

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: February 18, 2019

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Dr. Severine Groh
Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Charles McAdams, Dr. Billy Moore, Mr. Rick Munroe,
Dr. Christy Riddle, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Mr. Charlie King
and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: None

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on February 18, 2019. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Rutledge and seconded by Dr. McAdams, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on February 11, 2019.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from last week. President LaForge continued his campus outreach by hosting another Faculty and Staff luncheon. The Student Government Association hosted the Student Lunch with Legislators at the Mississippi Capitol last Wednesday. Mr. Munroe said the event went very well, and he was very pleased that legislators engaged with the students by asking and answering questions following the luncheon. President and Mrs. LaForge visited Kosciusko High School to recruit for Delta State. President LaForge participated in the conference call with other members of the NCAA's Ad Hoc Committee on Sports Wagering. The committee is trying to anticipate the needs for federal and state legislation, as well as for NCAA regulations. President LaForge continued his capital campaign meetings last week by visiting with Ms. Nan Sanders. President and Mrs. LaForge attended the Big Band Bash at the Cleveland Country Club on Friday to support the DSU Jazz Ensemble.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The men's and women's basketball teams competed against the University of West Florida and Valdosta State University last week. The men's team went 0-2 and the women's team went 1-1. Senior day for basketball will take place on Saturday during the Mississippi College games. Mr. Kinnison is optimistic both basketball teams will see tournament play. The baseball team continues their winning streak with four wins last week over University of Arkansas at Monticello and University of Montevallo. The softball team went 2-1 against University of Montevallo over the weekend. Both teams play at home this weekend against Union University. The swimming and diving teams are hosting and competing in the New South Intercollegiate Swimming Conference Championship meet from Wednesday through Saturday. The women's tennis team competes against Ouachita Baptist University on Sunday.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on facilities projects. The Hill Apartments renovation project will be complete by the end of May. The moving of the Social Work Department to Kethley Hall is 85%

complete. Mr. Rutledge is optimistic it will be finished this week. The roofing projects should be advertised by the end of the week. The Walter Sillers Coliseum project has made slow progress due to questions from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History about the roof.

- President LaForge shared with Cabinet Members some of the meetings and events planned for the week. President LaForge will host a Faculty and Staff luncheon on Tuesday. He will meet with Dr. Jacqueline Goldman, Assistant Professor of Psychology, on Tuesday to discuss her upcoming trip to Poland. Ms. Sarah McLachlan will perform at the BPAC on Tuesday evening. President LaForge will travel to Jackson on Wednesday for the IEO meeting and will attend the IHL Board meeting on Thursday. He travels to Virginia on Thursday afternoon and will return on Sunday.

CABINET TOPIC

Impact of “The Changing College Business Model” on distance learningDr. McAdams

Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet members his presentation on “What can Delta State University Do to Ensure Sustainability?” He emphasized that the assumptions and recommendations made throughout the presentation were of his own accord. Dr. McAdams stated: 1) higher education faces multiple and substantial challenges and is in the midst of significant change; 2) the current business model, as well as some institutional practices and priorities at rural state regional universities, are not sustainable; and 3) universities must evolve/change and respond to internal budget factors, as well as national and state conditions, in order to ensure sustainability. Pressures facing higher education include: changing demographics, evolving culture, a decrease in financial support, and distance education becoming a heightened commodity. Mississippi is facing a decrease in the traditional applicant pool of those students who attend college. The projected high school graduation rates from 2018-19 to 2027-28 show a decline of 11.5% for Mississippi. Distance education will expand with “online only” students comprising an increasingly larger percent of the student body at the national, state, and local level. State appropriations will never be adequate, with few exceptions, and appropriations will continue to decrease. With decreasing state support, Delta State has had to increase tuition at a rate that outpaces inflation. The increase in tuition still doesn’t help cover the increasing cost of expenses due to a downward enrollment trend. Delta State may soon reach the saturation point of how much tuition Delta area students can afford to pay. Another pressure facing universities is public opinion. Many have questioned the value of higher education and asked, “is a college degree worth the cost and incurred debt?” Employers want their potential employees to have a wider skill set and have noticed a disconnect between the degrees graduates have earned and the knowledge, skills, and abilities demanded by the innovation economy for a 21st century workforce. Delta State must recognize we can’t be all things to all people. We must refine our focus on who we are (or want to be) and whom we serve. Going forward, Delta State must make some major changes and minor course corrections including: 1) provide superior customer service to students from the point of the potential student’s initial inquiry to the time they receive a diploma; 2) full participation of all staff and faculty with recruitment and retention initiatives; 3) prioritize budget decisions and operational efficiencies to reflect budget realities and our academic focus; and, 4) affirm and market our value proposition. (see presentation)

