

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: June 2, 2015

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Wayne Blansett, Mr. Keith Fulcher, Dr. Charles McAdams, Mr. Steve McClellan, Ms. Marilyn Read, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Mr. Jeff Slagell, Dr. Leslie Fadiga-Stewart, Dr. Myrtis Tabb, and Ms. Claire Cole.

Members not in attendance: Dr. Debbie Heslep, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, and Mr. Mikel Sykes

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on June 2, 2015. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge announced our Hearin Foundation grant proposal, "Teach for America Alumni Retention Assistance Program," was approved. Delta State will receive \$1,075,867 over four years, beginning in January 2016. This grant will provide 10 graduate assistant positions for TFA Alumni each year (for three years) plus pay for their graduate tuition as well as a summer internship. We also received \$75,000 for need-based scholarships.
- President LaForge, Dr. Roberts, and Mrs. Emerson met with Teach For America's new Mississippi Director, Barbara Logan Smith. During their meeting, she conveyed an interest in establishing a strong connection with Delta State, which allowed President LaForge to introduce the proposed Hearin Foundation grant. President LaForge called Mrs. Logan Smith today to tell her the Hearin grant was approved.
- President LaForge expressed concern for the Great River Road State Park in Rosedale based on a conversation he had with Senator Roger Wicker. Senator Wicker called President LaForge to see if Delta State could do anything to help the situation since the State won't supply funds to help fix it. President LaForge had lunch with County Administrator Will Hooker and Supervisors Donny Whitten and James McBride recently to discuss the issue with them to see if they knew how to help.
- President LaForge referenced the Reception and Dinner for Honorary Degree Recipient, David Abney, as well as Commencement, and he commented on how great the events were. President LaForge did not have a chance to speak with Mr. Abney regarding the International Business Symposium, but he feels that Mr. Abney wants to continue the program.
- Mrs. Read updated Cabinet members on Staff Development Day. The morning session was attended by 140 staff and lunch was served to 180 staff. Overall, she said it was a great event with an immense turnout for the afternoon events.
- Dr. McAdams attended the May IHL Board meeting and provided a report on the good things happening at Delta State. He also stated that the Board approved the naming of New Men's Hall to Blansett Hall.
- Delta Council's Annual Meeting and Catfish Luncheon were well attended (approximately 1,600 people). Governor Phil Bryant, Governor Tate Reeves, Dr. Larry Nabors of Mississippi Delta Community College, Dr. Will Bynum of Mississippi Valley State University, Dr. Al Rankins of Alcorn State University, and Dr. Valmadge Towner of Coahoma Community College were all in attendance. One issue that was

raised by staff was not supplying lunch tickets to Delta State employees, as they have in the past. Dr. Tabb stated that this was a Delta Council decision and not a Delta State decision.

- The Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Search has been suspended for the time being. The preferred candidate declined due to family matters. The Executive Committee will decide on how to proceed with this search.
- President LaForge spoke of his trip to Russia. He was the first Fulbright Fellow to go to Perm State University. During his time there, he met with deans and chairs to discuss the continuation of our exchange program. The DMI group arrived shortly after his departure. He spoke highly of the DMI group and the work they were doing to better our exchange with Perm State.
- Teach For America Delta Registration is today. The Delta Corps is comprised of approximately 150 people and they will stay in the Delta to teach for two years. Several members of the community will host Delta Hospitality Night on Friday at 6:30 p.m. at The Warehouse in honor of this year's Delta Corps class. Teach for America Registration Day is Saturday, June 7, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Wyatt gym. Volunteers are still needed in all areas.
- The GRAMMY Museum Mississippi Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, June 4.
- A Commemorative Dedication for Bond-Carpenter/Whittington-Williams Residence Halls will be held Thursday, June 4. Dr. Blansett provided information about the event and said that the Bond family will be in attendance. Emily Jones will speak on the history of the buildings and Davlon Miller, last hall director of the dorm, will speak on his many memories of being the hall director.
- The BPAC Annual Member Reception and Season Announcement will be held on Thursday. Dr. Tabb extended an invitation to Cabinet members to attend the event. Also, Dr. Tabb spoke of the completed 2014-2015 season and how excellent it was for celebrating 20 years of the BPAC. Ticket sales are increasing and she expects the same for the new season.
- Mississippi in the Park event in Atlanta will take place on Saturday, June 6. Jeffrey Farris will represent Delta State at this event. Mr. Fulcher stated that Gary Bouse and Jordan Thomas will attend the Mississippi in the Park event in New York, and Jordan Thomas will attend the Mississippi in the Park event in D.C.
- The Chamber of Commerce is hosting "Old Fashioned Day" in downtown Cleveland on Saturday. They are holding a fundraiser, Jail Break, to raise money for the Chamber. In order to be "bailed out," President LaForge will have to raise \$500.
- Steve Azar is hosting the Fourth Annual "Delta Soul" Celebrity Golf and Charity event to raise money for his foundation, The Steve Azar – St. Cecilia Foundation. President LaForge will attend the Celebrity Dinner on Thursday and, possibly, The Big Night Dinner and Live Auction in Greenville.
- The Roseanne Cash Concert will be held on Saturday at Dockery Farms.
- Dr. McAdams announced that we received written approval from SACSCOC regarding the closure of our five academic programs. Also, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) gave written notice of the continuance of our NCATE accreditation of the College of Education. The Commission cited no areas for improvement relative to any of the standards.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Mr. McClellan, seconded by Dr. Blansett, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on May 4, 2015.

