

Approved Recommendations

Postsecondary Education Review Commission

February 5, 2010

Approved Recommendations:

1. The management boards of the Louisiana State University System, the University of Louisiana System, and the Southern University System, and the Board of Regents, or the appropriate successor boards, shall work with the legislature to increase graduation rates at all four-year universities. This process should begin immediately so that, by 2018, the following goals are met:
 - A. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Category 1 university raises admissions requirements as part of a series of actions to achieve at least a 75% graduation rate for the freshman class that enters in 2012 and each freshman class thereafter. This goal shall also apply to the admission of transfer students.
 - B. The SREB Category 2 institutions raise admission requirements as part of a series of actions to achieve at least a 60% graduation rate for the freshman class that enter in 2012 and each freshman class thereafter. This goal shall also apply to the admission of transfer students.
 - C. All other four-year institutions raise admission requirements as part of a series of actions to achieve at least a 50% graduation rate for the freshman class that enters in 2012 and each freshman class thereafter. This goal shall also apply to the admission of transfer students.
 - D. All four-year institutions initiate a series of actions to develop and utilize connections with the schools and school districts from which they enroll students with initial emphasis on entering first-time students who graduated from high school in the prior year. The specific actions taken shall be shared annually with the appropriate board and evaluated by such board in conjunction with the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.
 - E. All four-year institutions significantly reduce and minimize the use of exceptions to admission policies, including:
 - (1) the admission of students who are in a certain percentage of their high school graduating class without regard to quality;
 - (2) the lack of a required minimum grade point average on the core curriculum; and
 - (3) the admission of students requiring developmental courses.
 - F. All four-year institutions be required to:
 - (1) clearly articulate criteria for exceptions to admission policies which should be based on legitimate education disadvantages and the student's potential for success; and
 - (2) regularly publish the rationale for any exceptions granted.

The appropriate board shall create and provide for the implementation of a policy that underwrites the achievements of these goals with incentives.

2. To improve student learning outcomes and reduce the cost of postsecondary education, the appropriate board, with designated funding from the legislature, shall oversee the initial development of at least two academic course redesigns at each university and at least two academic courses within the community and technical college system, in conjunction with the National Center for Academic Transformation, with emphasis given to those courses that have the potential to yield the greatest impact in terms of student success and savings.

The academic course redesign at each institution and within the community and technical college system shall be developed with the intent of potential sharing with other institutions. The funding formula developed by the appropriate board will incorporate the academic course redesigns' productivity measures and cost-savings into its performance funding elements.

The aim of the state's academic course redesigns will be to make Louisiana a recognized national leader in this proven national program for increasing student outcomes at lower costs.

3. In an effort to support Louisiana's public higher education system in remaining competitive and increasing its overall effectiveness and efficiency, the Legislature shall grant colleges and universities limited operational autonomy and tuition and fee authority consistent with the recommendations adopted by this Commission provided that institutions achieve specific, measurable performance outcomes aimed at improving their graduation/completion rates and numbers and meeting the state's current and future workforce and economic development needs.
4. A rigorous review of role, scope, and mission statements, with the aim of eliminating or minimizing mission creep in order to create a better fitting system of postsecondary education, shall be undertaken by the appropriate boards.
5. A rigorous statewide review of academic programs for unnecessary duplication and excess hours required for degree completion shall be undertaken by the appropriate boards and such review shall eliminate such duplications and excess hours accordingly.
6. The appropriate boards shall conduct regular reviews of academic degree programs that consider the following:
 - A. Program quality.
 - B. Alignment with statewide and regional workforce needs and economic development priorities.
 - C. Cost-effectiveness.
 - D. Student completion rates.

- E. Institutional role, scope and mission.**
- F. Residency of students enrolled.**
- G. To the extent possible, information on graduate employment and continued education.**

The boards shall furnish an annual report to the governor, the speaker of the house, the president of the senate, the Senate Education Committee and the House Education Committee of the legislature, outlining the review process used, programs removed in the preceding year, the progress of reviews of academic programs for unnecessary duplication and excess hours required for degree completion, and any program approvals or eliminations.

- 7. Beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year, institutions that do not offer an academic degree above the associate degree shall be designated as the exclusive providers of required non-degree credit prerequisite courses at public colleges and universities, provided that such courses can be provided by such institutions in regions of the state where public universities are located.**
- 8. The Board of Regents will establish a formula by which to uniformly allocate funding for all associate degree programs and to implement such formula not later than the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year.**
- 9. All lower division courses, or the first sixty hours of any baccalaureate degree program, shall be funded at the same rate for all public postsecondary institutions, regardless of institutional classification, effective not later than the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year.**
- 10. The Board of Regents shall develop and use a new formula for the distribution of both required tuition and fees and state-provided funding. Such formula shall:
 - A. Emphasize support for and reward success in undergraduate education (performance funding). Incremental increases in graduate degree production and enrollment at institutions whose mission is overwhelmingly undergraduate would not result in overall institutional funding increases based on formula factors. This should not be interpreted to imply that established graduate programs of high quality be diminished in support.**
 - B. To achieve the goals contained in Recommendation No. 1, the formula shall direct 25% of funding based on performance components used in the formula. The performance components should include, but not be limited to, workforce completers, graduation rates, and time-to-degree rates. The incentive for research should be a separate component.****

