

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: November 9, 2015**

**Members in attendance:** President William LaForge, Dr. Libby Carlson, Dr. E.E. Caston, Dr. Leslie Fadiga-Stewart, Mr. Keith Fulcher, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Mr. Steve McClellan, Dr. Michelle Roberts, and Mr. Mikel Sykes  
(Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

**Members not in attendance:** Ms. Marilyn Read

**Guests:** Dr. Beverly Moon, Dean, Graduate and Continuing Studies

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on November 9, 2015. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge asked Dr. Roberts to give an update on the primary election results. Dr. Roberts stated that at the county level, the incumbents retained their seats. Representative Linda Coleman, Senator Willie Simmons, and Senator Derrick Simmons ran unopposed. Representative Tommy Taylor did not run for re-election and was replaced by Mr. Robert Foster. Senator Buck Clarke's race had some controversy over old voting districts in Bolivar County, but he was re-elected.
- President LaForge spoke highly of the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and thanked the Dedicated Statesmen Association for all of their hard work in making it a success.
- President LaForge attended a GRAMMY Museum Mississippi Board meeting last week. He stated the Board will meet more frequently with the opening date for the museum approaching. The opening of the Museum is still on schedule, and the entertainment for the opening week is still being ironed out.
- President LaForge stated our Radio Station held its "soft launch" last week, and asked Dr. Roberts to recap the event. Dr. Roberts thanked Cabinet Members for their attendance. The Radio Station Committee is very excited about the potential of the radio station, and wants the radio station to provide something for all listeners to enjoy. The committee will also record different segments to showcase faculty, staff, and students in order to engage more people. The radio station is live-streamed from their website at [www.deltastateradio.com](http://www.deltastateradio.com).
- President LaForge asked Mr. Mayers for an update on Homecoming activities. Mr. Mayers stated it was an excellent weekend even though our football team did not win. Several alumni groups were in attendance and were thankful for the hospitality extended to them.
- President LaForge started a series of department visits this week. His first visit was with Housing and Residence Life. During his visits, President LaForge will engage with faculty and staff to learn more about the units and to hear and see the good things happening in their areas.
- President LaForge stated ODK Initiation will be held tonight in the Lena Sillers Chapel with six students being inducted. He will be the guest speaker at the banquet following the induction ceremony.
- President LaForge asked Cabinet Members to consider attending the Ellucian Executive visit tomorrow morning in the President's Conference Room. He stated it would be a good time to inform them of our likes and concerns.

- President LaForge discussed this week’s schedule. He will visit with Bayou Academy juniors and seniors on Wednesday morning, and on Thursday he will travel to Jackson for the Robert M. Hearin Foundation Beneficiaries meeting. Also on Thursday, DMI will host a “Show Off” party for their new equipment. President LaForge will continue his First Friday Faculty Meetings this Friday. Mississippi College will host our football team on Saturday at 3:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Dr. McAdams, seconded by Dr. Caston, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on November 2, 2015.

**CABINET TOPIC**

None

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**Assets for Independence (AFI) Grant Renewal .....Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet a revised two-part request for the AFI “Delta Dollars” Scholarship. Dr. McAdams stated Delta State has been very successful in administering this grant in the past year. Through the grant, students’ needs are met, and it is teaching them the value of saving. By setting aside \$70,000 in private dollars, we could double this amount to \$140,000 with a federal match to give to 35 students. Part one of the request is for Delta State to provide \$12,353 from our institutional FY17 funds to support the administration costs of supervising the students in the grant. Of the \$70,000 in private funds, \$50,000 will come from the Delta State University Foundation and \$20,000 will come from the Robert E. Smith Endowment. Part two of the request is for Delta State to allow the Center for Community and Economic Development to keep the entire amount of administrative costs (\$24,706).

