

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT'S CABINET
Minutes

Meeting date: February 20, 2017

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Mr. Keith Fulcher, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Dr. Chris Jurgenson, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Ms. Allie Rose Parker, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Christie Rocconi, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

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 20, 2017. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Jurgenson, seconded by Dr. McAdams, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on February 13, 2017.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge and other members of Cabinet attended the State of the Student Union Address last week. President LaForge thanked Ms. Parker for informing the student body of the current and future plans of the Student Government Association.
- President LaForge visited with residents of Cain-Tatum Hall last week as part of his outreach to students.
- Last week, President LaForge traveled to Jackson to attend IHL meetings on Wednesday and Thursday. He attended the Foundation Affiliation Agreements meeting on Wednesday, and he said new language is being drafted for the affiliation agreements of larger universities. The regional universities will not be affected. President LaForge announced that Ms. Ann Lamar attended her first IHL Board meeting on Thursday. Ms. Lamar is awaiting Senate approval for her appointment. During the IHL Board meeting, Ms. Karen Cummins was honored posthumously by receiving the Community Service Award and by having the Diversity Award of Excellence named in her honor. President and Mrs. LaForge attended the Mississippi Arts Commission 2017 Governor's Art Awards ceremony on Thursday evening. President LaForge stated it was a great event that honored individuals for their contributions to the arts including two Delta State alumni, Ms. Lucy Janoush and Mr. Sammy Britt.
- President LaForge attended the Department of Music's Big Band Bash on Friday at the Cleveland Country Club. He informed Cabinet Members of the excellent job Dr. Bret Pimentel does with the performance each year. Proceeds of the event support the DSU Jazz Ensemble.
- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. The men's and women's basketball teams won all games last week. Seniors were recognized at the end of each game on Saturday. The men's basketball team will host Super Tuesday on Delta State's campus on Tuesday, February 28. The time has not been set. Admission will be \$10 for adults and \$3 for students. The baseball team won all games except one

against West Alabama, and the softball team did well over the weekend. The NSISC tournament was wonderful on all accounts. Nationals' qualifications will be known by Tuesday. Mr. Dan'l Murray received Women's Coach of the Year and Mr. Kyle Friesenhahn received Diving Coach of the Year.

- President LaForge gave an overview of the week. On Tuesday, he travels to Jackson for the Gertrude Ford Foundation Board meeting. Following the Board meeting, President LaForge will attend the HEADWAE Luncheon honoring Ms. Parker and Ms. Sheryl Stump, and he will have legislative visits with Lieutenant Governor Tate Reeves, Chairman Joey Fillingane, and Chairman John Read. On Wednesday, President LaForge will travel to Greenwood to speak at the Greenwood Lions Club annual Youth Leadership Seminar. On Friday, President LaForge will travel to Dallas for his fraternity's Foundation Board meeting.

CABINET TOPIC

Department of Education Program Review Ms. Rocconi

Ms. Christie Rocconi stated that the Department of Education will perform a program review the week of February 27. Delta State has not undergone a program review in at least thirty years. Delta State was chosen for the program review due to the abundance of online classes offered within the curriculum. Ms. Rocconi provided the Department of Education with information for their review including a list of students receiving financial aid in FY16 and FY17 and CLERY information. Thirty students were chosen randomly for review of their files. Ms. Rocconi believes the Department of Education may uncover a few areas of shortcomings, but believes the overall review will be positive. President LaForge thanked Ms. Rocconi for her lead on this project.

BUSINESS

Action

Grants and Contracts policy – new (final reading)Dr. McAdams

Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the Grants and Contracts Policy, on recommendation and approval of Academic Council, for a final reading. Dr. McAdams stated two substantive changes were made to the policy. The requirement for submitting requests to the grants coordinator has changed to four business days prior to the due date in order to have more time for the approval process. New percentages have been created for the distribution formula. The percentages changed to 49% E&G budget, 1% Accounting and Finance, 14% Provost, 2% Grants Office, and 34% Dean and Originating unit (or Administrative Office). Employees paid from a grant accrue the same personal and sick days as regular employees, and so 1% is given to Accounting and Finance to pay for accrued leave time.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the Grants and Contracts Policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. **The motion was approved.**

Non-Academic Disciplinary Transcript Notation Policy - new (final reading).....Dr. McAdams

Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the Non-Academic Disciplinary Transcript Notation Policy, on recommendation and approval of Academic Council, for a final reading. Academic Council recommends adding a notation for any non-academic expulsion to a student's transcript. The notation would not divulge details about the expulsion. If a student tries to enter a different institution after being expelled, the institution can contact the local police department to inquire about the expulsion.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the Non-Academic Disciplinary Transcript Notation Policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. **The motion was approved.**

Hiring RequestsDr. McAdams

In response to the Cabinet’s decision that only those vacant positions deemed essential to university operations will be filled, and that requests to fill these essential positions be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Cabinet, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet several positions for consideration. He informed Cabinet Members that none of the positions would impact the salary savings identified previously to offset the mid-year budget cuts. Eleven positions will be filled this year for the Student Athlete Support Services Project; however, these positions are grant-funded positions.

