

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: January 17, 2017**

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

**Members not in attendance:** Mr. Keith Fulcher

**Guests:** Dr. Debbie Heslep, Dean, Enrollment Management

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on January 17, 2017. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

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

On motion by Dr. Jurgenson, seconded by Mr. Rutledge, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on January 9, 2017.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge informed Cabinet Members of the passing of Mr. William Fulcher, Mr. Fulcher's father. The service was today in Vicksburg. President LaForge, Dr. Roberts, Dr. McAdams, and Mr. Rutledge attended the visitation on behalf of the university.
- President LaForge informed Cabinet Members of several friends of Delta State that have been in the hospital. Mr. Homer Sledge, Jr. is recovering from double pneumonia, Dr. Milton Bradley has been at Bolivar Medical Center with double pneumonia, and Mrs. Eloise Walker fell and broke her hip and is undergoing therapy at Sunflower Medical Center.
- President LaForge attended the Cleveland Music Foundation Board meeting last week. He reported 26,000 guests have visited the GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi since its opening in March 2016.
- President LaForge participated in a GSC Executive Committee conference call last week. He said GSC Commissioner Matt Wilson is providing great leadership for the conference. President LaForge said the conference is very strong, and the University of North Alabama will remain in the GSC until the end of 2018—before moving to Division I. President LaForge will participate in a full GSC meeting on January 20 at the NCAA Convention in Nashville.
- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. Delta State's swimming and diving teams won all events against Henderson State University on Saturday, and they will travel to Emory University this Saturday for a meet. Delta State men's and women's basketball won their respective games on Saturday. Mr. Devin Schmidt scored 47 points during the men's game. Mr. Mayers announced Mrs. Barbara Ann Varner, Delta State's first women's tennis coach, was inducted into the Mississippi Tennis Hall of Fame over the weekend.
- Dr. Bennett announced the retirement party for Chief Lynn Buford begins at 3:00 p.m. on the second

floor of the Union in the East Lobby. She stated there would be a time for remarks from attendees, and she encouraged Cabinet Members to attend.

- President LaForge announced Governor Phil Bryant’s State of the State address is tonight at 5:30 p.m.
- The Institutions of Higher Learning Board of Trustees will meet on Thursday. President LaForge will not be able to attend the meeting due to the NCAA Convention in Nashville. Dr. McAdams will fill in for President LaForge in his absence. President LaForge plans to attend the IEO meeting on Wednesday.
- President LaForge and Mr. Mayers depart on Wednesday for the NCAA Convention, which begins on Thursday and commences on Saturday.
- President and Mrs. LaForge plan to attend the Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi’s Crystal Ball Gala on Saturday.
- IHL’s Senate and House Appropriations Hearings are Monday and Tuesday of next week. Commissioner Boyce will speak on behalf of the entire IHL system.
- President LaForge informed Cabinet Members that a Cabinet meeting will not take place on Monday, January 23. The next Cabinet meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 30.

### **CABINET TOPIC**

#### **Student Recruitment Initiatives .....Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams welcomed Dr. Debbie Heslep, Dean of Enrollment Management, to Cabinet and asked her to provide Cabinet Members with an update on recruitment efforts. Dr. Heslep and her team have been working diligently to develop new initiatives for Spring 2017. Dr. Heslep shared with Cabinet Members a listing of recruitment opportunities for the Spring, and she highlighted days that need Cabinet participation. The first event occurs on January 27 and is called Statesmen Scholarship Interview Day. They have invited 44 students to campus to interview for the Statesmen Scholarship (covers tuition, housing, and books) as well as the Honors College, Foundation, and Presidential scholarships. Dr. Heslep estimated 20 students will participate in this event. Another new recruiting event for the Spring are Academic Days. Three Academic Days have been planned for the semester including School of Nursing, S.T.E.M. and fine arts. Students who have been provisionally admitted to Delta State are invited to attend the Academic Day that correlates with their field of interest. Academic Days allow students to attend classes of their choice, visit academic buildings, and tour the campus. Dr. McAdams asked Cabinet Members to introduce themselves to prospective students who visit the campus because personal and unique interactions increase the yield of those who commit to Delta State after a visit. In November, Delta State became a member of the Education Advisory Board (EAB), which is a best practices firm that serves over 1,100 educational institutions worldwide and conducts peer-tested research to identify new ideas and proven practices. Delta State joined forty-four other regional master’s level colleges and universities in the Enrollment Management Forum within EAB. This forum focuses on providing best practices through three main divisions: 1) enrollment management, 2) student success, 3) growth and academic operations. Delta State’s initial focus areas are: 1) increasing transfer recruitment efforts to improve enrollment and 2) strategically allocating financial aid dollars and scholarships. Dr. Heslep has created a task force led by EAB to look at policies relating to financial aid and scholarships, to see what has occurred in the past, and what needs to occur in the future. Enrollment Management continues to work on Cleveland/Bolivar County Awareness by creating and hanging football banners at high school football games in Cleveland, participating in Homecoming parades, providing breakfast for students, and giving flowers to spring pageant participants. Enrollment Management utilized Search in the fall and has purchased 2,808 names from ACT since October. The focus areas for the names included underrepresented students from Mississippi (minority, low income, and first generation); Bolivar, Desoto, and Washington County students; and, an ACT range of 18-36 and self-reported high school GPA of 2.00-4.00. Enrollment Management also created a call center called the E-center that is staffed by six students. Dr. Heslep explained to Cabinet Members a significant increase can be seen in the Dual Credit program due to the Mississippi Department of Education Accountability Model.

