

01) Voting Members present:

Gokhan R. Karahan
Ellen S. Green
Duane Shuttlesworth
Subramanian Swaminathan
Clint Tibbs
David Hebert
Lisa Moon

Eckward McKnight
Nina Baghai-Riding
Charly Abraham
Debarashmi Mitra
Stephen A. Patton
Teri Herron
Anjanette P. Powers

Patricia Brown
Brett Oleis - President
Leigh-Anne Gant
Allan Mitchell
Lawrence Magee
Catherine Hayes
Karen Bell

Nonvoting persons:

Sam Washington
Ann Lotven

Talbot Brooks
Suzanne Simpson

Beverly Moon
John M. Hilpert

02) Agenda: 02/09/12 Approved Minutes: 01/12/12 Approved

03) Faculty Senate President's Report:

The calendar was changed again mainly due to the SGA. No one was in favor of a 3 day Thanksgiving week. So we are going back to the status quo 2 day fall break and a 5 day Thanksgiving holiday. Dr Lotven said we could postpone the date we need to turn in the MAD or Far to 04-01-12. Appeals will also run at a later date this year. The Department of Labor contacted Delta State to let us know that the materials we submitted are sufficient and they won't be conducting an onsite visit. Chair evaluations are out until 02-14-12. Students can no longer apply for graduation using paper copies they must submit an online application. SACS leadership team has met.

04) University Entities:

Report from Staff Council:

Staff is working on a compensation study. We will be giving a workshop on diversity soon. We ask that faculty join our relay for life team. We are getting ready for staff development day.

Report from Graduate Council:

We approved one faculty member. We discussed graduate enrollment. We tabled the discussion of the constitution for Graduate Council.

Report from BPAC:

Tonight Damn Yankees will be performing.

Report from Budget Committee:

Correct me if I'm wrong. When Dr. Hilpert spoke he said that the UBC has completed its job. When the UBC was established I thought it was a rolling committee that constantly reviewed cuts. I think we should talk to our faculty and see what their feelings are. Do we want representation in future budget cuts via the UBC?

05) Faculty Senate Committees:

Committee on Elections:

We still need to run elections for HPER. We are getting spring ballots ready. William Hayes will hold the elections for the Appeals committee.

Committee on University Standing Committees: No Report

Committee on Technology: No Report

Committee on University Services: No Report

Committee on General Academic Affairs:

We have tabled the discussion on voting for support of confidence of the chairs at this time.

06) Delta State University President - Dr. John Hilpert - (Serving from 2003 to current.)

- Question Time:

Thank you for asking me to come. I would be happy to be a guest speaker any time you would like to discuss anything. Thank you for the questions you submitted ahead of time. I appreciate it and they were good questions. I assume you have all seen the list of questions. I have a few responses to some of the comments submitted last.

- I am the only individual at this university that has not seen an increase in compensation since 2007.
- The annual net revenue to the university from Teach for America has exceeded \$500,000. These dollars have helped to offset budget cuts from the state.
- Yes, my desk is where the buck stops.
- Where there is a need to address administrative failure we have done so.
- I am comfortable with the decisions we have made and believe there would have been significant instability at the institution without the sound management we have provided.

I'll go through the topics that were part of the other questions. Enrollment of course has been on everyone's minds but let me be sure we all have an accurate picture. If we take the fall of 2010 and compare it to the fall of 2011 when you take out the influence of TFA we had 95 fewer students this past fall, which is about 2.4%. So it is not surprising that we would have 2 or 3 percent fewer students at the beginning of the spring semester, when we started with fewer students this year. Comparing the fall of 2011 with the high water mark of the fall of 2006 shows that during that period of time we had an 11.6% drop. The comparison that was suggested in one of the questions I received compared a fall enrollment with a spring enrollment and of course we are always going to have some disparity there.

[Note the question that was referenced: Since the Fall of 2006 (4,216 enrollment) to this semester (3,360 enrollment) our student body has dropped off by more than 20%.]