Staff Requests:

The Registrar’s Office and the Department of Commercial Aviation request to search and hire staff positions for this fiscal year. The Registrar’s Office would like to fill the position of Coordinator of Computer Services/Transcript Clerk. The Department of Commercial Aviation would like to fill three flight instructor positions.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve searching and hiring staff positions for FY17 for the Registrar’s Office and the Department of Commercial Aviation and seconded by Jamie. **The motion was approved.**

The Grants Office and Registrar’s Office began searches for positions prior to the freeze and request to hire staff in this fiscal year. The Grants Office would like to hire a Director of Institutional Grants and the Registrar’s Office would like to hire a VA Certifying Official.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve hiring staff positions for the Grants Office and Registrar’s Office for FY17 and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. **The motion was approved.**

Dr. McAdams requests approval to search and hire for FY18 a new Assistant to the Provost.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the search and hire for a new Assistant to the Provost for FY18 and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. **The motion was approved.**

Faculty Requests:

Searches for faculty positions in Biology, Commercial Aviation, DMI, HPER, and Languages and Literature began prior to the hiring freeze. The hires will not be effective until FY18. Dr. McAdams is holding four faculty positions for the next fiscal year.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the filling of these faculty positions for FY18 and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. **The motion was approved.**

The School of Nursing is requesting to search for and hire three faculty positions for the next fiscal year. Dr. McAdams believes nursing enrollment is directly tied to staffing as the ratio is twelve students to one professor.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the search and hire of three School of Nursing faculty positions for FY18 and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. **The motion was approved.**

Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy - new (first reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet a new policy, Drug and Alcohol Testing, upon the approval of IHL’s legal counsel. Recognizing that drug and alcohol abuse poses a direct and substantial threat to the safety,

health, and well-being of the campus community, Delta State reserves the right to test potential employees and/or current employees for alcohol and/or controlled substances pursuant to this policy. All employees of Delta State may be subject to reasonable suspicion drug and alcohol testing. If reasonable suspicion exists, the employee's supervisor should contact Human Resources for the testing. Mr. Rutledge stated authorized personnel have the right to inspect the workplace for alcohol, controlled substances, illegal drugs or paraphernalia related to alcohol, controlled substances, or illegal drugs and to question any employee when they reasonably suspect that this policy or any procedure under this policy has been violated.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the Drug and Alcohol Testing policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. **The motion was approved.**

Restricted Funds Policy – deletion (first reading)..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the current Restricted Funds policy. Mr. Rutledge said the new Grants and Contracts policy covers everything in the Restricted Funds policy, and therefore should be deleted.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the deletion of the Restricted Funds policy and seconded by Dr. McAdams. **The motion was approved.**

Golf Course..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge stated that, according to IHL policy, auxiliary operations must be self-sustaining. However, we are not compliant with this policy with regards to the golf course. Mr. Rutledge stated that Delta State cannot continue to support an auxiliary program that loses \$248,032 a year. President LaForge has reached out to the City of Cleveland on different occasions to see if they had an interest in the golf course, and they do not. Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet Members the two golf course employees would be given the opportunity to transfer to positions with Facilities Management. Mr. Mayers informed Cabinet Members of the value the golf course has brought to Delta State and the Cleveland community. Mr. Mayers requested the driving range be kept intact for use by the golf team. Also, he would like to use the pro shop as an office building for the tennis coach and the golf coach. President LaForge stated Delta State has a responsibility to communicate to the community our intentions, and he asked Mr. Rutledge to schedule a meeting to share the decision with community members. He also asked Mr. Mayers to notify the family of Derrall Foreman of the closure of the golf course, and to let them know Mr. Foreman's name and legacy will be memorialized. President LaForge and Dr. Roberts will write an op-ed piece for local newspapers to let them know about the closure.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to cease operation of the golf course and golf cart storage, effective July 1, 2017 and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. **The motion was approved.**

Discussion

Budget Update Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet Members of the additional budget cut that will occur this week. This cut will bring Delta State's mid-year cuts to 5% or \$377,463. The Senate appropriations bill suggests cutting higher education budgets by an additional 1.3% for FY18, and the House appropriations bill suggests a bigger cut. The cuts we have experienced this fiscal year will carry over to FY18. Mr. Rutledge and his staff are looking into ways to save the university money without affecting student services and academic programs. He will take his findings to Executive Committee before bringing them to Cabinet.

