

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: April 1, 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, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

**Members not in attendance:** Mr. Charlie King

**Guests:** Mr. Gunner Sizemore, President's Art Award Winner  
Mr. Michael Stanley, Chair, Art Department  
Mr. Jordan Whitchurch, Cabinet Art Award Winner

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on April 1, 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 March 27, 2019.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge introduced Mr. Michael Stanley, Chair of the Art Department. Mr. Stanley introduced Mr. Gunner Sizemore, the President's Art Award winner, and Mr. Jordan Whitchurch, the Cabinet Art Award winner. Mr. Sizemore won with his image titled "Envy". Mr. Whitchurch won with a painting from his senior thesis based on relationships.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from the last week. President LaForge and Dr. Bennett traveled to Greenwood High School last week for a recruiting visit. President LaForge attended a reception for the Kyle Educational Trust Board Members and their scholarship recipients. The Kyle Educational Trust gives annually for scholarships, and their donations make up the majority of the annual operating scholarships. President LaForge visited the Office of Admissions last Friday to meet all the new staff members. He stated great changes and additions have been made. The National Alumni Association Board met last week. Mr. Munroe stated the Board Members are fired up, and they are committed to the University Advancement mantra of alumni engagement going forward. President LaForge represented Delta State at the inauguration of President Blake Thompson at Mississippi College last Friday. On Saturday, President LaForge had the chance to meet with the football team to encourage them as they finish up their spring practices.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The baseball team went 2-2 last week, and the softball team went 1-2. The baseball team is on the road this week playing Henderson State University, Ouachita Baptist University, and series against Lee University this weekend. The softball team will also play Lee University this weekend. The golf team has their final match against the University of West Florida this

week prior to the GSC tournament. The annual Green and White football game is Thursday evening. The tennis teams compete against Blue Mountain College today and Auburn University at Montgomery this weekend. This will be senior day for our tennis teams. Student Athlete Day is Thursday. Athletics will recognize their student-athletes with a lunch in the Dorgan Center.

- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on facilities projects. The MDOT sidewalk project was approved, and it will begin this summer. Bids for the roofing project will open on April 10. The Walter-Sillers Coliseum HVAC projects are on hold due to the Mississippi Department of Archives History. The lighting project will continue in two weeks with Bailey Hall. The RFP for the golf course development will be released on Wednesday. Also, a meeting on the President’s home will occur on Wednesday to finalize all plans.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet Members some of the meetings and events planned for the week. Representatives from FedEx will be on campus Wednesday for their gift announcement to the Commercial Aviation Department. President LaForge and Dr. McAdams will meet with Dr. Andrew Wegmann on Wednesday to discuss The Madison Center. Mr. Andy Anderson of the Bank of Anguilla will present a donation to Delta State University Foundation on Thursday. President LaForge travels to Minneapolis on Friday for the NCAA DI Men’s Final Four, and he will return on Wednesday. The next Cabinet meeting is April 10.

**CABINET TOPIC**

**Staff Leadership Program..... Dr. Riddle**

Dr. Riddle shared with Cabinet members a program created by the Administrative Staff Council Executive Committee to fulfill a need for staff development. The program, DSU LEADS, is a professional development opportunity for Delta State staff that promotes individual and collaborative leadership. The program provides action-based learning to link, empower, and develop staff, which in turn, increases Delta State’s services to students and opportunities for staff upward mobility. The objectives of the program are to cultivate a positive, collaborative, action-oriented culture among staff; increase awareness and understanding of university structure and priorities; and sharpen skills to excel in current positions and prepare for future Delta State opportunities. A staff member’s eligibility hinges on three areas: 1) must be a full-time employee for a minimum of two years as of the program start date; 2) the staff member must be at a coordinator level or below; and 3) have an interest in furthering a career at Delta State. DSU LEADS is limited to 10 staff members per cohort, and each cohort will participate in seven sessions for a total of 17 hours. Staff members interested in the program can apply online with supervisor approval by April 18. The first cohort will be announced at the Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day in May.

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**Faculty Positions policy (revised – final reading) .....Dr. McAdams**

On the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet for a final reading the revised Faculty Positions policy. An additional requirement was added to the he rank of Assistant Professor of Practice. This rank is required to have a record of professional practice related to the teaching assignment as well as a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in an appropriate field related to the teaching assignment.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Faculty Positions policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

**Faculty Promotions policy (revised – final reading).....Dr. McAdams**

On the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet for a final reading the revised Faculty Promotions policy. An additional requirement was added to the he rank of Assistant Professor of Practice. This rank is required to have a record of professional practice related to the teaching assignment as well as a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in an appropriate field related to the teaching assignment.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Faculty Promotions policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

**Notification of Rights under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions policy (revised – final reading) ..... Dr. McAdams**

On the recommendation of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet for a final reading the revised Notification of Rights under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions policy. The policy was updated to reflect other universities’ policies on FERPA and information found in the Federal Register.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Notification of Rights under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Munroe. The motion was approved.

**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, Mr. Munroe brought to Cabinet a position for consideration. The position presented does not impact the salary savings identified previously to address the budget shortfall.

