

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: March 23, 2026**

**Members in attendance:** Dr. Dan Ennis, Dr. Curtis Coleman, Dr. Edwin Craft, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Ms. Hayden Kirkhart, and Dr. Suzette Matthews (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

**Members not in attendance:** Mr. Peter Dean

**Guests:** Ms. Tijuana Harris, Director, Human Resources  
Ms. Gina Goetzinger, Enterprise Applications Director, OIT  
Ms. Collins Phelps, Interim Chair, Staff Council  
Ms. Denise Soldevila, Business Analyst, OIT  
Dr. Jon Westfall, President-Elect, Faculty Senate

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on March 23, 2026. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Ennis presiding.

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

On motion by Dr. Matthews and seconded by Dr. Lovin, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on March 9, 2026.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- Dr. Matthews announced Centennial Under the Stars is April 11. Faculty and staff can purchase tickets for a discounted price of \$30. The Alumni Awards Ceremony is on Friday at 6:00 p.m.
- Dr. Lovin thanked Cabinet members and their teams for their assistance with Spring Fest last week. The Delta State Vocal Collective leaves on Thursday for their trip to New York City to perform at the Lincoln Center.
- Dr. Craft has met with several budget managers to begin preparations for the FY27 budget. He and his team are preparing the Annual Operating Budget for submission to IHL in April. The budget will not be finalized until the legislature finalizes their session and the status of appropriations and capital projects funds are known. Dr. Craft announced the Bologna Performing Arts Center has a new executive director, Mr. Matty Bengloff. Additionally, three performances remain for the 2025-2026 season. Kansas performs on Thursday, April 9. The Magic School Bus: Lost in the Solar System show is Tuesday, April 14. The final show is Taj Mahal and the Phantom Blues Ban on Tuesday, April 21.
- Dr. Coleman provided an overview of current data for fall enrollment. The National College Decision Day is May 1, so the numbers should see changes at that time. Eight Takin' Care of Business Days are

scheduled with virtual and in-person options. Recruiters are on the road recruiting at a graduate fair in Alabama, south Mississippi, and Mississippi Delta Community College this week.

- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The Athletics Hall of Fame ceremony was held over the weekend. The baseball and softball teams hosted University of West Alabama for a series over the weekend. The baseball team travels to Southern Arkansas University on Tuesday, and both teams travel to University of Alabama-Huntsville this weekend for a series. Spring football practice has commenced. The golf team competes at Southern Arkansas University today and tomorrow. The tennis team competes at Christian Brothers University tomorrow.
- Dr. Griffin shared curriculum decisions and planning for the next year are nearing completion. To assist with retention, general education, and remediation, Dr. Griffin is creating working groups to dive into these topics to see what the university is doing well and what we could do better. The signing of the 2+2 agreement with Itawamba Community College with their Connect Program will occur soon. A new assistant teacher pathway program is in development.
- In the absence of Mr. Dean, Dr. Westfall shared that Faculty Senate leadership change occurs on April 9. In the last Faculty Senate meeting, general education changes were created and proposed for Academic Council. The Student Senate requested a mid-semester course evaluation, so Faculty Senate is deliberating on what a mid-semester evaluation would look like. The Faculty Handbook draft will go to Academic Council for review soon. A subcommittee on course evaluations is searching for a new instrument for evaluations that will provide better data.
- Ms. Kirkhart shared with Cabinet members updates about the Student Government Association (SGA) and student body. Ms. Kirkhart hosted a meeting of all the student body presidents for the Institutions of Higher Learning last week. The attendees were very complimentary to the campus. She thanked all Cabinet members for their assistance in making Spring Fest and the Waka Flocka Flame concert a success. SGA elections begin tomorrow morning. The Big Green Event is Saturday, and students meet in front of the Nowell Union at 8:00 a.m. for registration.
- Dr. Ennis attended Cleveland Day at the Capitol last week and the IHL Board meeting. He provided Cabinet members with an update on the legislative session, and he shared items the university is watching this week during conference week.

**CABINET TOPIC**

**New Online Forms Tool (Kuali)..... Dr. Craft**

Dr. Craft invited Ms. Denise Soldevila and Ms. Gina Goetzinger to Cabinet to introduce Cabinet members to the new online forms tool, Kuali. Ms. Soldevila and Ms. Goetzinger are diligently working to streamline processes and enhance functionality at Delta State by digitizing forms. Ms. Soldevila is working with offices across campus to see how Kuali and digital forms can ease their processes. The Office of Finance will be the first digitized office. Lastly, Ms. Soldevila and Ms. Harris shared a demonstration of how a hiring request approval process works within Kuali.

