

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: May 18, 2026

Members in attendance: Dr. Dan Ennis, Dr. Edwin Craft, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Dr. Suzette Matthews, Ms. Collins Phelps, and Dr. Jon Westfall (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: Dr. Curtis Coleman and Ms. Evelyn Greer

Guests: None

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on May 18, 2026. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with Dr. Ennis presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Lovin and seconded by Dr. Matthews, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on April 6, 2026.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- Dr. Matthews shared that the Sippin' with the Statesmen series is wrapping up with final stops in Baton Rouge, Washington, D.C., Southaven, and Jackson. The Office of Marketing is installing new billboards across Mississippi, and the first is in Clinton.
- Dr. Lovin announced a new concept within Student Affairs called Okra Threads: Outfits for any Occasion. Okra Threads is a student clothing resource designed to help students look and feel their best. It is more than a clothing closet; Okra Threads is about providing confidence, dignity, and opportunity by ensuring every student has access to clothing that helps them show up ready for any occasion. The closet space is under construction and will be ready by the time students return in August.
- Dr. Craft shared updates on campus projects. The ARPA projects continue outside of Broom Hall. Once the repairs are made, the ARPA project will be complete. The campus HVAC project began with Ewing Hall. The HVAC system controlling repairs begin on the first and third floors, and repairs on the second floor will begin once the first two are completed. The HVAC system for DMI begins soon. The chiller for Chadwick-Dickson will be paid for by FEMA and insurance funds. Currently, Chadwick-Dickson has a rented chiller, and it is being paid for by FEMA. The BPAC construction project will be completed soon. The issues found in the new roof of the nursing building will be fixed by the roofing company.
- Dr. Westfall informed Cabinet members that the executive committee of the Faculty Senate will meet throughout the summer to prepare for the upcoming academic year.

- Mr. Kinnison shared that the baseball team competed in NCAA DII regionals over the weekend, marking the end of competition for the year. Athletics hosted a high school football event last Friday. Lastly, his staff members are focusing on finalizing the Night of Champions event for August.
- Dr. Griffin announced the Division of Academic Affairs will participate in a three-day retreat next week, and the division continues to work on projects to prepare for the upcoming academic year.
- Ms. Phelps shared the schedule for the Wayne Blansett Staff Appreciation Week.
- Dr. Ennis, Dr. Michelle Roberts, and Ms. Katie Lusk traveled to Washington, D.C., for congressional visits. Alcorn State University hosts the IHL Board meeting this week. Dr. Ennis will be out of the office next week for the GSC Annual Meeting.

CABINET TOPIC

None

BUINESS

Action

Annual Operating Budget Dr. Craft

Dr. Craft presented the 2026-2027 annual operating budget to Cabinet members. The annual operating budget increased from \$49,198,146 in 2025-2026 to \$51,825,457.81 for 2026-2027. The changes to the budget are increased expenditures in salaries, travel, scholarships, advertising and marketing, repairs and services to buildings and grounds, equipment contracts, professional services, computer software acquisitions and maintenance, and accreditation review. All presidential direct reports met with Dr. Ennis and Dr. Craft to review their respective budgets.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Craft to approve the annual operating budget for fiscal year 2026-2027 and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

Access to University Information Technology Resources policy (revised – final reading) Dr. Craft

Upon the approval of the University Leadership Council, Dr. Craft brought the revised Access to University Information Technology Resources policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Delta State University provides access to University owned technology resources for the purposes of learning, service, and research whose use is consistent with the mission and purpose of the University. Access to University systems is granted by the Office of Information Technology for use in accordance with this policy. Use of University technology resources must comply with all applicable federal and state laws, including but not limited to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Mississippi Public Records Act, applicable records retention requirements, litigation hold obligations, and all applicable IHL Board policies and University information security standards. University technology resources include, but are not limited to, University owned or licensed hardware, software, networks, email systems, enterprise systems including Banner, cloud platforms, electronic records, and data stored on or transmitted through such systems. All University records, including electronic communications and files, are subject to applicable records retention schedules, litigation hold requirements, and the Mississippi Public Records Act. Employees shall not delete, alter, remove, destroy, or copy University records or data in violation of law, litigation hold notice, or University policy. Unauthorized removal or retention of University data, including confidential information, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination and may subject the individual to civil or criminal liability. All access to University systems will be terminated upon discontinuation of employment

with the University. Access termination shall occur upon official notice from Human Resources or appropriate administrative authority and may occur immediately in cases of resignation, termination, or separation for cause. Users of University systems have no expectation of privacy in information stored on, transmitted through, or created using University technology resources. The University reserves the right to access, review, monitor, audit, preserve, and disclose information on its systems as permitted or required by law, including for purposes of compliance, public records requests, litigation, investigations, and institutional operations. All users are responsible for safeguarding login credentials, complying with University cybersecurity standards, and immediately reporting suspected data breaches or unauthorized access to the Office of Information Technology.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Craft to approve the Access to University Information Technology Resources for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Matthews. The motion passed unanimously.

