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Regents Recommends Termination of 87 Low-Completer Programs

BATON ROUGE, La. –The Louisiana Board of Regents has identified 87 technical, community college and university programs which should be eliminated due to low-completion rates. Additionally, the board recommended a comprehensive review of 3 program areas for potential unnecessary duplication in the future.

“We have pledged to do our part to operate in the most efficient and accountable manner possible for our students and for taxpayers in Louisiana,” said Commissioner Clausen. “This is an important step in assessing our entire higher education enterprise so we can continue to demonstrate that colleges and universities are a wise investment in our state’s future.” Clausen said.

The Board of Regents began an expedited review of the “low-completer” programs in January and routinely reviews all degree programs at Louisiana’s postsecondary institutions. Low-completer program reviews use five years of student graduation data provided by the campuses to measure productivity. The last low-completer review was done by Regents five years ago. This year’s review includes data from 2003-2008. The established standards to be met by campuses are:

- **Undergraduate Programs**-an average of 8 completers per year or a minimum of 40 graduates within 5 years
- **Masters/Specialist Programs**-an average of 5 completers per year or a minimum of 25 graduates within 5 years
- **Doctoral Programs**-an average of 2 completers per year or a minimum of 10 graduates within 5 years

“During these difficult economic times, the state must invest in programs that have a proven track record of student success,” said Board of Regents Chairman Artis Terrell. “This important work has been done in collaboration with all our systems to ensure that is as thorough and accurate as possible,” Terrell said.

Each campus was provided its list of low-completer programs in January and given an opportunity to respond to the identification and propose remediating action. The final recommendations presented to Regents were discussed with each affected campus chief academic officer before today’s action.

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PAGE TWO-Low-Completer Recommendations

Regents staff reviewed 36 programs within the LSU system; recommending the termination/consolidation of 9 of them. Forty five programs in the UL system were reviewed with 14 recommended for termination/consolidation. Eighteen programs within the Southern University system were reviewed with 5 being recommended for termination/consolidation. Seventy one programs were reviewed in the LCTC system with 59 recommended for termination/consolidation. Another 474 programs at institutions in the LCTC system are still being reviewed using job placement as an additional measure of productivity. Actions on the remaining LCTC programs are expected in May.

A total of 168 programs will be impacted by today's recommendations.

- **Maintain Program Unconditionally - 13 Programs**
These programs were found not to be low-completers either due to corrected data or because they constitute initial certification teacher education programs.
- **Conditionally Maintain for Three Years, then Re-Evaluate - 63 Programs**
These programs showed evidence of becoming productive quickly and/or were needed for essential reasons.
- **Conditionally Maintain, Pending External Review - 6 Programs**
These programs were already under an in-depth external review or will be by Regents.
- **Terminate - 77 Programs**
These programs are recommended for immediate termination. Currently enrolled students will be given the opportunity to complete their studies or transfer to another program.
- **Terminate, Consolidate with Other Programs - 2 Programs**
The programs to be consolidated were both low-completers in the same subject area and can be consolidated into one program without further review. Provisions regarding currently enrolled students described above shall apply.
- **Terminate, Consolidate with Other Programs, Proposal Review Required - 7 Programs**
These programs to be consolidated with a required Regents review involve a low-completer program and a non-low-completer program. Regents recommends the termination of the low-completer program and a review of the proposed consolidation.
- **Terminate, New Program Provided – 1**
This low-completer program was inappropriately designed by the campus and was terminated. A replacement program was created to replace it.

The Academic Affairs Committee also recommended further comprehensive review for potential duplication of the following:

- **Ed.D. programs in North Louisiana**
Three universities in north Louisiana offer Ed.D. programs in both Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Leadership (six separate and distinct programs). Regents recommends a comprehensive review of all existing and proposed Ed.D. programs in north Louisiana to determine if there is a more effective and efficient method of delivery.

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PAGE 3-Low-Completer Recommendations

- **Ph.D. programs in Special Education**

There are two Ph.D. programs in Special Education statewide. Regents believes both programs should be examined to help determine if there is a more effective and efficient way to offer needed education.

- **Professional Candidacy Programs in Architecture**

Four public universities in Louisiana offer professional candidacy programs in Architecture. Some are B.S. programs and others are master-level programs, reflecting the current diversity of educational practice. Regents recommends a review based on comparisons of numbers of program per state population across the nation

The full board is expected to take final action on all of today's recommendations tomorrow.

To see the full list of low-completer programs for each campus click here:

<http://www.regents.state.la.us/Board/Agenda/2009/04/AAppdfs/Agenda%20Item%20III%20-%20Low-Completer.pdf>

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