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UL System Reports on Budget Priorities Expanding Partnerships with Community Colleges

BATON ROUGE, La. - The University of Louisiana System has dedicated the \$99 million in new funding allocated this year by the Legislature to enroll and graduate more students in its eight universities, as reported to the Board of Regents today. UL System President Sally Clausen and the campuses each reported on their current operating budgets to the Regents Finance Committee.

"We came before you in June and pledged to be good stewards of the historic investment of resources in our system," said UL System President Sally Clausen. "I'm pleased to report that our universities are doing just that by dedicating funding for initiatives that directly support faculty and improve student access and success through some very unique approaches."

Among the many programs highlighted were progression grants at Southeastern Louisiana University to encourage students to graduate in four years; financial rewards for outstanding faculty advising at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette; incentives to attract former students to complete degrees at Nicholls State University; need-based aid over and above the state funded Go Grants at Northwestern State University; redesigned barrier courses such as mathematics at the University of Louisiana at Monroe; supplemental instruction and peer mentoring programs at Grambling State University; and student achievement centers that promote student success through tutoring, writing assistance, degree planning, career development and other academic support at Louisiana Tech University and McNeese State University.

In 2004, the UL System initiated a goal to exceed the national graduation rate by 2012. Clausen reaffirmed that commitment by stating that by 2012, ULS will graduate approximately 2,400 more students over current numbers to 15,000 per year. Universities will also target efforts to increase graduates in critical areas such as education, business, engineering, and health care.

UL System campuses spent a combined \$8.6 million on faculty salary increases above the \$9.7 million state funds allocated for faculty pay and \$3.7 million above the mandated \$1,500 increases per staff member.

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Universities

Grambling State University

Louisiana Tech University

McNeese State University

Nicholls State University

Northwestern State University

Southeastern Louisiana
University

University of Louisiana at
Lafayette

University of Louisiana at Monroe

Dr. Sally Clausen President

The UL System:

- Ranks among the 20 largest public systems in the U.S.
- Enrolls almost 80,000 students
- Employs over 8,000 faculty/staff
- Awards more than half of the public college degrees in Louisiana

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“A critical component of reaching our goal is attracting and retaining quality faculty and strengthening our partnerships with the state’s community colleges,” said Clausen.

Louisiana Community and Technical College System President Joe May attended a recent UL System Board Professional Development workshop and discussed several partnership initiatives such as strengthening articulation agreements that would allow community college students to enter four-year institutions as juniors upon completion of certain associate degree programs, exploring scholarship opportunities at UL System schools for superior community college graduates, and partnering for workforce development.

“Our board and presidents are very excited about expanding our work with the LCTC System because it is good for students and our state,” said Clausen.

Finance Chair Scott Brame noted the significance of the UL System budget presentation stating, “We appreciate your leadership in targeting these dollars and focusing on accountability and cost-saving efficiencies. Your system has been a leader in aggressively serving our students well.”