- C. In addition to the monies which the historically black colleges and universities would receive under the formula's equitable distribution, they shall receive an amount designed to close the gap between funding for the public Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other public institutions. This amount shall be awarded until the funding gap is closed.
 - D. The formula should provide for mission-centered funding that provides a competitively directed element for productivity and provides reasonable protection via an intentional reduction strategy for schools that lose money.
- 11.
 - A. Every institution shall report student credit hours on the 14th class day and at the end of the semester.
 - B. A statewide universal withdrawal policy be adopted and implemented.
 - C. The funding formula will ultimately be based on the use of end of semester student credit hours.
- 12. The appropriate boards shall evaluate college and university presidents and chancellors based, in part, on the same performance indicators included in the performance-based funding formula.
- 13. The Postsecondary Education Review Commission believes in the educational value of students learning in diverse educational environments as outlined in the Supreme Court decision in Grutter v. Bollinger. The commission also believes in the unique and important mission of the Southern University System and Grambling State University as historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) for fostering expanding educational access, excellence, and success for all students, especially African-Americans and disproportionate numbers of low-income, first generation students.

The commission recognizes, however, that it is an important mission of all of the state's colleges and universities, especially, but not limited to its land-grant institutions, to educate the diverse students of the state roughly in proportion to the racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and geographic makeup of the state. The commission recognizes further, that if the state does not take affirmative steps to ensure that all of its higher education institutions are educating the diverse students of this state, especially those who have traditionally been and continue to be under served and under-represented in higher education, the state will never realize its educational, workforce, civic, social or economic goals.

Therefore, the commission recommends that the Board of Regents recommend to the legislature, actions that are consistent with the following:

Set aside within the higher education appropriations a specific allotment of funds, sufficient to enable the state's HBCUs to realize their important missions. This fund shall be used to ensure that the infrastructures, student/faculty ratio, faculty, salaries, technology, libraries, holdings, and other aspects of the campus operations are comparable to other institutions in the state; and establish specific goals for the state's non-HBCUs to achieve greater racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and regional diversity among full-time enrolled students; and establish a financial incentive for meeting and exceeding the graduation goals for African-Americans, and other racial and ethnic minorities of the state.

No state funding or policy shall be used for the purpose of discriminating or have the effect of denying educational opportunity.

- 14. The governor, the Louisiana Legislature, and the citizens of Louisiana shall consider and approve changes to the constitution that will allow required budget cuts to be allocated across all possible state agencies and not fall disproportionately upon postsecondary education.**
- 15. The use of the words "college", "university", or "institution" are to be interpreted to include law centers, agricultural centers, and health science centers as a part of the institution to which they are attached with regard to productivity, efficiency, funding, and budgetary recommendations.**
- 16. Beginning in fiscal year 2013 (after current authority expires) and ending in fiscal year 2019, the legislature authorizes the appropriate boards to establish tuition and fees pursuant to developed policy. Such policy shall require, at a minimum, that:
 - A. Tuition and fees for residents be benchmarked against the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) median by institutional classification.**
 - B. Increases in tuition be granted only if institutions are demonstrating substantial increases in retention rates toward achieving the following graduation rate goals:
 - i. SREB 1: 75% by 2018**
 - ii. SREB 2: 60% by 2018**
 - iii. All other four-year institutions: 50% by 2018**
 - iv. All community and technical colleges reaching the SREB median of their institutional category by 2018****
 - C. Annual increases in tuition not exceed five percent or the amount of increase in the higher education price index in the previous year, whichever is greater.****

- 20. The legislature shall restructure Louisiana's postsecondary education system such that all four-year universities shall be governed by a single university board using the current structure of the Board of Regents required by the constitution as it relates to membership composition, including the provision for geographic representation and the provisions for members being representative of the state's population by race and gender to ensure diversity, and that all technical and community colleges shall be governed by a single technical and community college board.**
- 21. The legislature shall direct the Board of Regents, in consultation with the management boards, to conduct a comprehensive review of all postsecondary institutions and authorize the appropriate boards to initiate any consolidations or mergers of institutions necessary to improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of Louisiana's public postsecondary education system. The board shall ensure that access to all levels of postsecondary education is maintained in each region of the state.**
- 22. The legislature shall take steps during the 2010 regular session necessary to provide for the power, authority and responsibilities of the Board of Regents to become consistent with the recommendation put forth by the report issued by the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana issued in 2009 regarding higher education governance, until and unless a change in the governance structure occurs.**