

Continuing Education

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Higher Education Quote of the Week:

"That's not the way to conduct the people's business. I just dread what's coming."
- State Senate President John Alario following the close of the special session which left a \$70 million deficit for the current fiscal year and \$850 million deficit for 2016-2017.



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Greetings!

Changes to higher education and the highly popular TOPS program are expected to be among the most debated topics during the regular legislative session that kicked off this week.

Legislation introduced so far includes a bill that would make it easier to close or merge institutions along with several bills that would consolidate the five higher education boards into a single, potentially less costly board. ***For more on these bills click here.***

But the biggest topic, by far, is going to be how to manage the growth of TOPS, which is expected to cost the state \$300 million next year if no changes are made. The bill with the most traction so far is one that limits TOPS to the current amount instead of having it automatically increase if tuition goes up. Other possible changes include raising the required GPA and ACT and limiting it only to public universities.

Centenary College President David Rowe opposes limiting it only to public schools. "Let's be clear: Cutting TOPS is not cutting funding to colleges and universities; it is cutting funding to students and their families." ***For more on proposed cuts to TOPS click here.***

Shreveport-Bossier Higher Education News

- LendEdu, a national organization designed to help students find reliable information on student loans, has named Louisiana Tech #35 in the nation in its recently released College Risk-Reward Indicator. Tech was also ranked #1 in the state. ***Monroe News-Star, 03.16.16***

Louisiana Higher Education News

- The mid-year budget deficit doubled today following a meeting of the Revenue Estimating Conference. At the close of the special session, it was reported that the deficit was around \$30 million, but today the REC said the deficit is closer to \$70 million. "That hammers us," said LSU President King Alexander. ***Shreveport Times, 04.16.16***
- The University of Louisiana Board of Supervisors has

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selected the current UNO Provost, Dr. John Nicklow, to be the next President of the University of New Orleans. Nicklow has only been with UNO since July, but he had support from 80% of the faculty. [ULWebsite, 04.16.16](#)

- After serving for more than 10 years at the helm, SUNO Chancellor Victor Upkolo is calling it quits and returning home to Nigeria. Upkolo had a rocky tenure at SUNO; in both 2010 and 2012 the faculty passed a vote of no confidence. [NOLA.com, 03.16.16](#)

National Higher Education News

- A recent Gallup poll suggests students who play college athletics are more likely to thrive in the areas of purpose, community, and social well-being later in life. The Gallup study, which was released last month, randomly surveyed 30,000 college graduates. [Gallup.com, 03.14.16](#)
- The Chronicle of Higher Education is reporting that 160 private colleges failed the federal government's "financial-responsibility test", which measures the financial health of an institution. The only Louisiana school making the failing list was Blue Cliff College in Metairie. [Chronicle of Higher Education, 03.14.16](#)

For more information on higher education in Northwest Louisiana, please visit our website at 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