BUSINESS

Action

Naming of Campus Facilities policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Naming of Campus Facilities policy for a final reading. The changes outline the reasons and process for removing a name from any facility or program. The University

reserves the right to revoke and terminate its obligations regarding a naming, with no financial responsibility for returning any received contributions to the benefactor. These actions, and the circumstances that prompt them, may apply to an approved naming that has not yet been acted upon or to a conferred naming. Circumstances leading to the removal of a name include but are not limited to: the commission of and conviction for a crime by an individual whose name appears on a naming opportunity; the failure of a donor to fulfill gift commitments as specified in a stated agreement; and, the benefactor's or honoree's reputation changes substantially so that the continued use of that name may compromise the public trust, dishonor the University's standards, or otherwise be contrary to the best interests of the University.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the revised Naming of Campus Facilities policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Munroe. The motion was approved.

Freedom of Speech and Assembly policy (new-final reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the Freedom of Speech and Assembly policy for a final reading. Due to public speech issues occurring system wide, IHL Commissioner Al Rankins has asked each university to review their respective free speech policies and update them, if needed. The freedom of speech policy from Mississippi State University was used as a guide for our policy. Dr. McAdams' suggestion of adding "classroom instruction" to section A under the "Relocation of Expressive Activities" section of the policy was added. Mr. Rutledge said he did not receive any recommended changes from Faculty Senate or Staff Council, in response to President LaForge's recommendation for Dr. Riddle and Dr. Groh to poll their constituencies regarding the policy.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the Freedom of Speech and Assembly policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. McAdams. The motion was approved.

U.S., State, and Delta State University Flag Protocols Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett brought to Cabinet for review the revised U.S., State, and Delta State University Flag Protocols. Facilities Management will purchase/fabricate and maintain a display case that will house all flag proclamations on the south side of the flag plaza. The Office of Communications and Marketing will be responsible for drafting and placing the proclamations in the display case. Archives will house proclamations, once removed from the display case. The section regarding family and friends being able to display mementos with the proclamations was removed.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve the U.S., State, and Delta State University Flag Protocols and seconded by Dr. Moore.

Cabinet members suggested creating a policy for this item. As a result, Dr. Bennett withdrew her motion to approve the U.S., State, and Delta State University Flag Protocols, and, instead, will bring the new policy to a future Cabinet meeting.

Hiring Requests Cabinet Members

In response to the Cabinet's decision that all requests to search for and fill vacant positions will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Cabinet, Dr. Bennett and Mr. Munroe brought to Cabinet positions for consideration. The positions presented do not impact the salary savings identified previously to address the budget shortfall.

Student Affairs Request

Dr. Bennett presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire a Director of Career Services, Assistant Director of Housing and Residence Life, Assistant Director of Admissions, and Admissions Clerk. The Director of Career Services and Assistant Director of Housing and Residence Life have submitted their resignations. The Office of Admissions is undergoing reorganization, and the coordinator positions were eliminated. The salaries from these positions will fund the Assistant Director of Admissions and Admissions Clerk.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve the searching and hiring of a Director of Career Services, Assistant Director of Housing and Residence Life, Assistant Director of Admissions, and Admissions Clerk and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

University Advancement Request

Mr. Munroe presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire a Director of Advancement Services. This position was in effect in 2015. With the resignation of the Campaign and Research Coordinator, Mr. Munroe plans to replace that position with the Director of Advancement Services. The funds to pay for the Director of Advancement Services are paid for by the Foundation.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Munroe to approve the searching and hiring of a Director of Advancement Services and seconded by Dr. McAdams. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Budget Update.....Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge announced the Phase I (Facilities) and Phase II (New and expanded activities) budget requests have been received. The Executive Committee will review the requests this week, and the requests will be presented to Cabinet members on March 4. If no additional funds or tuition are received for FY20, the budget will have to be cut by \$1.2 million. Mr. Rutledge sent to each Vice President the amount they will need to reduce their budgets, if additional revenue is not received. The university’s requested tuition amount for FY20 is due to IHL on March 7. The Executive Committee has decided to request up to a 5% increase, with the actual percentage being dependent upon the amount of funding Delta State receives from the legislature.

