

# Regents Recap

Highlights of the Activities and Official Actions of the Louisiana Board of Regents

June/July 2006

## New Budget Provides Relief, Stability for Louisiana Public Colleges and Universities

Louisiana's public colleges and universities, still reeling from the physical and financial impact of last year's devastating hurricanes, can breathe easier now that the 2006 Regular Legislative Session has come to a close. The state's budget for the 2006-07 fiscal year, passed by the Legislature, not only provides much-needed relief for higher education's storm-induced financial shortfalls, but also undergirds institutional stability and provides funds to help public institutions train the skilled workers vital to Louisiana's long-term rebuilding effort.

"The 2006-07 budget demonstrates that our legislators and Governor Blanco remain committed to education and recognize it as the foundation of economic vitality and – more to the point this year – of our long-term recovery from Katrina and Rita," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. "The budget's provision to cover mandated cost increases removes a significant financial burden from our cash-strapped institutions, and the faculty pay raise will go a long way toward the retention of quality faculty, helping stabilize the campuses most directly impacted by the disasters."

The faculty pay plan was funded at approximately \$31.17 million, which will make possible an average 5% pay increase for college faculty at all levels, the first raise since 2001. The measure will bring Louisiana's average faculty salary, currently 14<sup>th</sup> among 16 southern states in average college faculty salary, to a more competitive level, though still well below the current southern average.

The budget also includes some \$18.5 million to pay for "mandated costs," expenses such as increases in insurance premiums and routine civil service pay raises over which campuses have no control.

Other significant higher education provisions include \$21.55 million for general operations funding, \$12 million to provide financial stability to institutions facing uncertain future enrollment, \$5 million for the Louisiana Community and Technical College & Learning Center Development Pool, \$2.5 million to fund dual enrollment courses for high school students and adult education initiatives, and \$3.2 million for the LSU Flagship Agenda.

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New student board member Terry Landry (left) is sworn in by Connie Khoury, Assistant to the Commissioner for Legal Affairs, at the June board meeting. Terry is a law student at Southern University. Terry's brother Tory (center) joined him at the podium for the ceremony.



Dr. Kerry Davidson, Deputy Commissioner for Sponsored Programs (left), and Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie (far right) present plaques of recognition to Dr. Robert Twilley of LSU, Dr. Shirley Laska of UNO (represented by Dr. Dennis McSeveney) and Dr. John Clements of Tulane for their work in planning the Board of Regents Post-Katrina/Rita Research and Education Forum held April 2-4 in New Orleans. Regents, in partnership with Louisiana EPSCoR, hosted the highly-successful event at the New Orleans Marriot Hotel.



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Chair

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Vice Chair

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Secretary

*William "Billy" Blake*  
*Scott O. Brame*  
*Richard E. D'Aquin*  
*Stanley J. Jacobs*  
*Ingrid T. Labat*  
*Robert W. Levy*  
*W. Clinton Rasberry, Jr.*

*Virgil Robinson, Jr.*  
*Mary Ellen Roy*  
*William Clifford Smith*  
*Harold M. Stokes*  
*Artis Terrell, Jr.*  
*Terry Landry*  
Student Member

*E. Joseph Savoie*  
Commissioner of  
Higher Education

## Board Action - June 21-22, 2006

### Program Approvals

The Board of Regents approved the following proposed new academic programs, proposed letters of intent and administrative and curricular revisions:

#### Proposed New Academic Programs:

Southern University New Orleans - M.S. in Management Information Sciences; B.S. in Entrepreneurship; B.A. in Public Administration.  
Louisiana State University Alexandria - B.S. in Psychology.  
Baton Rouge Community College - A.S. in Business.  
Louisiana Community and Technical College System (Varied Campuses) - Certificate of General Studies.

#### Administrative and Curricular Revisions:

University of New Orleans - Request for Selective Administrative/Curricular Changes/Eliminations

### Regents Approve Course Articulation Matrix

The Board of Regents approved the annual update of Louisiana's Statewide General Education Course Articulation Matrix, a list of courses that will transfer for full credit from one public institution to another. The matrix is designed to encourage and facilitate the ready transfer of general education coursework between Louisiana's public colleges and universities. The Board's approval of this latest matrix update codifies course additions with applicability to the widest possible range of institutions.