Administrative Structure policy (revised – final reading)Dr. Lovin

Upon the approval of the University Leadership Council, Dr. Lovin brought the revised Administrative Structure policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Delta State University and its operations are governed locally by the President's Cabinet, which is determined by the President and is composed of the university's senior leadership, as well as representatives from the student body, faculty, and staff. Its members meet at least monthly to advise the president on official policies and procedures, processes, or regulations required for the operation of Delta State University. The University Leadership Council and Academic Council advise the President's Cabinet on academic matters, the university budget, university policies, and other major university matters.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Lovin to approve the revised Administrative Structure policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Matthews. The motion passed unanimously.

Academic Honesty policy (revised - final reading)..... Dr. Griffin

Upon the approval of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the revised Academic Honesty policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Delta State University expects all students to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, consistent with Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning Board policies and the Principles of Accreditation of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Academic honesty is fundamental to the credibility of the University's degrees and to the trust between students, faculty, and the broader academic community. This policy governs conduct related specifically to academic coursework, academic evaluation, and academic records. Alleged misconduct involving non-academic university documents, identity records, or administrative fraud will be referred to the appropriate University office in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct and other applicable policies. Sanctions imposed under this policy may be appealed through the University Academic Grievance Policy. Delta State University expects all students to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Unethical or dishonest conduct undermines the academic mission of the University and may result in disciplinary sanctions. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, forgery, and misuse of academic documents or records. Faculty members must provide students with an opportunity to respond to allegations of academic dishonesty before sanctions are imposed. Students must be given an opportunity to review the evidence supporting the allegation and may respond during the meeting described in this policy or submit a written response prior to the imposition of sanctions. Determinations of responsibility under this policy shall be based on a preponderance of the evidence, meaning that it is more likely than not that the violation occurred. Records of academic honesty violations will be maintained by the University in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and applicable University records management policies.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the revised Academic Honesty policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

Class Absences and Excuses policy (revised - final reading)..... Dr. Griffin

Upon the approval of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the revised Class Absences and Excuses policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Students who are not present at the first class meeting may be administratively removed from the roll unless they have paid their fees or have contacted the instructor. Regular and punctual attendance at all scheduled classes and activities is expected of all students and is regarded as integral to course credit. Particular policies and procedures on absences and makeup work are established for each class and are announced in writing at the beginning of the term. Each student is directly responsible to the individual instructor for absences and for making up work missed. A student absent from class when a test is scheduled may be provided a makeup test if evidence is presented to the instructor that absence was due to illness or death in the immediate family subject to the terms outlined in the course syllabus. Any student who has received consequences for excessive absences has the right to appeal to the Attendance and Grievance Appeals Committee. For more information about the appeal process, contact the Office of Academic Affairs. Official absences are granted to students required to miss class for University sponsored events such as athletics, performing groups, and student government groups.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the revised Class Absences and Excuses policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Westfall. The motion passed unanimously.

Class Attendance policy (revised - final reading)..... Dr. Griffin

Upon the approval of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the revised Class Attendance policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Students are expected to attend and engage in at least 75% of class and/or activities for each course unless a different standard is required by the nature of the course or modified through an approved accommodation or University approved absence. Failure to meet this expectation may have academic consequences as outlined in the course syllabus, including potential impact on grades or eligibility to successfully complete course requirements. Instructors must document the last date of academically related attendance in accordance with University and financial aid requirements.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the revised Class Attendance policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Matthews. The motion passed unanimously.

Curriculum Development and Revision policy (revised - final reading) Dr. Griffin

Upon the approval of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the revised Curriculum Development and Revision policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Academic development and changes to courses, curricula, programs, degrees, or academic units originate within the appropriate academic school or division and are first reviewed by the applicable School/Division Curriculum Committee. Following committee review and recommendation, proposals proceed through the following approval process: School or Division Curriculum Committee, school/division chair, College Curriculum Committee (if empaneled), college or school dean, University Curriculum Committee, Academic Council, and the Provost for final institutional approval. When a proposed change affects the general education curriculum, the School or Division Curriculum Committee and department chair will consult with the University General Education Committee before submitting the proposal to the College Curriculum Committee. Other designated curriculum development units that do not report directly to an academic unit (General Education Committee, for example), may recommend academic development and change to the Provost and Office

of Academic Affairs. The Provost will identify the appropriate position within the approval process— School/Division Curriculum Committee, College Curriculum Committee, Graduate Council, or University Curriculum Committee, but no higher—and begin the review/recommendation process at that point. The proposal will then move according to the standard routing procedure. Academic Council will act on all curriculum requests approved by the University Curriculum Committee or Graduate Council as expeditiously as practicable and generally within two scheduled meeting, and it will ensure that all applicable policies and procedures are followed, including, for example, federal requirements regarding credit hour designations.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the revised Curriculum Development and Revision policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