Students may be admitted to a Dual Credit program with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA and successful completion of 14 core high school units or junior status. Dr. Heslep and her staff are working to bring the students from the larger schools participating in Dual Credit to campus to have our faculty teach the students for a day and have them participate in a campus tour. Desoto County High School and Tupelo High School have agreed to host a recruiting event for Delta State for the Dual Credit program. Enrollment Management wants each teacher and student participating in this program to feel as though they are a part of Delta State. Lastly, Dr. Heslep gave an update on enrollment figures. First-time freshmen applications are slightly down from this time last year, but 76 more students have paid an application fee from this time last year. Dr. Heslep stated the number of provisionally admitted students is down 35 students from last year, but this report was run a week later last year. Transfer applications are down from last year. Dr. Heslep estimates enrollment will be flat from Spring 2016 to Spring 2017. Dr. Heslep offered projections for Fall 2017. She estimates enrollment for first-time freshmen will be flat and first-time transfers will increase slightly.

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**Key Handling Policy (first reading)..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the Key Handling policy for a first reading. The policy puts into writing the current practice of the university, and makes the key holder liable for any keys in their possession. Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet Members the Locksmith Supervisor conducts key audits every sixth months. Dr. Jurgenson asked Mr. Rutledge about how the policy relates to students, and if students are allowed to have keys. Mr. Rutledge said this policy does not include students. President LaForge asked Dr. Jurgenson, Dr. Bennett, and Ms. Parker to work together to develop a key policy for students.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Rutledge to approve the Key Handling Policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. **This motion was approved.**

**Discussion**

**Removal of trees on Fifth Avenue ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet Members that three trees were cut down on Fifth Avenue over the weekend due to rotting. In the interest of protecting campus facilities and the safety of people on campus, the trees needed to be removed. Facilities Management plans to plant trees in their place on Earth Day.

**State Budget Cuts ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge stated Governor Bryant notified State agencies of an additional budget cut for FY17. The first budget cut was \$187,000 in September. The second cut is \$346,000—for a total of \$533,000 for the fiscal year. Mr. Rutledge stated an additional three percent cut for FY17 is being discussed. President LaForge asked Dr. Roberts to offer any clarity on the subject from a legislative standpoint. Dr. Roberts stated legislators are offering mixed signals. Dependent upon the Education Bill for K-12 and Medicaid deficits, it could mean additional losses for higher education. The Executive Committee will make a recommendation to the Cabinet on how to address the \$346,000 cut.

**Other Discussion**

- Ms. Rocconi announced the Department of Education will perform a program review during the week of February 27. Departments under review include Student Business Services, Financial Aid, Registrar’s Office, and Enrollment Management. Ms. Rocconi and Mr. Kelvin Davis will present to Cabinet more

information about the review and Cabinet Members' role in the review.

- Ms. Parker announced the SGA's State of the Student Address is February 6 at 5:30 p.m. A dinner will be served, and a table will be reserved for Cabinet Members. The event is the same night as the Delta State vs. Mississippi College basketball games, and so the date could be changed.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Alonzo King LINES Ballet, BPAC, January 31, 7:30 pm

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, February 6 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Visioning Goals (Charles, Jamie, Keith, Michelle, Ronnie, and Vernell)

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.