

*Kim Hunter Reed, Chair  
James Ammons  
Ray Belton  
Joseph Bouie  
Gerald Boudreaux  
Preston Castille  
Ava Dejoie  
Rodney Ellis  
Randal Gaines  
Richard Gallot, Jr.  
Jimmy Harris  
James Henderson  
Jason Hughes*



*Walter Kimbrough  
Mandi Mitchell  
Orlando McMeans  
Kelsey Perine  
John Pierre  
Edward Price  
Larissa Littleton-Steib  
Toya Barnes-Teamer  
Reynold Verret  
Arlanda Williams  
Stephanie Willis*

## MINUTES

### Historically Black Colleges and Universities Advisory Council

April 26, 2021

The Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Advisory Council met in session at 10:02 a.m., on Monday, April 26, 2021 via Zoom. Dr. Kim Hunter Reed called the meeting to order.

#### ROLL CALL

The roll was called and quorum was established.

Present at the meeting were:	Absent from the meeting were:
Dr. Kim Hunter Reed	Preston Castille
Dr. James Ammons	Senator Joseph Bouie
Senator Gerald Boudreaux	Ava Dejoie
Representative Jason Hughes	Representative Randal Gaines
Kelsey Perine	Senator Jimmy Harris
Dr. Orlando McMeans	Senator Jimmy Harris
John Pierre	Dr. Jim Henderson
Dr. Ray Belton	Mandi Mitchell
Rick Gallot	Senator Edward Price
Dr. Rodney Ellis	Dr. Larissa Littleton-Steib
Dr. Reynold Vere	Dr. Toya Barnes-Teamer
Dr. Walter Kimbrough	Arlanda Williams
	Stephanie Willis

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed welcomed the Council members in attendance, noted that a quorum was not yet present, and acknowledged HBCU Day at the Capitol. Dr. Reed recognized the legislators who were present at the meeting and requested to move forward with an open discussion of the 2021 Regular Legislative Session until a quorum was reached so the February 8<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes could be approved.

### OPEN DISCUSSION OF 2021 REGULAR SESSION

Representative Jason Hughes expressed excitement about HBCU Day at the Capitol. Representative Hughes stated that the previous week he was joined in the House Education Committee with Dr. Kim Hunter Reed to present a bill to make adjustments HBCU Advisory Council. Representative Hughes stated he will present House Concurrent Resolution 38 in acknowledgement of the state's HBCUs and invited Dr. Kim Hunter Reed and other council members who are available to join him in legislative chambers once it is read. Representative Hughes continued to thank the council members for their service and reiterated his excitement for the HBCUs in Louisiana.

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed invited Representative Ted James to make remarks. Representative James echoed Representative Hughes' sentiments, expressing his gratitude to and excitement for the state's HBCUs. Representative James noted that the Legislative Black Caucus had released their legislative agenda, specifying three tax bills in the House Ways in Means Committee. Additionally, Representative James informed the Council of a series of bills authored by other Black Caucus Members pertaining to education, criminal justice reform, and women's health. President Rick Gallot and Dr. Ray Belton acknowledged and thanked Representative James for his presentation. Dr. Belton asked Representative James about the status of the legislature's consideration of salary adjustments for faculty. Representative James stated he was unsure but promised to follow up.

Senator Gerald Boudreaux stated that he was proud to be associated with the Council and he looks forward to the continued engagement of the Council in the legislative session.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On the motion of John Pierre, seconded by Rick Gallot, the HBCU Advisory Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the February meeting.

### AROUND THE TABLE-SPOTLIGHT ON HBCU ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Rick Gallot, president of Grambling State University, thanked Dr. Reed for her leadership in continuing to advance the important mission of the state's HBCUs. President Gallot began his presentation by briefly sharing the founding history of Grambling State University and statistics pertaining to the graduates of the Class of Spring 2021: 411 degrees awarded, including 291 undergraduate degrees and 120 graduate degrees. One of the graduates is the first and only person so far in the state of Louisiana to earn a bachelor's degree in cyber security, and President Gallot also shared several other stories of spring 2021 graduates. He noted that Grambling has been reaccredited through 2030 by SACS. Grambling has unveiled the Doug Williams Center for the study of race and politics in sports. Grambling has also established a strategic partnership with Clemson State University for the Call Me Mister Program. President Gallot shared progress on the university's first and only digital library, which will make Grambling the only HBCU in the country with a digital library.

