

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: April 17, 2023

Members in attendance: Dr. E. E. Caston, Dr. Joshua Armstrong, Dr. Caroline Fletcher, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Ms. Lucia Chacon Habis, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Mr. Rick Munroe, Dr. Andy Novobilski, Dr. Michelle Roberts, and Mr. Larry Wakefield (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: Dr. Edwin Craft, Associate Vice President for Finance and Administration
Dr. Christopher Jurgenson, President-Elect, Faculty Senate
Dr. Ellen Green, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Axel Elliott, 2023 Cabinet Art Award Winner
Mr. Cetin Oguz, Chair, Art Department
Ms. Holly Ray, Chair-Elect, Administrative Staff Council
Ms. Haley Rooks, President-Elect, Student Government Association

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on April 17, 2023. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Caston presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Lovin and seconded by Dr. Novobilski, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on April 3, 2023.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- Dr. Caston introduced and welcomed Mr. Cetin Oguz, Chair of the Art Department, and asked him to introduce the student who recently won the Cabinet Art Award at the Juried Student Art Exhibition. Mr. Oguz introduced Axel Elliott. Elliott won with their piece titled "Peanut." Mr. Oguz shared the President's Art Award with Cabinet members in the absence of the winner Sophia Waddingham. Waddingham won with their piece titled "Pink Day." Cabinet members congratulated the students on their awards.
- Dr. Caston gave an overview of the activities and events from the last couple of weeks. The Gulf South Conference Board of Directors met for their quarterly meeting. The BPAC hosted a performance of R.E.S.P.E.C.T. The Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning announced Delta State's 9th President Dan Ennis. Dr. Roberts shared her appreciation for all university constituents who worked together to execute a successful event. The Foundation staff hosted a Vision Event for Athletics in Olive Branch, MS.
- Ms. Chacon gave an overview of Student Government Association activities. The Student Government Association held their 2nd Annual Big Green Event. Participating students volunteered throughout 14 project sites.

- Mr. Kinnison provided an update on Athletics. The golf team is in Mobile, AL today for the Gulf South Conference Men’s Golf Championship. The baseball and softball teams competed against University of Montevallo over the weekend. The baseball team travels to Lane College tomorrow, and the softball team travels to Southern Arkansas University tomorrow. Both teams host University of West Georgia this weekend. Senior Day for baseball, softball, and golf will take place on Saturday. The Green and White Awards Ceremony is scheduled for Monday, August 24 in the BPAC.
- Mr. Wakefield shared an update on Facilities projects. Facilities Management staff pressure-washed the exterior of Kent Wyatt Hall. Repairs for the roof of Bailey Hall continue. A contractor for the boiler installation in the Nowell Union was chosen. Dehumidifiers will be used in Wright Art Gallery this summer during building closures. The tile installation on the exterior of Wright Art Center is complete.
- Dr. Caston shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. Dr. Caston and Dr. Novobilski met with Erasmus+ Program Visiting Professor Dr. Piotr Mamcarz this morning. The Institutional Executive Officers have their monthly meeting on Tuesday. The IHL Board of Trustees meet on Thursday for their monthly meeting. The Bolivar County Chapter of the National Alumni Association will host their annual crawfish boil on Thursday beginning at 5:30 p.m. The Division of Student Affairs' Awards Ceremony will be held on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. in the BPAC. Student Hall of Fame, Greek Awards, and Emerald Awards will be presented at this time. The Retirement and Service Awards Ceremony will take place on Friday at 2:00 p.m. in Nowell Union.

CABINET TOPIC

None

BUSINESS

Action

Faculty Tenure policy (revised – first reading)Dr. Novobilski

Upon the recommendation of Academic Council and Faculty Senate, Dr. Novobilski brought to Cabinet the revised Faculty Tenure policy for a first reading. In April 2022, the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning revised their policy for the minimum standards required for tenured employment. The new minimum standards include the criteria of collegiality. Also, the Board of Trustees no longer grant approval of tenure, and the decision is made by the Institutional Executive Officer (President). The criteria the Institutional Executive Officer must follow in granting or denying tenure are outlined in the policy and mirror Board policy.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Novobilski to approve the revised Faculty Tenure policy and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Sodexo Contract extension Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield requested approval from Cabinet members to enter into an extended professional services agreement with Sodexo Operation, LLC to provide dining, catering, and concession management. Delta State contracted with Sodexo Operation, LLC in May 2019, and the extension will be five years beginning on June 1, 2026 continuing through June 30, 2031. The original contract has been renegotiated due to hardships from COVID-19 and to decrease the required number of students in housing. The food service rates for students will increase by 3% each year due to inflation.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Novobilski to approve the Sodexo Operation, LLC contract extension and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Spring 2023 Campus Forum Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts reminded Cabinet members that the Spring 2023 Campus Forum will be held on Thursday, April 27 at 2:00 p.m. in the auditorium of Jobe Hall. She provided Cabinet members with the Campus Forum agenda and noted that the topic of Academic Affairs was added to the agenda.

Budget Update Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield provided an update on the university budget. Mr. Wakefield and his staff are reviewing the budgeted projections for revenue and expenses for March compared to the actual revenue and expenses for March. A projection of year-end figures is being configured using trend data across three years. The university is on schedule to have a balanced budget by June 30. The Executive Committee is working with the Accounting staff to complete their budgets by the end of the week.

Legislative Update..... Mr. Munroe

Mr. Munroe provided Cabinet members with a final review of the 2023 Mississippi Legislative Session. For FY24, Delta State will receive: \$300,000 for the Delta Music Institute; \$800,000 for the Department of Commercial Aviation; \$155,000 for E-Learning; \$100,000 for the Delta Center; \$1,259,391 for Repair and Renovation funds; \$5,000,000 in Enhanced Education Funds for the Department of Commercial Aviation; and, \$8,122,500 for bond projects. In federal appropriations, the university will receive \$1,000,000 for Rural STEM and \$450,000 for Rural Radio. Overall, the university will receive a 3.5% increase in state appropriations from FY23.

Recruitment Update/Overview..... Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin provided a recruitment update to Cabinet members. Takin’ Care of Business Days begin tomorrow. Currently, 340 students have signed up for Takin’ Care of Business Days. At this time last year, 263 students had signed up. The Office of Admissions has had several turnovers recently — four recruiters have left for various reasons. Ms. Ashley Tanksley, the new Director of Admissions, will begin on July 5.

Institutional Effectiveness and Planning Dr. Novobilski

Dr. Novobilski reminded Cabinet members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee meeting scheduled for Monday, April 24. The Presidential priority of “realigning core functions and structure with budget realities, and make budget adjustments” will be discussed. D. Novobilski asked Cabinet members to send any evidence available to Dr. Josie Welsh prior to the meeting. If called upon for evidence, Dr. Novobilski urged Cabinet members to respond and provide any information possible.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Bolivar County Alumni Chapter Crawfish Boil, April 20, 5:30 p.m., Alumni-Foundation House
- Student Affairs Awards Ceremony, April 20, 7:00 p.m., BPAC
- Retirement and Service Awards Ceremony, April 21, 2:00 p.m., Second Floor, H. L. Nowell Union
- Athletics Green and White Ceremony, April 24, 6:00 p.m.,
- Spring 2023 Campus Forum, April 27, 2:00 p.m., Auditorium, E.R. Jobe Hall

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, May 1, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:49 p.m.