

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT’S CABINET
Minutes

Meeting date: January 27, 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 (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: Dr. Michelle Roberts and Mr. Larry Wakefield

Call to Order: A special meeting of the President’s Cabinet was held in the President’s Conference Room on January 27, 2023. The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. with Dr. Caston presiding.

BUSINESS

Action

Academic Calendar for 2023-2024 (revised)Dr. Novobilski

On the recommendation of Faculty Senate and Academic Council, Dr. Novobilski brought the revised Academic Calendar for 2023-2024 to Cabinet for approval. To help address the class cancellation (purge) process and allow staff more time to help students with the payment process, the start date for Spring 2024 was changed to Tuesday, January 16. No additional revisions were made to the Academic Calendar for 2023-2024. Cabinet members inquired about the required number of course minutes being met, and Dr. Novobilski stated the requirement was dismissed by the IHL Board of Trustees in 2020. Mr. Kinnison requested the Young-Mauldin Cafeteria and the residence halls be open for athletes the week prior to the first day of classes for student-athletes returning for the Spring semester.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Novobilski to approve the revised Academic Calendar for 2023-2024 and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Duolingo English Proficiency proposalDr. Novobilski

Dr. Novobilski presented a proposal from the International Student Services Division of the Student Success Center to add Duolingo as an additional option for English-language proficiency. The Student Exchange Visitor Program regulations require designated school officials to provide information on the school’s English proficiency requirements and whether a prospective F-1 student has met those requirements on the student’s Form I20, “Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status.” Currently, Delta State accepts the following documents as proficiency in English: Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS.) Due to COVID-19 closures in Spring 2020, testing centers for TOEFL and IELTS were not available. An option for English language-proficiency testing during this time was Duolingo since it was readily available online. Delta State temporarily utilized Duolingo, as well. In Spring 2021, Delta State International Student Services examined the viability of allowing Duolingo as an approved option; however, the majority of schools in our area were planning to discontinue use of Duolingo due to the ineffectiveness of the test.

Recent benchmarking has shown that the schools in our region have continued to accept Duolingo, with more schools also adding Duolingo. It is recommended by the Division of International Student Services to begin accepting Duolingo for Fall 2023 admissions as one of the approved English proficiency testing options. The recommended minimum score will be 110 and is based off of the University of Mississippi's Duolingo score requirement. If a student has a score of 100, they can be accepted with additional remediation required during the students' first semester of enrollment.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Novobilski to add Duolingo as an option for English-language proficiency at Delta State and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to revise the Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs to add Duolingo as an option for English-language proficiency at Delta State and seconded by Dr. Novobilski. The motion was approved.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.