

Regents Recap

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

October 2007

Value-Added Teacher Preparation Assessment Model Breaks New Ground in Education Accountability

Is it possible to measure the relative effectiveness of university teacher training programs in preparing their graduates to help students learn? According to the results of a groundbreaking study presented to the Louisiana Board of Regents, the answer to that question is a resounding *yes*. The initial results of the Regents-sponsored Value-Added Teacher Preparation Assessment Model, in development for four years, not only demonstrate that such an evaluation is possible, but that, contrary to prior research findings, some programs in Louisiana are producing new teachers who are as effective in their first and second years in the classroom as veteran teachers. The ability to quantify the impact of the instruction teachers receive in their college teacher preparation programs has enormous implications for improving education program quality and student learning across the nation.

“The most important news is that three years of data and analysis, validated and revalidated by nationally-recognized experts in this field, show beyond a doubt that a meaningful assessment of program effectiveness in preparing teachers for the classroom is possible,” said Louisiana Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. “And as we continue to gather more data each year, a clearer picture will emerge regarding what makes a given program more effective than a similar program at another university.”

“Louisiana is the first in the nation to step up and do this,” said Kati Haycock, of Education Trust. “Now what is important is what the institutions do over time to improve the achievement of students.”

Dr. George Noell, professor of psychology at LSU and principal investigator in the ongoing study, presented the study’s latest and most provocative results yet at the Regents’ regular monthly meeting. Noell’s Value-Added Teacher Preparation Assessment Model predicts the academic achievement of students in grades 4-9 from the end of one year to the end of the next academic year, compares that achievement to the students’ actual standardized test performance the next year, and yields *teacher preparation effect estimates* for universities, which reflect the impact of new teachers on the achievement of the children in their classes, one critical factor in student learning.

In previous years Noell has reported promising preliminary study results to the Board, but this is the first year that there have been sufficient data to fully implement the model and determine the reliability of the results. Noell reported that three redesigned alternate certification programs produced enough new teachers who taught grades 4-9 mathematics, science, and social studies during 2004-05 and 2005-06 to be included in the study as post-redesign programs. The results for the new redesigned programs were very promising.

All other undergraduate and alternate certification programs were primarily or exclusively composed of graduates of old programs that stopped admitting new teachers

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Regents Approve 2007-08 Operating Budget Review Report

The Board of Regents recommended approval of the Regents’ 2007-08 Operating Budget Review submission at its October meeting. The action is the culmination of a series of meetings over several weeks with representatives of Louisiana’s four public postsecondary education systems and their campuses to review plans for investing this year’s historic budget appropriation for Louisiana’s colleges and universities. On October 11, 12, 18, 19, and 22, campuses presented to the Board their detailed plans for spending their portions of the \$2.9 billion FY 2007-08 higher education budget, especially the more than \$230 million in new recurring revenue appropriated by the legislature this year. Louisiana’s colleges and universities are now funded at the average of their regional peers for the first time in more than twenty-five years.

Because of the significant new state funding, the Board of Regents directed the Finance Committee and staff to engage in a particularly detailed operating budget review to ensure investment in areas that support the goals and objectives of the state’s Master Plan for Public Postsecondary

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The next Board of Regents meeting will be held December 5-6, 2007



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Board Action - October 24-25, 2007

Program Approvals

The Board of Regents approved the following proposed research units and reports on conditionally-approved programs:

Proposed Research Units

University of Louisiana-Lafayette: National Incident and Management Systems and Advanced Technologies Institute

Southeastern Louisiana University: Center for Nursing Research in Education and Practice

LSU Agricultural Center: Louisiana Center for Rural Initiatives

Progress Reports on Conditionally Approved Programs

Northwestern State University: B.S. in Addiction Studies

Bossier Parish Community College: A.A. in Music

Louisiana Technical College-Ascension Campus: A.A.S. in Process Technology

Louisiana State University-Shreveport: B.S. in Computer Information Science; Sports Science Institute

South Louisiana Community College: A.A.S. in Emergency Health Science; A.S. in Industrial Technology

Select Grants Awarded

The Board of Regents voted to approve grants awarded through the Regents' SELECT (Supporting Electronic Learning and Essential Campus Transitions) Program. Campuses receiving grants include UL-Monroe (3 grants, \$103,187 total), Southeastern Louisiana University (\$36,008), LSU-Eunice (2 grants, \$89,938 total), Nicholls State University (\$46,099), UNO (\$50,000), Southern University – BR (\$29,739), Louisiana Technical College – Region 6 (\$75,000), River Parishes Community College (\$49,450), and UNO/LSU-Eunice (shared grant, \$20,000 total). Details on the SELECT projects funded by the Board are posted on the Board of Regents website.

Since its inception in 1997, the SELECT grants program has fostered the development of electronically-delivered degree programs and supported the Regents' Electronic Campus (BOREC). The initiative continues to expand such programs. Structural support is in place: technicians have created a high-quality compressed video and Internet network; partnerships between institutions at a variety of levels have been forged; faculty members around the state have been trained to use these resources effectively; and the Community and Technical College System and K-12 school systems are coming online, increasing the numbers of potential users and programs.

For more information about these and other Board of Regents actions, please visit our web site at www.regents.state.la.us

Value Added (from page 1)

on July 1, 2003, and are now being phased out. The results for these programs will be used as a baseline against which to compare future redesigned program results.

“It is exciting to see collaborative work between the Louisiana Department of Education, Board of Regents, and a research team at LSU produce the first statewide assessment of teacher preparation based on the achievement of students taught by new teachers,” Noell said. “I hope that this information will ultimately contribute to strengthening teacher preparation in Louisiana so that students have increasingly effective teachers.”

“Research shows that the best indicator for child’s success in the classroom is a good teacher, and I can’t overemphasize how important it is that we have the best possible preparation programs in our universities,” said State Superintendent of Education Paul G. Pastorek. “This study is a valuable tool as we work together with universities across the state to create a new generation of teachers that will help us reach our goal of creating a world-class educational system in Louisiana.”

“A significant finding from this research is that teacher preparation does matter,” said Jeanne Burns, Board of Regents Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs for Teacher Education. “I’m looking forward to working with our State Research Team as we collect additional data to identify factors that are evident within those teacher education programs that prepare new teachers whose students surpass predicted achievement. These findings will help all of our programs prepare highly effective new teachers for our state.

A student’s ability to achieve in the classroom is influenced by many factors: home life, the school principal, the child’s health, the community in which the child lives, and many others. Teacher effectiveness can partially compensate for some of these factors.

Budget Review (from page 1)

Education and which are consistent with mission of each institution.

“This year’s historic appropriation for higher education provides Louisiana’s colleges and universities an unprecedented opportunity to gain ground on their regional counterparts,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. “This exhaustive review has demonstrated that our systems and individual institutions are proceeding prudently and responsibly in their plans for investing these public dollars.”

The \$230 million in new funding is being invested in several key areas, including faculty and staff pay increases to raise salaries to the southern regional average; hiring new faculty in priority disciplines; library improvements and acquisition of state-of-the-art equipment; long-overdue building maintenance; student support facilities; and mandated costs (uncontrollable expenses, such as health insurance premium increases and pay increases for classified staff, that campuses must absorb each year).