Interestingly, comparing the fall of 2011 with the fall of 2001 we were 73 students smaller than 10 years ago. That is 1.9% and during that same period of time the population of the core counties of the Mississippi Delta fell 14.4% or nearly 40,000 people. The population that remains is significantly older than the population that lived here just 10 years ago. You should also understand that this past fall we had more new freshmen than we had in the fall of 2003, but fewer than we have had in any fall since then. On the other hand we had more new transfer students this past fall than in any fall since 2006. Enrollment has always been cyclical, an up and down issue at Delta State University. The question is, were the good years when the economy was strong, that is, 2004 through 2007, the unusual years or are these the unusual years? The question doesn't mean that I'm not worried about enrollment. It doesn't mean that I'm not concerned about paying attention or doing different things, but it does suggest that those 4 or 5 years that were particularly strong for this institution may not be the best point of comparison. In recent years our retention and graduation rates have also eroded to a degree. When I was thinking of coming here in 2003, I read the SACS self study that was in preparation at the time. I wanted to see what the institution was saying about itself. At that point the institution was projecting a slide in enrollment for a ten year period and maybe beyond. This prediction was based on the demographics of the area. So the fact that for a few years we grew meant that the prediction didn't necessarily hold for the institution.

Let me review why I think enrollment will always be a challenge and is currently a challenge. First of all there are the demographics I have discussed. If you have seen the work with the census that Dr. Nylander has done you will recognize that there has been a consistent erosion of the population in the Delta. Rather remarkably Delta State University during the period since about 1940 until today has really saturated the Delta more. That is, our marketing has meant a higher percentage of a smaller number coming to enroll at Delta State University during that period of time because the direction and the trend in the area has been for fewer and fewer people.

During the last few years the competition for students has increased dramatically. You all know that Ole Miss has been very successful in planting a branch campus in Desoto County. That branch campus has grown to 1500 to 2000 students and has stolen a lot of the north Delta student population from Delta State University and Mississippi Valley State. In the last 3 or 4 years Ole Miss has also planted a branch campus in Grenada, MS. That branch campus is beginning to grow and have the same effect on Delta State University. So I believe the encroachment of Ole Miss into the Mississippi Delta has made a tremendous difference to the availability of students. (See Map Page 12: Mississippi Senior Colleges and Offsite Campus)

Also in a report that was given to the IHL board at a public meeting within the last 6 months, it was rather remarkable to see the growth in institutional financial aid at the larger institutions, particularly at the University of Mississippi. I believe the increase over a three year period at UM was \$9 million to \$24 million institutional money being spent on individual student aid in order to increase competitiveness.

All of you know that our potential students are affected by the economy maybe more so than students in other areas of the state or other areas of our marketing region. It is a telling view of our enrollment trends to see that during the good years how our enrollment prospered versus what's happened in the last four years as the national economy has been more and more negative. That has certainly had an effect on our students and it has also had an effect on the DSU Foundation's endowment. At one point that organization annually made \$250,000 available to the institution for marketing; now it is about \$75,000 per year that can be used for marketing.

During the last year we have brought in Maguire Associates, a research-based consulting firm, to do a review of our marketing efforts and admissions efforts. Their conclusion has been that we have an able staff, that we have a difficult situation, and that we need to involve all the people at the University – faculty, staff, students, and alumni – in helping with the marketing.

Let me also tell you that right now the admissions department has put in place a very ambitious schedule of high school visits and many more on-campus visits. The good news is that first time freshmen at this time last year who have paid their application fees (the most likely to attend) were 373 and this year there are 490 for this coming fall. The number of campus tours at the same mark which was the end of last week was 234 last year and 303 this year. So it does look like we are experiencing positive activity in terms of student enrollment.

[Note the question that is referenced: The President of Mississippi State has reportedly come to the delta on a recruiting trip and stopped in at several high schools to speak directly to students. Are you planning a similar trip?]

I really haven't made those trips much during my 16 years as a president, though I do use opportunities to speak to prospective students. For example, two weeks ago I was in Greenwood and I led a seminar for 40 high school seniors from the public high school in Greenwood and from two academies in that area. I had a chance to talk to them about college choice and about college opportunities. Those are the kinds of events I prefer. Tomorrow evening I will welcome the state honor choir students who are coming to campus. So, yes, to the extent I have access to students like that I certainly do get involved.

I also have worked with the DSU foundation's board of directors; together we created a special board fund to help attract outstanding students. I kicked that off with a personal pledge of \$2500 and all of you would be welcome to pledge as well.

We have also had success generating much needed student aid funding from the Hearin Foundation, the Gertrude C. Ford Foundation, and other such organizations.

Frankly I don't subscribe to the rock star president theory that assumes a message from the institution's CEO is compelling. I think students who are making college decisions are much more attracted by visits with faculty, by visits with current students, and by visits to the campus. When I see presidents on television commercials, I doubt that students of that age find it appealing.

[Note the question that is referenced: Why are the number of student contact days different across the IHL member institutions?]

