

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: April 1, 2024

Members in attendance: Dr. Dan Ennis, Dr. Edwin Craft, Mr. David Gladden, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Dr. Christopher Jurgenson, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Ms. Holly Ray, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Haley Rooks, and Mr. Larry Wakefield (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: Ms. Ashley Tanksley and Ms. Holly Ray

Guests: Ms. Chrisa Mansell, Director, Institutional Research, Effectiveness, & Planning
Mr. Shaun Kelly, President-Elect, Faculty Senate

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on April 1, 2024. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Ennis presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Jurgenson and seconded by Dr. Lovin, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on March 18, 2024.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- Dr. Jurgenson introduced Mr. Shaun Kelly to Cabinet members. Mr. Kelly is the President-Elect of Faculty Senate, and he assumes the role of Faculty Senate President on April 11. Mr. Kelly will shadow Dr. Jurgenson at Cabinet meetings until he becomes a full, voting-member on May 13, 2024.
- Dr. Ennis gave an overview of the activities and events from the last two weeks. Dr. Ennis participated in a meeting of the Enrollment Group. The Institutional Executive Officers had their monthly meeting with Commissioner Al Rankins. The IHL Board of Trustees had their monthly meeting at the University of Southern Mississippi at Gulf Park. SGA hosted Student Legislative Day at the Capitol. The Delta State Foundation hosted a reception for the Kyle Educational Trust Board of Directors and their scholarship recipients. The BPAC had a performance by Travis Tritt, and Ms. Lauren Powell was hired as their new Executive Director.
- Dr. Craft and Mr. Wakefield gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The kickoff meeting for the ADA project at the BPAC is April 3. The Delta and Pine Land Theater will experience changes, and it will require some seats to be taken offline for shows next season. The windows for the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing failed the water penetration test. The roof of Jobe Hall needs to be repaired; Dr. Craft signed a work order to fix the issue.
- Ms. Rooks gave an update on student activities. The elections for SGA Cabinet are today and tomorrow. The applications for Student Senate and Student Court will be released today. The Most Beautiful Pageant is tomorrow, and 18 students are participating. The Big Green Event is Saturday, April 13.

- Mr. Kinnison provided an update on Athletics. The baseball and softball teams competed at the University of West Georgia over the weekend. The baseball team hosts Lane College on Tuesday and Christian Brothers University this weekend. The softball team hosts Henderson State University on Wednesday and Christian Brothers University this weekend. The tennis teams competed at Auburn University at Montgomery over the weekend, and they travel to Mississippi College on Wednesday. Both teams compete in Florida over the weekend. The football team’s spring training continues this week. Their first scrimmage is Saturday at 9:15 a.m. The Athletics Hall of Fame Banquet is Friday at GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi, and eight individuals will be inducted.
- Dr. Ennis shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. Dr. Ennis participated in a conference call with Dr. Belle Wheelan, President of SACS-COC, and the Institutional Executive Officers this morning. The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has their monthly meeting tomorrow. Dr. Ennis and Dr. Roberts have legislative visits this week, and Dr. Ennis will visit with Dr. Stephen Vacik, President of Hinds Community College, while in Jackson. Dr. Ennis will be the guest speaker of Cleveland’s Rotary Club on Wednesday.

CABINET TOPIC

Student Achievement Measures Dr. Ennis

Dr. Ennis invited Ms. Chrisa Mansell, Director of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning, to Cabinet to review the University’s Student Achievement Measures. As a SACS-COC accredited institution, the University is required to identify, evaluate, and publish goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution’s mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered. Each institution uses multiple measures to document student success. Delta State’s Student Achievement Metrics are: 1) graduation rates (six-year) and 2) fall-to-fall retention rate of first-time, full-time freshmen. The six-year graduation rate is a Key Student Completion Indicator, and the University is required to have this measure. The University’s goal for six-year graduation rate is 40%, and the fall-to-fall retention rate for first-time, full-time freshmen is 70%. For the 2017 cohort, 47% graduated as of 2023 (six-years). Of the Fall 2022 first-time, full-time freshmen cohort, 73.6% returned for Fall 2023. The University met and surpassed its goals. Ms. Mansell advised updating the University’s Student Achievement Metrics upon the completion of the new strategic plan and approval of the University mission statement by the IHL Board.

2024-25 Budget Recommendations.....Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield and Dr. Craft shared with Cabinet members a high-level summary of the 2024-25 budget recommendations. The 2024-25 budget with scholarships is \$43,385,015.92; however, this figure is fluid and will change due to additional budget cuts not announced yet. At the next Cabinet meeting, Mr. Wakefield and Dr. Craft will discuss revenues, student fees, and designated funds. The Academic Program Review changes will not affect the 2024-25 budget.

