

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: February 24, 2025**

**Members in attendance:** Dr. Dan Ennis, Ms. Arlene Cash, Dr. Edwin Craft, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Suzette Matthews, and Ms. Marilyn Read (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

**Members not in attendance:** Dr. Nora Gough-Davis

**Guests:** Mr. Peter Dean and Mr. Tim Nicholson

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on February 24, 2025. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Ennis presiding.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Dr. Lovin and seconded by Dr. Matthews, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on February 10, 2025.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- Dr. Ennis gave an overview of the activities and events of the last week. Dr. Ennis and Dr. Craft met with consultants of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems to discuss the Institutions of Higher Learning's funding formula. Dr. Ennis provided Cabinet members with an update on the State's legislative session and bills that could affect Delta State University. Additionally, Dr. Ennis discussed the state of federal funding and grant funding that could affect Delta State in the coming months. Dr. Lovin announced he made an offer to one of the Director of Public Safety candidates interviewed last week. The IHL Board of Trustees met last week for their monthly meeting.
- Dr. Craft gave an update on Facilities Management projects. Dr. Craft informed Cabinet members a boiler for Brumby Castle Hall failed, and the University provided space heaters to residents to ensure their warmth until the situation could be resolved. The new part for the boiler arrives today, and a new boiler has been purchased. Dr. Craft hired a consultant to review housekeeping and custodial practices. The consultant will provide a report on how these departments can be more strategic. The Young Mauldin Cafeteria roof leaked last week; however, the kitchen equipment was not damaged.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The men's and women's swimming and diving teams finished second in the MSISC Championship. The student-athletes that qualified for Nationals travel to Indiana March 11-15. The men's and women's basketball teams compete against Mississippi College on Saturday. The men's team has qualified for the Gulf South Conference tournament, and the women's team must win on Saturday to be considered. The baseball team hosts Ouachita Baptist University tomorrow. The baseball and softball teams are traveling to University of West Florida this weekend. The tennis teams are competing in Texas this week, and the golf team is in Louisiana.
- Ms. Kirkhart gave an update on the Student Government Association.
- Dr. Ennis gave an overview of the week. The Margaret Tullos Social Work Symposium is Friday, and the

Office of Admissions is hosting a Transfer Day on Friday.

**CABINET TOPIC**

**Brand Strategy..... Dr. Matthews**

Dr. Matthews brought Mr. Tim Nicholson to the Cabinet to share his proposed strategies for the University's brand and recruitment. Mr. Nicholson's three main initiatives to revamp the brand are to embrace and envision a new reality, create a culture that is compelling, and enroll more students. The last initiative will be at the heart of all projects conducted within Communications and Marketing, and Mr. Nicholson encourages Cabinet members to consider their own initiatives and to plan them to be in service of enrolling more students.

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**Statesmen Boulevard Sidewalk Project Activation and MOU with MDOT ..... Dr. Craft**

Dr. Craft announced that Delta State was awarded a Transportation Alternatives Project through the Mississippi Department of Transportation, and he needs Cabinet's approval to activate the project and enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Mississippi Transportation Commission.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Craft to approve the request to activate the Transportation Alternatives Project and enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Mississippi Department of Transportation and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

**University Apartments Length of Stay ..... Dr. Craft**

Dr. Craft informed Cabinet members a resident of the University Apartments can reside there for three years. The current length of stay was approved by Cabinet in 2017. Dr. Craft requests to change the length of stay to five years.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Craft to approve the length of stay at the University Apartments to five years and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

**Accounts Payable policy, Agency Accounts policy, Budget Transfers policy, Data Integrity policy, and Meals Allowance policy (revised – final reading) ..... Dr. Craft**

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Craft to discuss the Accounts Payable policy, Agency Accounts policy, Budget Transfers policy, Data Integrity policy, and Meals Allowance policy in bulk and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

On behalf of the University Leadership Council, Dr. Craft brought the Accounts Payable policy, Agency Accounts policy, Budget Transfers policy, Data Integrity policy, and Meals Allowance policy to Cabinet for a final reading. All policies were revised to coincide with current practices, and minor grammatical and stylistic changes were made.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Craft to approve the Accounts Payable policy, Agency Accounts policy, Budget Transfers policy, Data Integrity policy, and Meals Allowance policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

**Contracts policy..... Dr. Craft**

On behalf of the University Leadership Council, Dr. Craft brought the Contracts policy to Cabinet for a final reading. All contracts entered by Delta State will have a pre- and post-checklist to complete. Third audit, we will do this every year. All contracts follow the same procedures no matter what the amount or type of contract. Dr. Craft is revising an open position to be a contract specialist, and they will review all contracts for completeness and accuracy prior to being submitted to Dr. Craft for signature and approval.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Craft to approve the Contracts policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

**Statement of Student Responsibilities and Statement of Student Rights (revised – final reading) ..Dr. Lovin**

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Lovin to discuss the Statement of Student Responsibilities and State of Student Rights together and seconded by Dr. Matthews. The motion passed unanimously.

On behalf of the University Leadership Council, Dr. Lovin brought the Statement of Student Responsibilities and Statement of Student Rights to Cabinet for a final reading. Dr. Lovin updated and restructured both policies, and they coincide with current practices.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the Statement of Student Responsibilities and Statement of Student Rights for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Matthews. The motion passed unanimously.

**Discussion**

**Enrollment Update .....Ms. Cash**

Ms. Cash gave an update on current enrollment figures for Fall 2025. The Office of Admissions is planning Delta Days for April 13-14, and Ms. Cash is developing a planning committee. She requested Cabinet members to send her recommendations for membership.

**Fundraising Update ..... Dr. Matthews**

Dr. Matthews provided an update on fundraising for FY25. In FY24, the Foundation raised \$2.3 million, and they have raised \$3.4 million thus far for FY25. Her goal is to raise \$5 million for the year. She discussed current initiatives and fundraising efforts. Delta State's Pig Pickin' Weekend is September 5-6, and Homecoming is October 18.

**Additional Information**

- Dr. Ennis announced the Child Development Center is closing in July 2025. The staff have been informed, and families will be notified this evening at 5:30 p.m. All current contracts will be honored.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Vice President for Enrollment Interviews, March 6-7
- Grand Funk Railroad, March 6, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Spring Break, March 10-14

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, March 10, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:08 p.m.