Dr. Ray Belton, President of the Southern University System, shared with the Council a list of commitments for promoting student success and excellence within the Southern University System. Each of the campuses within the System has a scoring system that charts annual growth. During the 2019-2020 academic year, the Southern University System Annual Accountability Scorecard indicated the System has met or exceeded 80% of its targeted outcomes ranging from academic excellence to institutional effectiveness. Similarly, the Baton Rouge Campus has met or exceeded 74% of expected outcomes, ranging from fundraising and philanthropy to student access and affordability. Dr. Belton highlighted other focal areas, including the establishment of an HBCU designation adopted by the Board of Regents. Dr. Belton informed the Council that Southern University in New Orleans' probationary status was lifted by SACS. The System appropriately adapted to the "new normal" during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the health and safety of all students, faculty, and staff. Southern University and A&M College serves as one of the leading institutions in the state to launch a statewide campaign to encourage minority groups to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Dr. Belton shared that a reported 1,011 people received a one-shot vaccine at a statewide event hosted at Southern University on April 10<sup>th</sup> and the Louisiana Department of Health was a service provider for the event. Dr. Belton said he remained optimistic for increased student enrollment especially, for the dual enrollment program recently set in place. Dr. Belton shared that Southern's main campus in Baton Rouge is exploring plans to construct a new student union.

Dr. Rodney Ellis, Chancellor of Southern University-Shreveport (SUSLA), informed the Council that SUSLA is designated as a military friendly school. SUSLA has outlined a strategic plan focusing on expanding the number of new programs, several of which have received approval from SACS COC. The System Board has recently approved an associate's degree program in graphic and web design and 15 embedded certificate programs. SUSLA signed a partnership with Avance International University of Uganda and has received a number of grants. The National Science Foundation awarded SUSLA \$300,000 to strengthen collaboration among stakeholders dedicated to student success in engineering technology and related disciplines. Additionally, SUSLA was awarded \$20,000 from Home Depot to be used to beautify parts of SUSLA's campus and \$10,000 from Precious Memories Funeral Home. Lastly, SUSLA is using the proceeds from a \$500,000 donation to launch a new business school.

Dr. James Ammons, Chancellor of Southern University in New Orleans (SUNO), thanked the Commissioner for her advocacy and leadership in her commitment to HBCUs. Dr. Ammons shared that SUNO is an urban university that can help address the challenges that face New Orleans and other mostly Black urban centers across America. SUNO has regained SACS accreditation and has been removed from probation. SUNO was able to secure foundation partnerships with the Wisner Foundation, Oschner Foundation, and Kellogg Foundation. Particularly through its partnership with the Oschner Foundation, SUNO's Center for African American Studies and program in Museum Studies will develop a documentary on their investigation of the social cultural and economic impacts of COVID-19 on the African American community in New Orleans. Dr. Ammons stated that SUNO remains committed to erasing achievement gaps in degree attainment by adding online programs. The number of high school students who enrolled in dual enrollment courses in Fall 2020 set a record at SUNO, with 471 students enrolled. SUNO has applied for a grant with the National Science Foundation, which would provide scholarships to recruit highly qualified minority teachers in biology and

mathematics. Additionally, SUNO has partnered with Google and the Thurgood Marshall Foundation to establish the HBCU Career Readiness Program to help students develop digital skills for successful careers. Dr. Ammons highlighted Brianna Nelson, Miss SUNO 2021, who has been accepted into eight law schools across the country. DXC Technology extended 12 offers to new graduates through a partnership SUNO has with the Louisiana Workforce Commission. Dr. Reed asked if Dr. Ammons could share more information about the HBCU Career Readiness Program with the rest of the Council.