This is not an area where I have a dog in the fight. I'm satisfied with whatever schedule we have, and I see it as more up to you and the Academic Council. Of course the President's Cabinet has to approve it. It's our roll to do that. The system's policy is that students must meet 2250 minutes for a 3 hour class. In the first semester of this year I asked Provost Ann Lotven to compare our institution to other state institutions. We had 8 total holidays none of the other institutions had more than 6. On the other hand, all but a couple of the institutions had fewer scheduled class days then we did. What we don't know is whether or not their class sessions are the same length as ours or whether they are an hour instead of 50 minutes. So it's worth additional study, but we have to fulfill the requirement that we meet 2250 minutes. Here's my personal prospective: if we can agree on a schedule that satisfies you and the students and that meets the 2250 minute requirement, I will be good with it.

[Note the question that is referenced: The Clarion Ledger ran a story the other day concerning a possible financial short fall for needy student tuition provided by the state. If the state does not intervene, put more money in the fund, how many students at Delta State will be affected?]

It was a story that seemed alarming. I agree that it is a serious issue and one I hope the legislature will pay attention to. But let me be sure that you know what the scale is and what we're talking about here. Last year, there were fewer than 600 students at Delta State who received funding from the state programs that were the point of the article. The total amount awarded at DSU last year was \$443,000. Students who are eligible – this is a strange rule I think – for a full Pell Grant are not allowed to get the state money in Mississippi. If you are eligible for a 90% Pell Grant, you can get the state money, but you can't get it if you are eligible for a full Pell Grant. So we have a number of students who are ineligible for this state funding. The issue discussed in the article is that if the legislature does not provide funding for a likely shortfall in the state programs it will be necessary to reduce all grants proportionately. What I assume this means is that if there is a 5% shortfall in state funding for the student aid programs every recipient would see his or her Mississippi state grant reduced by 5%. Since the average recipient here receives about \$500, that would mean a \$25, reduction.

It's a bump in the road but recognize that the \$443,000 represents less than 2% of all the student assistance distributed by our student aid office.

Also recognize that Mississippi is woefully behind in state financial aid for its students. Every year we fill out a federal survey for the National Center for Education Statistics, we submit it and they feed back to us a report showing how our data compare to a group of 23 peer institutions from around the nation. This past year the average recipient at our institution received \$2200 less in state aid than students at institutions in other states. This is really an issue in Mississippi that we have to take a serious look at and work on.

[Note the question that is referenced: What is the talk around Jackson concerning a funding formula for IHL's?]

There is a funding formula for IHL, as you all know. It was adopted four or five years ago, and it was put on a track to be introduced across the system on an ascending basis over a six-year period. We actually had implementation of the formula and we received a cut for the first year of that. Our total reduction would have been in the range of \$5 million per year after the six year run-up. The first year we lost \$175,000. The idea was start slow and then build. At the end of the first year – partway through the first year actually – the economy went belly up. Things became difficult for the state. At that point the State IHL Board put the formula on hiatus. They said institutions shouldn't have to deal with the cuts coming from the legislature as well as cuts under the formula and so it was stopped in its tracks. Within a year someone on the Appropriations Committee of the House also wrote into the House Appropriations Bill a clause that said the money appropriated under this Bill should be awarded in the same proportions as in the fiscal year prior to the formula. If that didn't occur – if any new formula was used – there would be no appropriation under the Bill. And so a Legislative committee and finally the entire Legislature and the Governor formalized the stoppage. Now, personnel changes in the Legislature have brought new members to the Appropriations Committee in the House, and they may not share that same sentiment. So there are real questions about whether the Legislature will be involved and how they may be involved. Of course we're working on that issue. The preference of the Board is that the Legislature stay out of the issue so that the Board can make the decisions it feels are necessary.

I do want to report some hopeful news to you and that is that Commissioner Bounds has a good perspective on the formula. He understands the shortcomings. He understands the potentials. He understands what elements are necessary in a formula to reflect how institutions within the system are funded and the differences among institutions. His way of approaching it will be to ask that we reopen the issue that for re-discussion and that we have time before any formula comes back into play. He does not favor the formula that was adopted a few years ago. That is I think to our benefit. The factors that I have heard him discuss are critical – among them are performance factors.

It is terribly important that we do everything we can to assure that our students are well-served, that they are graduating, that they are taking jobs – particularly jobs in Mississippi. All of these elements could be factors in a new formula that is adopted.

[Note the question that is referenced: Have you had our CFO run the numbers as if the last funding formula were run this year? I think this should be done and shared with all constituents so we will know where we might stand.]

