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Postsecondary Education Review Commission Make Initial Recommendation

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BATON ROUGE, La. – Members of the Postsecondary Education Review Commission recommended increasing admission standards to improve graduation rates today. The motion, introduced by David Voelker and accepted unanimously by the commission, is below:

“The management boards for the Louisiana State University System, the University of Louisiana System, and the Southern University System work with the Board of Regents and the Legislature to strengthen admission requirements at all four year universities. This process should begin immediately so that the following goals are met by 2018.

- a. The SREB I university should raise admission requirements to a level that projects at least a 75% graduation rate for the freshman class that enters in 2012. This goal should also apply to the admission of transfer students.
- b. SREB II institutions should raise admission requirements to a level that projects at least a 60% graduation rate for the freshman class that enters in 2012. This goal should also apply to the admission of transfer students.
- c. All other four-year institutions should raise admission requirements to levels that project at least a 50% graduation rate for the freshman class that enters in 2012. This goal should also apply to the admission of transfer students.
- d. All four-year institutions should significantly reduce and minimize the use of exceptions to admission policies, including (1) the admission of students who are in a certain percentage of their high school graduating class without regard to quality, (2) the lack of a required minimum grade point average on the core curriculum, and (3) the admission of students requiring developmental courses
- e. All four-year institutions should be required to (1) clearly articulate criteria for exceptions to admission policies, which should be based on legitimate educational disadvantages and the student’s potential for success, and (2) regularly publish the rationale for any exceptions granted.

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The Board of Regents shall create and provide for the implementation of a policy that underwrites the achievement of these goals with incentives.”

In Louisiana, Louisiana State University A&M is a Southern Region Education Board-I (SREB-I) university. Louisiana Tech University, the University of New Orleans, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette are SREB-II institutions. Louisiana’s other four-year institutions include Grambling State University, Louisiana State University at Alexandria, Louisiana State University at Shreveport, McNeese State University, Nicholls State University, Northwestern State University, Southeastern Louisiana University, Southern University A&M, Southern University at New Orleans and the University of Louisiana at Monroe.

The next meeting of the Postsecondary Education Review Commission will be November 16-17, 2009. The topic of the two-day meeting will be academic programs including role, scope, and mission of colleges and universities and how they serve their geographic areas. The December meeting is scheduled to focus on funding for higher education including discussions on tuition.

Those unable to attend the meetings in person can watch the proceedings live via the internet by logging onto the Postsecondary Education Review Commission’s website, www.laperc.org. Additionally, the public may provide input to the commission in two ways – by attending the meeting, or by clicking on the “Tell Us What You Think” section of the website.

The 2009 Louisiana Legislature, with strong support from Governor Jindal, passed legislation sponsored by House Speaker Jim Tucker (Act 309) creating the Postsecondary Education Review Commission to study the governance, facilities, funding, operations, and number and alignment of degree programs at Louisiana public colleges, and to provide a written report of findings and recommendations to the Board of Regents by February 12, 2010. The Board of Regents will review the report and submit comments to the Legislature no later than February 26, 2010.

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