Dr. Orlando McMeans, Chancellor of the Southern University Agricultural Research & Extension Center (Ag Center), thanked the Commissioner for her advocacy on behalf of higher education and HBCUs. Dr. McMeans shared that the Southern Ag Center functions to improve the quality of life for individuals and communities the University serves. In 2022, Southern University will be celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary, during which the Ag Center will be conducting a Youth Livestock Show, which provides youth an opportunity to showcase their animals, develop entrepreneurship skills, build character, and receive leadership training. The Ag Center has created the Southern Institute for Medicinal Plants to facilitate public-private agricultural partnerships for the cultivation and research of medical marijuana. The Ag Center continues to work with disadvantaged and minority farmers and seeks to connect them with USDA FSA Loans for services provided by USDA partners. Dr. McMeans informed the Council that Congressman David Scott introduced legislation in the last farm bill that will give the 1890 Land Grant institutions a minimum of \$500,000 per year for scholarships and the food and agriculture disciplines. Additionally, the Ag Center was awarded an 1890 Center of Excellence grant in the amount of \$1.7 million in early April. The Ag Center has been working on a series of branding and marketing projects to promote the Ag Center. Lastly, Dr. McMeans shared that the Ag Center will be celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on July 1, 2021.

Chancellor John Pierre, Chancellor of Southern University Law Center (SULC), shared that during the 2020-2021 academic year SULC achieved its highest student enrollment, at 812 students. On April 10<sup>th</sup>, SULC partnered to host an inaugural Esports Gaming Summit. Associate Vice Chancellor Marla Dickerson has established an office of innovation and strategic partnerships and initiatives at SULC. SULC has partnered with the Cannabis Health and Equity Movement to host symposiums on cannabis and discuss legal and regulatory issues. SULC has formed a Propel Center in partnership with Ed Farm, which is designed to connect students and faculty across the community and provide them with knowledge, skills, tools and resources necessary to transform the nation's talent pipeline and workforce.

Dr. Reynold Verret, President of Xavier University, shared that Xavier has created new programs within its institution, two of the programs which are in partnership with Oschner Health. Xavier has entered into a number of partnerships with several organizations and institutions. Dr. Verret identified a number of donors who have given to the institution. Xavier continues to work with NASA on advanced battery technology. Xavier has been recognized as one of the best HCBUs (number 3) and number one in Louisiana for graduates who successfully enter the job market. Dr. Verret informed the Council that Xavier was able to raise almost \$1 million during the Give.Love.Xavier Campaign.

Dr. Walter Kimbrough, President of Dillard University, shared of the partnership Dillard has established with SUNO to assist with on-campus housing. Dillard is going to share research on health disparities from a grant received in 2011. The campus is launching a Center for Racial Justice, which also includes a national advisory board; the center has already hosted several panels. Dr. Kimbrough has shared that the university and its students have been very active in facilitating meetings and conversations surrounding social action and racial justice. Dillard has received a number of grants and philanthropic support. Dillard, along with several other HBCUs, received endowed scholarships from Peyton Manning's foundation. The American Institute of Physics listed both Xavier and Dillard as HBCUs that awarded the most bachelor's degrees in physics. Dr. Kimbrough went on to share numerous awards, accolades, and recognition Dillard has received in the past and current academic years.

#### FUTURE MEETINGS, FUTURE FOCUS AREAS AND NEXT STEPS

The HBCU Advisory Council will next meet in the fall. Dr. Reed shared that Representative Hughes has legislation to expand the Council to add a student member. In addition, the first statewide dual enrollment report is set to be released some time before the end of the year. Dr. Reed informed the council of the added tool kits available on the Master Plan Data app. Dr. Lisa Smith Williams stated that she will share with the Council the latest meeting concerning the Census Bureau's postsecondary employment opportunities experiment.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business discussed.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the HBCU Advisory Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:57 a.m.