

**DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**  
*Minutes*

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**Meeting date: March 11, 2024**

**Members in attendance:** Dr. Dan Ennis, Dr. Vicki Bingham, Ms. Lisa Giger, Dr. James Gerald, Mr. David Gladden, Dr. Ellen Green, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Dr. Tomeka Harbin, Dr. Christopher Jurgenson, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Ms. Holly Ray, Dr. Christy Riddle, Ms. Fawn Ussery, Dr. Merideth Van Namen, and Mr. Larry Wakefield (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

**Members not in attendance:** Dr. Edwin Craft, Ms. Chrisa Mansell, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Haley Rooks, and Ms. Ashley Tanksley

**Guests:** Ms. Rosa Becerril-Nieves and Ms. Sydney Pittman

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the University Leadership Council was held in Room 302A in the H. L. Nowell Union on March 11, 2024. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Lovin presiding.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Dr. Jurgenson and seconded by Ms. Ray, all University Leadership Council Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the University Leadership Council Meeting held on February 12, 2024.

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**Mission Statement..... Dr. Van Namen**

On behalf of the Strategic Planning Committee, Dr. Van Namen brought a proposed, new mission statement for Delta State University to be reviewed by the University Leadership Council. In revising the mission statement, the Committee sought to represent all values of the University and include all academic and non-academic programming. University Leadership Council recommended a few changes.

**Proposed Mission Statement**

*The mission of Delta State University is to provide exceptional programs and opportunities that are current, innovative, and responsive to the diverse needs of those it serves. Delta State University strives to provide experiences that cultivate intellectual growth and individual enrichment to develop productive members of local, regional, and global communities.*

**Proposed Mission Statement with revisions by University Leadership Council**

*The mission of Delta State University is to offer exceptional programs and opportunities that are current, innovative, and responsive to the diverse needs of those it serves. The University provides experiences that cultivate intellectual growth and individual enrichment to develop productive members of local, regional, and global communities.*

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Van Namen to approve the proposed, new mission statement for Delta State University and seconded by Dr. Griffin. The motion was approved.

**Counseling Services policy (revised)..... Dr. Lovin**

Dr. Lovin brought the revised Counseling Services policy to the University Leadership Council for review and approval. Delta State University provides access to confidential Counseling Services to current students, faculty, and staff. Dr. Lovin shared the minor adjustments made to the policy; all were grammatical or stylistic in nature. University Leadership Council members discussed the variety of ways Counseling Services can provide outreach to the University.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the revised Counseling Services policy and seconded by Dr. Gerald. The motion was approved.

**Leave for Death in Immediate Family policy (revised) ..... Mr. Wakefield**

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised Leave for Death in Immediate Family policy to the University Leadership Council for review and approval. Delta State University establishes guidelines for providing time off to employees for absences related to the death of immediate family members. The definition of a child was updated. An employee may use up to three days of earned major medical leave per calendar year for absences due to a death in the immediate family, and personal leave does not have to be used prior to use of major medical leave for this purpose. University Leadership Council members discussed the procedure for an employee having leave for more than one death in the immediate family in one calendar year. Ms. Giger stated the Mississippi Code does not reference an additional death in the immediate family, and the University would consider the leave on a case by case basis.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Wakefield to approve the revised Leave for Death in Immediate Family policy and seconded by Dr. Griffin. The motion was approved.

**Military Leave/Veteran’s Re-Employment Rights (revised) ..... Mr. Wakefield**

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised Military Leave/Veteran’s Re-Employment Rights policy to the University Leadership Council for review and approval. Delta State University employees are entitled to military leave in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994. The definition of Uniformed Services was added to the policy. Also, the policy was revised to be consistent with Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Wakefield to approve the revised Military Leave/Veteran’s Re-Employment Rights policy and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. The motion was approved.

**Personal Leave with Pay policy (revised) ..... Mr. Wakefield**

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised Personal Leave with Pay policy to the University Leadership Council for review and approval. Personal leave with pay is earned by all regular employees who work 50% time or greater and receive University benefits. Leave is accrued after one month of continuous service and according to employment status and length of annual employment periods. Leave accruals are added to an employee's balance at the end of the month and will be available for use beginning on the first day of the next month. The definitions of immediate family and child were updated. The rules for personal leave apply to all employees except for nine-month faculty. University Leadership Council suggested a few grammatical and stylistic changes.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Wakefield to approve the revised Personal Leave with Pay policy and seconded by

Dr. Jurgenson. The motion was approved.

**Discussion**

None

**Additional information**

- Dr. Ennis thanked University Leadership Council for their participation in his Inauguration in February. He provided an update on the status of the creation of the FY25 budget. The Ad Hoc Committee on Budget Sustainability fulfilled their charge and provided Dr. Ennis and Cabinet with many recommendations to consider, and the Committee will cease meeting until further notice. Also, Dr. Ennis shared an update on the six searches for University personnel.

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Meeting – Monday, March 25, 2024 at 1:30 p.m.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.