"We can no longer assume that a given student will complete his or her degree program at the institution where it was begun. Our population is increasingly mobile, and the articulation matrix helps ensure that students will not be put at a significant disadvantage by transferring from one institution to another, especially in the early stages of coursework. Transfer policies should be practical, predictable, and fair," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. "The Board's action expands an already very comprehensive matrix of general education courses."

### Support Fund Dollars Earmarked for Hurricane-Impacted Doctoral Students

The Board approved the use of \$50,000 from the Board of Regents Support Fund to underwrite targeted research or education initiatives by doctoral students at Louisiana's research universities directly impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The measure was adopted in response to a recognized need to encourage the retention of talented doctoral students negatively impacted by the hurricanes, who might otherwise be lured away to out-of-state institutions.

The incentive program, linked to the Board of Regents' long-standing tradition of bolstering strength and fostering excellence in graduate programs, will provide up to \$2,000 per student to attend a national conference, undertake a research trip or participate in other approved research or educational activities.

"While the Support Fund has limited monies, the Board has a sizeable commitment to continuing academic excellence in severely impacted areas," said Kerry Davidson, Regents Deputy Commissioner for Sponsored Programs.

Awards will be made on a first-come, first-served basis, with each of the participating campuses limited to ten award recipients. Requests must be approved by the submitting institution's Dean of Research and Graduate Studies or equivalent. Institutions eligible for the program include LSU Health Sciences Center-New Orleans, Tulane University, Tulane University Health Sciences Center, and the University of New Orleans. The program will be available beginning July 1, 2006, and will operate until August 31, 2007.

### Meningitis Vaccination Will Be Required for College Enrollment

Beginning with the upcoming Fall 2006 semester, incoming freshmen must be vaccinated against meningitis to enroll at any Louisiana public or private college or university.

Meningitis, which can be spread through viruses, bacteria and fungi, is an infection of the brain and spinal cord. The disease is not highly contagious, but can be spread through sharing food, beverages or cigarettes and intimate kissing. The disease can be fatal, and bacterial meningococcal meningitis is the most deadly form of the disease.

The requirement is the result of Acts 251 and 711 of the 2006 Regular Legislative Session. The legislation mandates that all first-time freshmen attending Louisiana's postsecondary institutions show proof of having received the meningococcal vaccine or provide a properly executed waiver at registration. A student's registration will not be complete unless these documents are provided to their institution.

This is in addition to the current immunization requirement for students to show proof of having been vaccinated with two doses of measles, mumps, and rubella and one tetanus/diphtheria vaccine within the last 10 years.

"Our first responsibility is to protect the health and safety of the students we serve," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. "Because of the close contact among students on a college campus it makes good sense to take this precaution against such a serious health risk."

**Next Board of Regents Meeting:  
August 23-24, 2006**

# Launching the “Culture of Preparedness”

By Mike Abbiatti, Board of Regents Associate  
Commissioner for Learning and Technology

Note: This is the first in a series of articles on postsecondary education emergency preparedness.

## Introduction and background

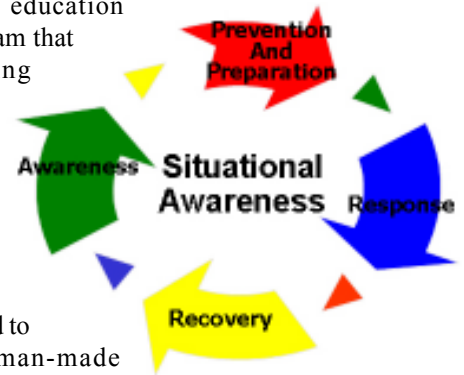
The devastation of physical property and loss of life resulting from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita was exacerbated by the lack of information and understanding of what to expect from the emergency response system. Although the postsecondary education community responded admirably, given the unique set of circumstances and the overwhelming number of rapidly-changing challenges, there is a clear need to be sure that each individual, organization and community has a full grasp of what is supposed to happen in any emergency. This collective understanding can best be obtained by investing time in studying a few critical documents. In so doing, individuals can best serve themselves, their families, and in turn their institutions. The goal is to create a “Culture of Preparedness.” The bottom line is that individual responsibility can be collectively focused at a moment’s notice in order to respond most effectively to the all-hazards environment. This short treatise is designed to take the reader “behind the scenes” in the complex realm of emergency preparedness in order to provide the framework, context, and vocabulary required to make members of the postsecondary education community well-informed decision makers, as well as potential active participants if called upon to serve during an emergency.