No, we don't run the formula. In fact, we can't run the formula because you have to have everybody's numbers and we don't have numbers from other universities. What the formula produces is a number that says this is how much – based on your enrollment and several other factors – is required in state funding for an institution to operate effectively. It provides a total number. It does that for all of the institutions, and then it addresses which institutions are funded at 70% of the optimum number, which are funded at 90% of the optimum number, etc., etc. We would lose money under the adopted formula because it's mostly an enrollment-based calculation. It also favors the large research universities because they get a bigger multiplier against the credit hours. Their enrollment growth has been greater. The idea when it was introduced previously was to equalize the percentages so that everyone would be funded at a certain level– for example, 78% of their optimum number. That would have meant we would be reduced down to that number and other institutions would climb until it balanced. The popular understanding was that the goal was to level the per student appropriated amount but that is incorrect. That's not the way the formula works.

[Note the question that is referenced: Is it true that student housing is about one third empty? If so, does this mean that the cost of housing is too high on campus?]

Occupancy is low. First of all, we had 362 beds when we built the new hall. We didn't build because we were pressed for space. We did it because some of the housing we had was just simply not competitive. It was not what students want to live in, and so we felt a need to provide more attractive options for students. We will decommission some halls but our occupancy rate still will not be at the level we would want it to be unless we can attract more upper class students back into the halls. The question about whether or not the cost of housing is too high is really a good question. When we compare DSU to other institutions, we're not too high but perhaps we're too high when it comes to keeping our students in the halls. What we don't know is whether or not cost is a factor and so Greg Redlin is currently devising a proposal that would gradually step down the cost of living in our residence halls for students who stay. Remember, we require that Freshman live in the halls, and so as you become a Sophomore you would earn a lower rate and as a Junior you would earn a lower rate still and so forth. We hope we can enhance the affordability of the halls and keep more of the students in the residence halls. I would point out that one of the great things that has happened with Teach for America being here is that our halls are fully subscribed in the summer time. In fact, we hardly can find a bed for summer camps and similar activities.

[Note the question that is referenced: Why has the University Budget Committee not met this year? Will the faculty have meaningful input into any future budgets and budget reductions?]

Our view has been that the University Budget Committee was an ad hoc committee intended for a specific purpose and that was to complete reviews of divisions and departments and to make recommendations when the cutbacks were coming from the Legislature. Those reviews were completed. The recommendations were drawn and with the relatively small level of budget cutbacks that we experienced this year we just didn't see the need for the University Budget Committee to continue that level of effort. If there are budget cuts of the level that the Governor is seeking (6% or so) there may very well be a need to call the University Budget Committee back into action and, yes of course, we would involve faculty. We do think that faculty currently participate in the decisions through representatives on the Academic Council and the President's Cabinet.

[Note the questions that are referenced:

Mr. President what are the two and five year goals you have for the university?

What future role(s) do you see for the university?

What changes do you foresee for the university over the next two years? Five years?]

I wrapped all of these questions together for my comments. The last three years have been very difficult ones for Delta State. They have certainly been difficult ones for me, the most difficult in my 30-some years in higher ed. The problems have been just as challenging for other universities in Mississippi and across the nation. You might be interested to know – you might even be encouraged by this negative fact – a friend of mine that works at Westchester University in Pennsylvania (suburb of Philadelphia) said that their Governor just recommended a rollback in funding for higher education in the next year of 50%. He made the same recommendation last year and the Legislature gave him a cut of 20%. What the Governor really wants there I'm told is zero out higher education direct appropriations in favor of a voucher system for students. Obviously a lot of redefinition is happening here and elsewhere.

My overriding goal of course which I have said over the years has been that we would be the best regional university in America. Those of you who were here nine years ago when I arrived will remember I offered a series of fifteen statements that defined what I meant. For me those basic concepts haven't changed. I think we still have obligations, responsibilities, and leadership to provide in this region and I think we have a mission that requires us to do those things. However, the persistent rollbacks in state resources, initial formula cuts, and the loss of federal earmarks (which by the way annually costs us \$800,000 to \$900,000) have forced us to spend much more time and energy on efficiencies and on sustaining the academic core of our enterprise. Our outreach to individuals and communities in the region has been severely limited by financial circumstances, and we have not been able to act on many of the creative ideas that arise from the organization because there is simply not the money to do so.

For example, there came from Academic Administration an absolutely outstanding idea for a Student Success Center that I still want to create but we must find a way to do it without any additional resources.

Leadership is our role as an institution. We must lead in this region. We must lead in the state as the outstanding regional university. More broadly we must redefine how we exercise leadership because the resources that we can apply to the challenges and the opportunities are greatly reduced or they are just nonexistent.