Pepsi Contract update.....Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge had a meeting with PepsiCo representatives recently to discuss our contract with them. Prior to Delta State’s contact with PepsiCo, Delta State received \$18,000 in commissions during a 12-month period. In nine months, Delta State has received \$96,000 in commissions from PepsiCo. According to our contract, Delta State receives a set amount for every case of drinks sold, up to 2,500 cases. Once we pass that threshold, Delta State receives triple the amount for every case sold. Once 3,200 cases have been surpassed, Delta State receives a bonus. Delta State has received the first bonus, and the second bonus occurs once 4,000 cases have been sold. Young-Mauldin Cafeteria has sold over 4,000 gallons of product with Gatorade, juices, and Dr. Pepper being the most popular beverages. PepsiCo plans to help Delta State start a recycling program, and they will give the university \$5,000 to help fund the program for the first year, and an additional \$2,000 each year after that, for the remainder of the contract. As part of their public relations efforts, PepsiCo plans to hire two Delta State students to be interns to help with product promotion and make sure machines are working.

Admissions Reorganization Update Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett informed Cabinet members the Office of Admissions is undergoing a reorganization. Mr. Merritt Dain has been working diligently on building an efficient team. Dr. Bennett and Mr. Dain have worked on creating job descriptions for the various positions, and Mr. Dain is working on cross training the employees. All coordinator positions within the office are being eliminated, and the positions will go offline by March 31. The Recruit software is only being used at 25% of its capacity. Dr. Edwin Craft has arranged for Ellucian representatives to come to campus Tuesday through Thursday of this week to listen to members of the Admissions' staff on their processes to see how Recruit can best be the used for their needs.

New Student Week Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett advised Cabinet members that the New Student Week will not occur in 2019. The opportunity for a resurgence will be revisited at a later time.

Career Services Feedback..... Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett conveyed to Cabinet Members feedback she received from the resigning Director of Career Services. The feedback included: 1) Career Services lacked support from the academy; 2) student resumes were very poor in quality, and students should be required to create a professional resume; and 3) Delta State receives wonderful support from the Cleveland community.

Cabinet Meeting Schedule.....Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts distributed to Cabinet members the revised Cabinet schedule for the semester. She said that meeting requests in Microsoft Outlook have been updated to match the current schedule.

Additional information

- Mr. King thanked Cabinet members for their support and help with the Student Lunch with Legislators last week.
- Mr. King announced the elections for Student Government Association officers for the 2019-20 school year will be held on March 27-29. Also, the State of the Student Union Address will take place on March 25.
- Dr. Riddle announced the Administrative Staff Council is currently seeking nominations for Staff Emeritus, and they will announce the request for nominations for the H.L. Nowell Outstanding Staff Award in March.
- Mr. Munroe held a meeting with the chosen recipients of the Foundation's inaugural Spring for Success micro-grants fundraising projects. The filming of support videos will begin soon. The chosen projects include: 1) Body Armor Safety Initiative, 2) Virtual Dementia Tour® Project, and 3) Statesman and Fighting Okra Costumes.
- Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet members that the Office of Human Resources is performing a review of all of Delta State's policies. During the coming weeks, several policies, which need to be updated, will be brought to Cabinet for approval.
- Mr. Rutledge announced that the food service vendors, who submitted an RFP, will be notified on Friday of Delta State's selection.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Sarah McLachlan concert, February 19, 8:00 p.m., BPAC
- Wizard of Oz performance, February 26, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Colloquia Lecture Series with Mr. Steve Forbes, March 4, 6:00 p.m., Jobe Hall

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, February 25, at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Campaign Update (Mr. Munroe)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:37 p.m.