**BUINESS**

**Action**

**Staff Evaluations..... Dr. Craft**

Dr. Craft invited Ms. Harris to Cabinet to review the staff evaluations schedule. All managers must attend a training with Human Resources prior to conducting evaluations. The training will assist in ratings and creating measurable and obtainable goals for staff. The training sessions will be April 7-9. Evaluations are to be conducted by managers from April 13 to May 9. Vice presidents are to review the evaluations for their areas from May 11 to May 15. All signed performance evaluations are due to Human Resources by May 19.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Craft to approve the Staff Evaluation schedule and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

**Summer Hours..... Dr. Craft**

Dr. Craft invited Ms. Harris to present the summer work schedule to be approved by Cabinet. Employees will have a flexible work schedule during the summer months, while maintaining a full 40-hour work week and ensuring the continuity of university operations. This change in the summer schedule is designed to enhance work-life balance and employee well-being, without compromising service delivery. Employees will work nine hours per day, Monday through Thursday, and four hours on Friday, totaling 40 hours per week.

**Work Schedule breakdown**

- Work Hours:
  - Monday to Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
  - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- Lunch Break, Monday to Thursday, one hour

Employees must work their full 40 hours a week or use vacation/sick time for any hours not worked. Any variation from the standard schedule must receive prior approval from a supervisor or manager. Managers retain the authority to adjust individual schedules as needed to accommodate events, service requirements, or other operational needs. Managers are required to communicate schedule changes with the appropriate vice president who have overarching authority to adjust schedules as needed to provide continuity of campus operations.

The summer work schedule begins on Monday, May 11. The summer work schedule concludes on Friday, July 31.

Upon approval of the summer work schedule for 2026, Dr. Ennis requested the summer work schedule be transformed into policy.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Craft to approve the summer work schedule and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

**FY27 and FY28 Holiday Schedule ..... Dr. Craft**

Dr. Craft invited Ms. Harris to Cabinet to share with Cabinet members the holiday schedules for FY27 and FY28. The holiday schedule includes Independence Day, Labor Day, two days for Thanksgiving, eight days for winter holidays (Christmas and New Year's), Martin Luther King Day, a spring holiday, and Memorial Day. The holiday schedule is to not exceed fifteen days per year per IHL Board policy.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Craft to approve the FY27 and FY28 holiday schedules and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The

motion passed unanimously.

**Staff Appreciation Week.....Ms. Phelps**

On behalf the Administrative Staff Council, Ms. Phelps requested approval to transition the Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day from a single, full-day event to a week-long series of activities and to rename the event Wayne Blansett Staff Appreciation Week. The Administrative Staff Council Staff Development Committee believes this updated name more accurately reflects the broader focus on recognition and morale-building that the expanded format would provide. The proposed structure would allow staff members to engage in offered opportunities offered throughout the week and to participate without requiring offices to close for an entire day. By distributing activities across multiple days, university operations can remain open and accessible while still prioritizing meaningful engagement. The appreciation week would be Monday, June 1 through Friday, June 5. The proposed schedule for the week is as follows:

**Monday, June 1 at 10 a.m. on the 2nd floor of the Nowell Union**

The week begins with a welcome from Dr. Ennis, raffle prizes, and a fun awards announcement. Refreshments will be served.

**Tuesday, June 2**

Staff Council members will deliver sweet and savory appreciation snacks with personalized tags to all staff throughout the day.

**Wednesday, June 3 at 8:30 a.m. in the Leroy E. Morganti Atrium**

Staff Council and the Office of the President will host Donuts with Dan. Staff members are treated to donuts and coffee, and this will be a time for staff to ask Dr. Ennis questions.

**Wednesday, June 3 at 6:00 p.m. at Hey Joe's**

Staff Council invites staff members to participate in Trivia Night. Staff Council will provide appetizers.

**Thursday, June 4 at 11:00 a.m. on the mini quadrangle in front of Walter Sillers Coliseum**

Staff Council will host a cookout featuring burgers and hot dogs served with chips, cookies, and soft drinks. Yard games will be available for added fun.

**Friday, June 5 at 8:30 a.m. in Jacob Conference Center**

Staff Council will provide a light breakfast followed by a speaker and service awards presentation.

**Motion:** Moved by Ms. Phelps to approve the transition of Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day to Wayne Blansett Staff Appreciation Week on the week of June 1 through June 5 and seconded by Dr. Craft. The motion passed unanimously.

**Discussion**

None

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- 45 Years of Wiley Planetarium, March 23, 6:30 pm, Wiley Planetarium

- Alumni Service Awards Ceremony and Reception, March 27, 6:00 pm, Leroy E. Morganti Atrium in Kent Wyatt Hall
- Good Friday Holiday, April 3

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, April 6, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.