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## Continuing Education

Volume 2 Number 10 - *The Weekly Newsletter of the SBBA* - March 5, 2013



### 2011 Complete College America: Louisiana

A report on college graduation rates shows some Louisiana colleges are trailing far behind their national peers. See how area colleges stack up.



### Quick Links

[Colleges and Governing Boards](#)

[Bossier Parish Community College](#)

### Dear Johnette,

A week of studying the Governor's budget has some legislators squeamish about funding higher education through the use of one-time money and a transfer of the \$100 million in reserves at the New Orleans Convention Center, which Mayor Mitch Landrieu has vowed to fight. If these funding sources facing opposition were to fall through, higher education could take up to a 19 percent cut.

The Board of Regents and system management boards are ready to fight for tuition freedom for Louisiana schools. Louisiana is one of only three states where tuition authority resides in the state legislature and the only state that requires a 2/3 majority to raise tuition. Colleges throughout Louisiana are asking for the freedom to let market considerations determine tuition costs. During a recent higher education strategy retreat, the SBBA agreed to support tuition freedom for area schools in the upcoming legislative session.

The legislature, however, seems more concerned with performance than tuition. A bill to be proposed by State Senator Conrad Appel, R-Metairie, and State Representative Steve Carter, R-Baton Rouge, would penalize Louisiana colleges who don't meet the average graduation rates of their Southern peers. Two recently released studies on graduation rates from the Chronicle of Higher Education and the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center suggest Louisiana schools are trailing rather far behind the national average with only about 15 percent of Louisiana students graduating in four years instead of 31 percent, which is the U.S. average.

Data in The Chronicle also showed which schools are driving the numbers downward. For example, according to The Chronicle, the four-year graduation rate for LSU-Alexandria was 1.3% and Southern University at New Orleans was 0%. Although Hurricane Katrina may be partly to blame for SUNO's low numbers -- the studies examined graduation rates for students entering college in 2004 and Katrina hit in 2005 -- the dismal numbers quoted for LSUA are confounding. [Click Here](#). A third report from Complete College America paints a

Centenary College  
LSUHSC Shreveport

LSU Shreveport

Louisiana Tech

Northwestern

Northwest LA  
Technical College

Southern University at  
Shreveport

LA Board of Regents

LCTCS System

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CERT

Committee of One  
Hundred

Manufacturers  
Managers Council

Shreveport Chamber

little better picture using different dates, but LSU and SUNO still trail the other schools by a significant margin. [Click Here](#)

## Shreveport-Bossier Higher Education News

- Shreveporter and State Representative Thomas Carmody is speaking out on TOPS funding in the Governor's budget. "I have spoken with a good number of members of the legislature, and each senator and representative has expressed concern over how this budget has been cobbled together." [The Advocate, 03.05.13](#)

## Louisiana Higher Education News

- Two powerful state legislators have a plan to further link college funding to performance. To receive full funding from the state, the schools would have to meet the graduation rates of their peer schools in the Southern states. In exchange, the legislators would support a bill to allow tuition freedom for Louisiana schools, which would give the schools power over raising tuition. [The Advocate, 02.27.13](#)
- The Advocate Editorial Board has cautioned schools against supporting the legislation to make colleges more accountable in exchange for tuition freedom. They believe the higher education funding formula should rest with the Board of Regents. "If you want a completely political system based on the whim of legislators, take this Trojan horse for a ride in the State Capitol rodeo." [The Advocate, 03.04.13](#)
- To fund higher education next fiscal year, Governor Jindal wants to transfer \$100 million in reserves from the New Orleans Convention Center. Mayor Mitch Landrieu has vowed to fight it. "Every municipality in Louisiana ought to be concerned if the state can come in and take the receipts from a local hotel/motel tax and spend it somewhere else for a purpose for which it wasn't intended." [The Advocate, 02.03.13](#)
- The Jindal Administration has said it is open to a plan that would create regional boards for state hospitals. Under a plan proposed by Representative Stephen Ortego, the boards would have the ability to raise local taxes and oversee operations. [NOLA.com, 02.26.13](#)
- Despite ongoing cuts to higher education and healthcare, the Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge has announced it wants to open a medical school. [The Daily Reveille, 02.26.13](#)
- LSU in Baton Rouge has finally entered the online world. Three master's level programs were launched last week



through the college's new web-based, distance learning initiative. Administrators hope it will build the LSU brand nationwide. [\*The Advocate\*, 03.05.13](#)

- The LSU professor who says he was fired by the LSU System for refusing to be silent about the engineering mistakes that led to the failures of the New Orleans levees during Katrina, has settled with the system out of court. He will receive \$435,000. [\*The Advocate\*, 02.27.13](#)
- The U.L. Board of Supervisors has approved a 10 percent hike in tuition for the 9 schools in the U.L. system. Other systems are expected to do the same. [\*The Advocate\*, 02.27.13](#)
- A former Louisiana College faculty member has publicly called for the ouster of the College's President, Joe Aguiard. The letter was made public just hours before the Board of Trustees called an "emergency meeting" and went into executive session. [\*Alexandria Town Talk\*, 02.27.13](#)

## National Higher Education News

- Research universities across the country brace for cuts in federal grants as a result of the sequestration. [\*Inside Higher Ed\*, 03.01.13](#)

For more information on higher education in Northwest Louisiana, please visit our website at [www.sbba4he.org](http://www.sbba4he.org)

Sincerely,

***Jhnette Magner, Ph.D., Executive Director  
Shreveport-Bossier Business Alliance for Higher Education***

*You are welcome to forward this newsletter to others in your network who are interested in higher education.*

*For more information on becoming a member of the SBBA, or providing direct support for our work, please contact Dr. Jhnette Magner at [jmagner@sbba4he.org](mailto:jmagner@sbba4he.org)*

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