**University Advancement Request**

Mr. Munroe presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire a Director of Development due to the resignation of the current employee.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Munroe to approve the searching and hiring of a Director of Development and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

**Ratification of Requests**

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bennett to ratify and affirm the following action taken by the Executive Committee, on behalf of the Cabinet, since Cabinet last met on March 27, 2019 and seconded by Dr. Roberts. The motion was approved.

- March 28, 2019 – Request from Dr. Bennett for approval to search for and hire a Police Officer for the University Police Department.

**Staff Leadership Program..... Dr. Riddle**

Dr. Riddle presented to Cabinet members the Staff Leadership Program for approval. *\*see Cabinet Topic for information*

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Riddle to approve the Staff Leadership Program and seconded by Dr. Groh. The motion was approved.

**Tuition Increase 2019-20..... Mr. Rutledge**

During the budget update by Mr. Rutledge, Cabinet members discussed adding an additional percent to the tuition increase request to be 6% instead of 5%. The 6% increase in tuition would amount to \$7,501 for the 2019-20 academic year.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Munroe to approve adding an additional percent to the tuition increase to be 6% and seconded by Dr. McAdams. **The motion was approved.**

**Discussion**

**Legislative Update ..... Mr. Munroe**

Mr. Munroe and President LaForge gave Cabinet members a legislative update. The bond bill allocates \$7.3 million to Delta State. The money will be used for ADA improvements and various repair and renovation projects. Delta State received \$607,055 for R&R. The appropriations bill provided the funding for the PERS and health insurance cost increases, and Delta State’s four line items—Commercial Aviation, The Delta Center for Culture and Learning, Delta Music Institute, and E-Learning program—within the appropriations bill received funding at last year’s level. The IHL system received \$4 million for salary increases with \$1.9 million being dispersed to the eight main campuses. Delta State received \$1,389 for pay raises for those who did not receive a pay raise last year.

**Budget Update ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge gave Cabinet members an update on the budget planning process. The university will not be able to fund any new and expanded projects this year. The priority list for R&R funds will be revisited by the Executive Committee and brought to Cabinet for final review. R&R projects can begin after July 1 when funds are distributed. Mr. Rutledge stated the final phase of the budget planning process, Phase III – Ongoing Operations, will be sent out on April 12, and requests will be returned to him by April 26 for a report to Cabinet on April 29. Phase III allows for non-salary budgeted amounts to be moved from one line item to another. The Finance and Administration staff took a snapshot of current budgets on March 31, and they will disperse the snapshot out to the departments for this exercise. Mr. Rutledge stated the university has to reduce its budget by \$380,000; \$165,000 has been identified in expenses for the university. Mr. Rutledge and Dr. McAdams will work to reduce the budget by the additional \$189,000. Mr. Rutledge reminded Cabinet members tuition will increase by 5%, housing rates will increase by 2%, and meal plans will increase by 3% upon IHL approval. During a discussion on the tuition increase, it was suggested to add an additional percent to our tuition increase request to be 6% instead of 5% to account for the additional \$189,000 in reductions. The 6% increase in tuition would amount to \$7,501 for the 2019-20 academic year. The tuition increase was put to a vote. *\*see above.*

**Performance Evaluation Timeline ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge received the Office of Human Resources’ recommended timeline for executive, staff, and hourly employee annual performance evaluations. Performance evaluation forms and guidelines will be emailed to supervisors on April 18, and supervisors are to conduct evaluations from April 22 to May 10. Completed performance evaluations should be submitted to the corresponding Dean or Vice President by May 14 for review. All signed performance evaluations are due to Human Resources by May 20. Mr. Rutledge stated a new rating of zero was added to the performance evaluations’ rating scale to allow for a more accurate assessment of an employee’s performance.

**Cabinet Meeting Schedule ..... Dr. Roberts**

Dr. Roberts distributed to Cabinet members the Cabinet schedule for the remainder of the semester. She

said that meeting requests in Microsoft Outlook have been updated to match the current schedule.

**Additional information**

- President LaForge announced the IHL Board approved Delta State's request to bestow an honorary degree to Mr. Ned Mitchell at the Spring 2019 commencement ceremony.
- Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members the golf course development RFP schedule.
- Dr. Roberts announced the 2019-20 SGA elected officers: Ms. Elizabeth Swindle, president; Sarah Ms. Cathryn Snellgrove, secretary; Ms. Meagan Sullivan, treasurer; Mr. Alex Cox, attorney general; and, Ms. Bria Goodson, chief justice. A run-off election for vice-president will take place tomorrow.
- Dr. Riddle informed Cabinet members nominations for the H.L. Nowell Outstanding Support Staff Award can be submitted to Dr. Bennett. The deadline for nominations is April 15.
- Dr. Riddle reminded Cabinet members it is Pre-Registration Week.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Trace Adkins concert, April 4, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Presidential Forums, April 16 (Staff-10:00am, Students-12:15pm, Faculty-3:00pm)
- Easter Holiday, April 19
- 38 Special performance, April 25, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Retirement and Service Awards Ceremony, April 26, 2:00 p.m., Union
- Spring Exams, April 29-May 2
- Spring Commencement, May 3, 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., BPAC

**NEXT MEETING:**

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

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.