CABINET TOPIC

Summer School enrollment/revenue trends Mr. McClellan

Enrollment in summer school is low and our budget is severely affected. We lost approximately \$500,000 in the last few years due to the decline in summer school attendance. There seems to be no ownership of summer school. We have 10 to 11 months to figure out how to reverse this process. Dr. Blansett mentioned that summer school made money in the past. Advertising summer school was never needed, so it wasn't talked about like it should have been. Dr. Fadiga-Stewart made the point that students don't realize the benefits of summer school in expediting their coursework if they want to finish their degree earlier. Also, she mentioned that students don't know the logistics of summer school and what is available to them. Dr. McAdams has asked the Dean's Council to meet with their Chairs to see if there is anything we can do right now as well as to identify which programs have the largest decline. President LaForge suggested including a discussion about the benefits of Summer School in the First Year Seminar program. The Executive Committee will discuss this issue further.

BUSINESS

Action

Grades and Credits Policy (first reading) Dr. McAdams

Dr. McAdams presented the revised "Grades and Credits Policy" to the Cabinet for a first reading. The changes to the policy include: adding a definition for our grading system, quality point, and grade point average; and, adding a sentence stating "various departments at Delta State University offer non-credit activities for the benefit of community members; non-credit activities are not eligible for academic credit." By adding this sentence, the "Non-Credit Activities Policy" is no longer needed and should be deleted.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised policy for a first reading and seconded by Mr. Slagell. **The motion was approved.**

Discussion

Opening Session Lunch for Faculty/Staff Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts brought to Cabinet the question of resuming the Opening Session Lunch for Faculty/Staff. The lunch was cancelled for 2014 to save money due to our budget issues. President LaForge inquired about the morale boosting effects the luncheon has for our faculty and staff. Options suggested by Cabinet included: having a sponsor or scaling back on the grandioseness of the event. President LaForge asked for input from our faculty and staff representatives to get a feel for what our faculty/staff want. Mrs. Read stated the majority of staff do not mind not having the lunch. Dr. Fadiga-Stewart said the opinions of faculty were mixed. President LaForge stated the topic would be tabled until the faculty and staff representatives could bring input from the individual groups.

Other Discussion

- Dr. Roberts referenced an earlier Cabinet discussion regarding changing the Opening Session start time to 10:00 a.m. instead of 10:30 a.m. She stated in years past the program has extended past 12:00 p.m. which caused many faculty and staff to lose focus on the President's State of the University address. One idea was to keep the start time at 10:30 a.m. and to reduce the allotted time for the various

speakers. Also, the idea of using a slideshow to feature the new faculty and staff or introducing the new faculty and staff during lunch, if it is provided, was presented as a way to save time during the program. This topic was tabled for future discussion.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- BPAC Annual Member Reception, June 4, 6:30 p.m., Sanders Sculpture Garden
- Delta Hospitality Night honoring TFA Delta Corps, June 5, 6:30 p.m., The Warehouse
- TFA Registration Day, June 7, 1:00 p.m., Wyatt Gym
- Thank You Lunch for Facilities Management, June 11, 11:30 a.m., Facilities Management
- TFA Catfish on the Quad, June 12, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m., Quadrangle
- GRAMMY Museum presents The Band Perry, June 29, 7:30 p.m., McCool Stadium

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, June 8, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Course Cancellation/Purge Process

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:44 pm.