That redefinition of how we serve is going to be the principal challenge to this organization. What we do doesn't have to be less ambitious; it just has to be less costly. We will work to turn enrollment in a positive direction. We will redefine our regional mission and address our new resource realities. We will announce a campaign very shortly that has been underway – it has been in its silent phase – and we'll reach its goal by 2015. We will continue to work on facility projects. We're headed for the last phase of Caylor-White-Walters – the money is there for that. We're looking at renewing the whole student union to relocate food services. We intend to redo Ward Hall and make it into a Student Services Center. We will sustain the quality of our academic offerings even as we work to boost the graduation rate. We will assert our goal as the most diverse public university in Mississippi and we will work on a greater understanding of how that characteristic informs all that we do.

There are stories that really encourage me. For instance, some of you have asked about my wife, Pat. She had hip replacement surgery last week, and she is doing very well. When we were at Baptist Hospital there was a young woman who provided nursing care for Pat. She was pleasant, worked hard and knew what she was doing. She told us she is a graduate of Delta State University and she went on to talk about how much she loves this institution. She didn't know who we were at first so it was remarkable to hear her go on at length. Not only is our nursing graduate doing well, but she is married to a young man who is in his last year of medical school. They had a child this past year. I hear those kinds of stories all the time. It is because of our graduates and their successes that I feel good about what we do as an institution. It is worth it to meet the challenges.

Those are my answers to the questions. – *(Dr. John Hilpert)*

Does anyone have any questions they would like to address at this time? – *(Brett Oleis)*

President Hilpert one of the things you talked about was going back to the funding formula you said that Dr. Hank Bounds (IHL) if we do eventually go back to the funding formula, he is going to rethink or do something different than the latest formula. I've heard talk about out comes based, in some respect? Do you have any idea of exactly what Dr. Bounds is looking for in those out comes? – *(Hebert)*

No, he has talked about a number of things. First, let me make sure you all know it is the Board's decision. Because there will be 4 new board members in May some of the current board members would like to get a quick decision. Dr. Bounds, on the other hand, has been working on a new process. What he has talked about is an enrollment base for the funding formula but then a significant part of the money being made available on performance criteria. Those things may focus on graduation rate and where graduates go to work. – (Dr. John Hilpert)

07) Old Business:

I have already spoken about the calendar. - Oleis

08) New Business:

University-wide honor pledge. – Tibbs

I would like to send this to the Committee on General Academic Affairs. We will let them do research on the topic. There is a group call Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE). They are a watch dog for student's rights. If the honor pledge is not addressed we could have difficulties with groups like FIRE.

The Committee on General Academic Affairs' members asked for more direction.

Tibbs says he will create a resolution. Discussion is tabled until a resolution is submitted.

Resolution for the FAR document (replacement for the MAD) - Mitchell

First reading – Orally read during meeting.

Please! Please! Make the faculty you represent aware of these documents. I don't want anyone surprised a month from now. Are the percentages written in stone? Could we change the 60-20-20? I would like to see a heavier weight in research. - Karahan

Nothing is written in stone yet. – Oleis

Is there going to be a meeting in the future where we can discuss these documents? - Herbert
Yes. I'm not sure of a date yet. – Oleis

I want every faculty member to have seen these documents. – Oleis

I would like to have a town hall style meeting. – Oleis

Are you trying to get this done in time for this year's review? – Magee

Yes - Oleis

So this would be quite different; like a three point scale. – Magee

It's still 3 terms but there are no numbers and no numerical formula. – Hayes

The new documents ask for training of the Chairs, and for Faculty being evaluated. There is no expectation that you will fill out each block. There is a one page cheat sheet that outlines the committee's findings. – Hayes

Realize we are still fine tuning these documents. – Oleis

There will be a one year pilot period to see if these documents meet the needs of their departments. – Hayes

Another reason we are working on this is to reduce the overhead for administrators so they don't have to keep track of so many different evaluations. The spreadsheet style will also ensure that all evaluations that are submitted are uniform. It will cut down on the Gone With the Wind style evaluations. Hopefully this form will get us back to apples to apples and oranges to oranges comparisons. We need to move away from thinking about this as punitive. - Oleis

There needs to be some kind of official communication on April 1st and that should come from Academic Affairs so that whatever the format that is used we have time to digest it. - Mitchell

Many of our faculty members have completed their MAD documents. They won't have a chance to really review the new format. - Patton

If they have already finished the MAD then submit that. The evaluation period will be until 01-01-13. A lot of people have moved to the calendar year. – Hayes

09) Adjournment: Approved