BUSINESS

Action

Social Security policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised Social Security policy to Cabinet for a final reading. All employees, except most student employees, are covered by Social Security and Medicare taxes. Social Security and Medicare taxes, sometimes called FICA taxes, are automatically deducted from the employee’s wages. The University and each employee share contributions into the Social Security system. This policy was updated

to current federal practice.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Wakefield to approve the revised Social Security policy and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

State Employees’ Health Insurance policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield brought the revised State Employees’ Health Insurance policy to Cabinet for a final reading. The State Health Insurance Plan is provided to regular and part-time, benefit eligible employees from their beginning date of employment. The policy was updated to reflect the Mississippi Code.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Wakefield to approve the revised State Employees’ Health Insurance policy and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Volunteer – Non-University Personnel policy (new – final reading) Mr. Wakefield

Mr. Wakefield brought the new Volunteer – Non-University Personnel policy to Cabinet for a final reading. This policy establishes uniform procedures for screening and engaging volunteers, ensuring that volunteers’ relationships with the University are clearly established and understood by both parties, and to reduce the risk and protect the interests of the University, its volunteers, and the community it serves.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Wakefield to approve the Volunteer – Non-University Personnel policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Purchase Order Process Mr. Wakefield and Dr. Lovin

The Purchase Order process discussion will be discussed at the next Cabinet meeting.

Hiring Requests Cabinet members

In following the hiring guidance set forth by Dr. Ennis, Cabinet members presented their requests for review. After review by Cabinet members, Dr. Griffin and Mr. Wakefield will meet with Dr. Ennis to provide additional context as to the need for the given position or positions prior to Dr. Ennis granting or denying hiring approval.

Academic Affairs requests

Dr. Griffin requested to search for and hire an Institutional Executive Director of Sponsored Programs and Special Projects for the Office of Institutional Grants. The position is a full-time position paid by the indirect costs collected from external grants. This position will serve as the Principal Investigator for all large multiyear grants including but not limited to: Gear-UP, TRIO Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Program, TRIO Educational Opportunity Center, and Title III Strengthening Institutions Program: Destination Graduation.

Hiring Requests Approval..... Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts shared with Cabinet members an overview of hiring request approvals made by Dr. Ennis. In the Department of Commercial Aviation, the request to search for and hire a Chair for the Department of Commercial Aviation was approved.

SACSCOC Update..... Dr. Griffin

Dr. Griffin announced preparations for the SACS-COC on-site visit are moving forward. Dr. Valarie Morgan, as the new SACS-COC liaison for the University, is working to create a smooth transition and assist with the

remaining preparations for the on-site visit.

Recruitment Update/Overview.....Ms. Tanksley

In Ms. Tanksley’s absence, Dr. Lovin provided an update on recruitment efforts. The Office of Admissions will host the Freshmen Admit Social on Friday, and the Presidential Admission Tour begins on Monday, April 8. Dr. Ennis discussed with Cabinet members the need to increase the University’s yield in admitted students and applications.

Budget Update Mr. Wakefield

Due to the 2024-25 Budget Recommendations discussion that took place earlier in the Cabinet meeting, an additional budget update was not provided.

Legislative Update..... Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts provided an update on the legislative session. Monday, April 8 is the deadline for appropriation bill requests. The deadline for general legislation is next week.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Most Beautiful Pageant, April 2, 7:00 p.m., BPAC
- Freshmen Admit Social, April 5, 10:00 a.m., Jobe Hall Auditorium
- 2024 Athletics Hall of Fame Social and Banquet, April 5, 5:30 and 7:00 p.m., GRAMMY Museum Mississippi
- Presidential Admissions Tour, April 8-11
- Division of Student Affairs Awards, April 11, 7:00 p.m., BPAC
- Alumni Board and Foundation Board Meeting Luncheon, April 12, 12:00 p.m., Multipurpose Room, Young-Mauldin Cafeteria
- The Big Green Event, April 13, 7:00 a.m., McCool Stadium
- SACS-COC On-Site Visit, April 15-18
- William H. Young Student Outdoor Recreational Area Dedication Ceremony, April 19, 1:00 p.m., Volleyball Court behind Foundation Hall
- Retirement and Service Awards Ceremony, April 19, 2:30 p.m., State Room, H. L. Nowell Student Union
- Town Hall meeting, April 23, 3:00 p.m., Jacob Conference Center, Ewing Hall
- Bolivar County Alumni Cajun Seafood Boil, April 25, 5:30 p.m., Kent Wyatt Hall Parking Lot
- Athletics Green and White Awards, April 29, BPAC

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, April 15, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.