IHL Report on the Cost of Higher Education in MississippiDr. McAdams

President LaForge asked Dr. McAdams and Mr. Rutledge to give an update on the IHL report on the Cost of Higher Education in Mississippi, which is mandated by the legislature. This report addresses the following issues: 1) the rising costs of tuition, 2) the effect that rising tuition costs have on Student Financial Aid and student debt, 3) methods to stabilize the increasing costs of higher education in Mississippi, and, 4) the viability of out-of-state tuition waivers. Dr. McAdams shared the highlights of the report with Cabinet Members. Mississippi's tuition and fees are among the lowest in the region and the country. Mississippi ranks 10 out of the 50 states. The most expensive degree is the degree not earned. Some contributing factors to the cost of higher education increasing include: decreased state support shifts the costs to students; universities must meet the demand for technology, student support, and market driven amenities; and, family incomes in Mississippi are nearly \$14,000 below the national average. The challenges that impact operating costs are: college readiness; tuition increases have little effect on the increased demand for financial aid; and, increased revenue from non-resident students has closed gaps where budget shortfalls might otherwise exist. Methods to stabilize costs are efficiency efforts, system-wide buying, state investment, and retention efforts. In order to help with the growing cost of higher education, Delta State will have to consider the following: make modest tuition increases to maintain program integrity; explore opportunities for increased revenue; look for additional operating efficiencies; and, consider cutting non-essential activities/programs to reduce expenses. President LaForge added that Delta State will be looking for opportunities for increased revenue through our Capital Campaign. (See *handout*)

Okra Patch – Cleveland SchoolsDr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett has started the next phase of the Okra Patch program, which includes community service and mentorship. Currently, 62 students are serving as teacher aids and mentors, and performing community service. Delta State students are in schools five days a week. Dr. Bennett stated Delta State students are interacting with peers that they normally wouldn't interact with on a daily basis. Students are excited about this program. Dr. Bennett has received excellent feedback on our students from advisors, who are thrilled with Delta State's student's performances.

Scholarship Proposal: 2017-18Mr. Mayers

Mr. Mayers brought to Cabinet the updated scholarship proposal for FY18, which includes Delta State's equivalencies of scholarships allowed by the NCAA for each sport. Mr. Mayers stated Delta State is not offering the maximum amount of scholarships in any sport. The amount of scholarships available in each sport directly correlates with a winning team as better athletes are attainable through scholarships. President LaForge stated only four percent of Division II schools fully fund scholarships for each sport. Mr. Mayers shared with Cabinet a handout listing the difference in scholarships available in each sport between Division I and Division II schools. (See *handout*)

Other Discussion

- Dr. Roberts informed Cabinet Members the land lease bill for the golf course has passed both chambers and each bill has been transferred to the other chamber. The bill has until next Tuesday to come out of committees. March 3 is the deadline for floor action. Dr. Roberts believes this will not be a problem. The bond bill language for the President's home has been given to the appropriate officials. President LaForge will meet with Chairman John Read and Chairman Joey Fillingane to discuss the line items for Delta State as well as the bond bill. Dr. Roberts announced Student Legislative Day was cancelled last week as Delta State got word of the legislature adjourning early. The rescheduled date for the luncheon is March 9. Dr. Roberts invited Cabinet Members to attend if they were in Jackson.

- President LaForge is in the process of working on the Case Statement for the Capital Campaign. President LaForge will bring the Case Statement to Cabinet for discussion once it is ready. Mr. Fulcher had a conference call with the consultants this morning, and they are pleased with the progress.
- Dr. McAdams announced the Art Department will have an international guest, Mr. Lester Campa, on campus for a week in April. President LaForge met Mr. Campa in Cuba in September 2015. Dr. McAdams stated he would keep Cabinet Members updated on Mr. Campa's schedule.
- President LaForge announced Dr. LouAnn Woodward, Vice-Chancellor for Health Affairs and Dean of the School of Medicine at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, accepted his invitation to be the Colloquia Series speaker for the spring. The lecture will take place the week of Good Friday.
- Mr. Mayers announced the baseball team will have its first home game on Wednesday. The baseball team will wear Coach Bill Marchant's and Coach Boo Ferriss' numbers.
- Dr. Bennett announced Dancing with the Delta State Stars is scheduled for April 22 in the BPAC. The tagline for the event is "bringing campus and community together through toe tapping fun." The Women's Conference is scheduled for March 2-3. The opening session of the conference will take place on Wednesday, March 2 at 3:00 p.m., and the awards ceremony is that evening. Other events included in the conference are a flash mob, health and wellness fair, community service project, and a women's panel. IHL Trustee Christy Pickering will serve as a speaker.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- STOMP performance, BPAC, February 28, 7:30 pm
- Winning the Race Conference, March 27-28
- International Business Symposium, March 29-30

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, February 27 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.