Grades and Credits policy (revised - final reading) Dr. Griffin

Upon the approval of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the revised Grades and Credits policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Delta State University uses a standardized grading and credit system and provides students with access to their individual grades. The University may also award academic credit for demonstrated college-level learning through credit by examination, prior learning assessment (PLA), and competency-based education (CBE) in accordance with Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning policy and accreditation standards. Credit is awarded for verified learning, not for experience alone.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the revised Grades and Credits policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

Graduate Course Repetition and Grade Replacement policy (revised - final reading) Dr. Griffin

Upon the approval of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the revised Graduate Course Repetition and Grade Replacement policy to Cabinet for a final reading. This policy describes the avenues for course repetition and grade replacement for graduate courses at Delta State University. A graduate student may repeat any course one time with the permission of the graduate advisor, School/Division chair, and college dean or their designee. Both grades will be calculated in the student's GPA unless Grade Replacement is applied. A graduate student who repeats a course(s) taken at Delta State University and who earns a higher grade the second time may submit a Grade Replacement Request form to the Office of the Registrar. Both the original grade and the repeat grade will appear on the student's transcript. The grade for the first attempt, however, will be excluded from the student's GPA calculation; only the grade and credit hours earned in the second attempt will be counted toward the student's GPA and degree completion requirements.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the revised Graduate Course Repetition and Grade Replacement policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Matthews. The motion passed unanimously.

Notification of Rights Under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions policy (revised - final reading) Dr. Griffin

Upon the approval of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the revised Notification Under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Delta State University establishes this policy in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 C.F.R. Part 99, which affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 99.7, Delta State University provides annual notification to students of their rights under FERPA. The University may provide this notice electronically through official University communication channels. FERPA affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include right to inspect and review, right to request amendment, right to consent disclosure, right to file a

complaint, a directory information hold, and written consent.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the revised Notification of Rights Under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Matthews. The motion passed unanimously.

Release of Information policy (revised - final reading)..... Dr. Griffin

Upon the approval of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the revised Release of Information policy to Cabinet for a final reading. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, as amended, is a federal law that grants students the right to access and request amendment of their education records and limits the disclosure of those records without the student's consent, subject to certain exceptions. Students may have access to information about them in university records unless the information is protected by an exception. Students should submit a signed request to the Registrar identifying the educational records they wish to inspect. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by Delta State University in an administrative, supervisory, academic, or support staff position or a person or company with whom Delta State University has contracted (e.g., an attorney, auditor, or collection agency). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the University. Delta State University may designate certain information as "directory information" and may disclose such information without the student's prior written consent unless the student has opted out of such disclosure in accordance with University procedures. Students will be provided with notice of the types of information designated as directory information and the process for opting out. The parent of a University student is not generally entitled to receive information about the student, even if the student is younger than 18 years old. The University will provide annual notice to students of their rights under FERPA, including the right to inspect and review education records, request amendment of records, consent to disclosures, and file a complaint.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the revised Release of Information policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Matthews. The motion passed unanimously.

Student Advising policy (revised - final reading) Dr. Griffin

Upon the approval of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the revised Student Advising policy to Cabinet for a final reading. Delta State University is committed to a comprehensive, student-centered advising model designed to support student success, retention, timely degree completion, and post-graduation outcomes. Academic advising is a shared institutional responsibility that integrates professional advisors and faculty advisors in clearly defined primary and secondary roles across the student life cycle. Academic advising provides guidance and support but does not replace the student's responsibility for understanding degree requirements, academic policies, and progress toward graduation. The purpose of academic advising at Delta State University is to provide intentional, proactive guidance that supports students in making informed academic decisions; maintaining satisfactory academic progress; completing degrees efficiently and on time; and preparing for careers, graduate study, and professional pathways. Academic advisors help students connect with campus resources that strengthen academic success, including support for study strategies, foundational writing skills, and discipline-specific academic, research, and professional development opportunities. Students are encouraged to engage in regular advising appointments to support ongoing communication about academic progress and long-term goals.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the revised Student Advising policy for a final reading and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion passed unanimously.

Course Fees Dr. Griffin

Upon the approval of the Academic Council, Dr. Griffin brought the new, revised, or deleted course fees for the 2026-2027 academic year to Cabinet for approval.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Griffin to approve the 2026-2027 academic year course fees and seconded by Dr. Westfall. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion

Cabinet Advance..... Dr. Ennis

Dr. Ennis reminded Cabinet members of the date for the Cabinet Advance on June 2. The Cabinet Advance topic will be a scholarship reset to include Foundation scholarships, University scholarships, academic scholarships, University discounts, and stacking. Additionally, the Retention Committee will present their findings from their recent study.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Memorial Day holiday, May 25
- Summer Session I begins, May 26

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, June 1, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.