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the \$12,353 FY17 funding request and the allocation of administrative costs to the CCED and seconded by Mr. Mayers. **The motion was approved.**

**Student Health Center proposal.....Dr. Caston**

Dr. Caston stated that Bolivar Medical Center has met with the Executive Committee to discuss the possibility of establishing a partnership with our Student Health Center. Through the partnership, the new Student Health Center would offer a full set of medical services for faculty, staff, students, and retirees. Bolivar Medical Center would staff, run, and equip the health center. Also, they would utilize some of our student nurses from the Robert E. Smith School Nursing for their clinical hours. If this partnership is approved, the process to change over could begin in January. President LaForge believes this will be a win-win situation for our campus — better services will be offered to our students and employees and our costs will decrease. Bolivar Medical Center has not proposed an insurance plan for students at this time. One aspect of the Center that Delta State will want to continue is the counseling service.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Caston to approve the concept of Bolivar Medical Center assuming responsibility for our Student Health Center, with more details to come, and seconded by Mr. Mayers. **The motion was approved.**

## Discussion

### **VPSAE Search.....President LaForge**

President LaForge spoke with Dr. Temika Simmons, Chair of the Search Committee for the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment, and she stated that the committee has voted to close the current search. The committee recommends reopening the search in January with the revised title, Vice President for Student Affairs, and revised job responsibilities. They also discussed the use of a search firm to help build the pool of applicants, and also to look at The Registry for a possible Interim Vice President.

### **Format for responding to requests/issues .....President LaForge**

President LaForge commended Cabinet Members on handling different issues that arise on campus, but wanted to remind them about how he would like for issues to be resolved. For example, if a complaint comes to the President's Office, he will delegate it to one of his direct reports and ask them to handle the situation, which should include responding to the person on behalf of the President. It is up to the direct report whether to delegate to someone in their division the responsibility of looking into the matter. Once the issue has been resolved, the direct report should follow-up with President LaForge with a final report on the actions taken and/or decision made.

### **Increasing Academic Excellence Planning Process.....Dr. McAdams**

President LaForge asked Dr. McAdams to present to Cabinet the "model" he is using in Academic Affairs to achieve "Big Think" ideas. During the Cabinet Advance, Cabinet Members were asked how Delta State could reach the "next level" of greatness. Academic Affairs believes Delta State must embrace the goal to **increase academic excellence**. To begin working towards this goal, Dr. McAdams created a strategy planning process. The purpose of the planning process is to generate discussion and ideas related to increasing academic excellence, develop and vet potential strategies to achieve this goal, achieve consensus and shared ownership for the strategies, and identify resources needed to implement the strategies. Dr. McAdams created six questions to guide the planning process (see handout.) The process Academic Affairs is undertaking will take time, cooperation, and full participation across the University. The goal and strategy planning process will include discussions from all academic areas, suggestions from departments on ideas and strategies related to the questions, and forums for faculty and students to voice their opinions and concerns. Dr. McAdams has created a timeline/schedule for the events. He expects for the goal and strategy planning process to be complete by March 1 in order to secure resources during the budget planning process and to begin new strategies in the upcoming academic year. The second portion of his model is to pilot two strategies. One strategy is to showcase our students' research capabilities on a statewide level and the other is to bring a pedagogy specialist to campus for faculty to enhance their teaching skills.

## Other Discussion

- Dr. McAdams announced commencement preparation is going well and everything is falling into place. After the announcement of the two ceremonies, a few graduate students expressed concerns about travel plans. Dr. McAdams offered the students the opportunity to walk on Saturday if they could provide proof of a hardship. Dr. Carlson stated the nursing students were very excited about the chance to walk on Friday evening. Several of her students were not planning to participate in graduation exercises, but changed their minds when the change in schedule occurred.
- President LaForge attended Stomp Fest, hosted by the National Pan-Hellenic Council, on Saturday evening. He said it was a great showcase of our diversity on campus.
- Mr. Sykes informed Cabinet Members that SGA provided funds for a few students from the HPE&R

department to attend a conference. He said SGA has funds available to help students in situations like this, and asked Cabinet members to share this information with Deans and Department Chairs. Mr. Sykes said he wants students to know SGA is very supportive of them and their endeavors.

- Dr. Roberts informed Cabinet Members of personnel changes occurring. Communications and Marketing has hired a Graphic Designer, Rachel Bush. Ms. Bush is a DSU graduate, and today is her first day on the job. Also, Ms. April Mondy, current Web Writer/Designer in Communications and Marketing, has been hired as the new Administrative Secretary in the President's Office. She will transfer to this new role on December 1.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- BPAC's "A Very Electric Christmas", November 19, 7:00 p.m.
- Thanksgiving Holidays, November 26-27
- Fall Commencement, Graduate students, BPAC, December 11, 7:30 pm
- Fall Commencement, Undergraduate students, BPAC, December 12, 10:00 am
- Winter Holidays, December 23 - January 1
- GRAMMY Museum Mississippi, Grand Opening, March 5

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, November 16, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 2:52 pm.