussion**

- Dr. McAdams stated that Express Registration Day, held on July 29, was a success. Eighty-five students registered throughout the day. Dr. Debbie Heslep, Dean of Enrollment Management, estimates that an additional 20 freshmen and 100 transfer students will register before school begins.
- President LaForge announced the Hearin Graduate Fellows program proposal submitted to the Robert M. Hearin Support Foundation was denied; however, Delta State will receive a one-time gift of \$25,000 for scholarships.
- President LaForge stated the President’s Office has begun receiving responses to the invitation to Convocation. He asked Cabinet Members to assist in greeting our VIP guests.

### **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 15 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Cabinet Advance Recap (President LaForge)

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.