## Framing the issues

The Culture of Preparedness is based on the answers to four critical questions:

1. How is the emergency response system supposed to work?
2. What should I expect from the system at the national, state, and local levels?
3. What does the system expect from me, my family or my institution?
4. What do I/we do next time?

Each postsecondary education campus has a local team that has been or is being trained to take the leadership in an emergency without regard to the underlying cause. These Incident Action Teams must be prepared to respond to both natural and man-made emergencies in a manner that will have anticipated as many variables as is possible and is practical in both resource requirements and execution. Thus, they will have developed the plans, resource base, and zone of comfort relative to handling identifiable variables and scenarios. This zone of comfort will likewise empower trained individuals to be as innovative and creative as needed to respond appropriately to the unforeseen challenges that will inevitably arise. So what are the Incident Action Teams learning?



## Content/context for the Culture of Preparedness

Figure 1 (at left) is a graphic summary of the official emergency response guidance published by the U.S government. The documents flow from left to right in a cascade of specific information that should be at least familiar to the general population as well as to the emergency response professionals. Each of the questions mentioned above will be answered in this series of articles within the context of Figure 1 and with the overall objective of helping realize the *National Preparedness Goal*: “To engage federal, state, local, and tribal entities, their private and non-governmental partners, and the general public to achieve and sustain risk-based target levels of capability to prevent, protect against, respond to,

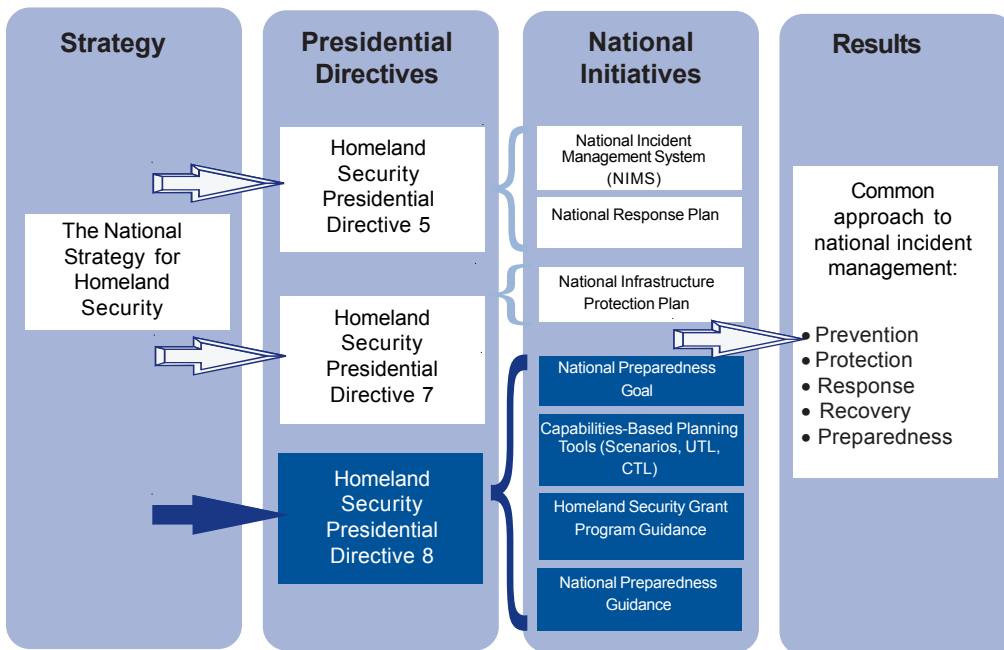


Figure 1

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## **Budget Relief (continued from page 1)**

At its June meeting, the Board of Regents adopted a resolution recognizing the strong support for postsecondary education demonstrated by Governor Blanco and the Louisiana Legislature during the regular session.

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## **Preparedness (continued from page 3)**

and recover from major events in order to minimize the impact on lives, property, and the economy.”

Over the course of these articles, the following four questions will be addressed from the national, state, local and individual perspectives:

**How is the emergency response system supposed to work?**

**What should I expect?**

**What does the system expect from me, my family and my institution?**

**What do I/we do next time?** ■

**For more information  
on these and other  
Board of Regents  
actions,  
please visit  
our web site at  
[www.regents.state.la.us](http://www.regents.state.la.us)**