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Date: June 23, 2011

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GRAD Act Progress Achieved

BATON ROUGE, La –The Board of Regents today approved annual designations that indicate all of Louisiana’s college and university campuses achieved the necessary progress to retain tuition authority and eligibility for autonomies under the GRAD Act for the next academic year. This important action enables campuses to raise tuition by 5% this Fall.

“The success of our colleges and universities this year comes as no surprise due to the collaborative and focused work on the GRAD Act which has occurred throughout the year,” said Board of Regents Chairman Bob Levy. “Institutions used actual data when they set this year’s targets and were able to accurately anticipate their progress. However, as they move towards meeting the aspirational, annual targets that were negotiated with Regents in their agreements institutions will be challenged to make continuous improvement.”

Under the GRAD Act, which was approved by the legislature in 2010, Regents entered into six-year agreements which set institution specific targets, including annual performance measures that result in educational improvements by the end of the timeline. Regents monitors the annual performance of each institution and submits a report to the Legislature and the Governor no later than July 15th. Regents may revoke a GRAD Act agreement with a college or university at any time for failure to abide by the terms.

Institutions submitted system-certified annual reports to Regents in May which were reviewed by staff for completeness as well as data verification before being read and scored on up to 56 individual measurements. The GRAD Act includes four performance objectives—student success, articulation and transfer, workforce and economic development and institutional efficiency and accountability. Because each institution has its own targets for progress it is measured against its own improvement plan during the annual review process, however each campus MUST achieve successful attainment of the student success objective in order to retain its tuition authority and autonomy eligibility.

At the end of the scoring process, each institution is given one of four evaluation designations based on the score for each performance objective. This year every institution received a designation of GREEN.

“Looking ahead, the Board of Regents Master Plan will set aggressive, statewide goals that will go well beyond the targeted measures established in the GRAD Act,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Jim Purcell. “Our focus on increasing educational attainment and investing strategically in research will compliment all of the measures encompassed in each six-year GRAD Act agreement, but will reach well into the future in order to create a long-term roadmap for Louisiana’s colleges and universities through the year 2025.”

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Below is a definition for each possible evaluation designation:

GREEN – Institution has passed the Student Success Objective and two or three other GRAD Act performance objectives. This allows the institution to retain tuition authority for the next academic year and makes the institution eligible for autonomies.

YELLOW - Institution has passed the Student Success Objective and only one other GRAD ACT performance objective. This allows the institution to retain tuition authority for the next academic year and makes the institution eligible for autonomies.

ORANGE - Institution has passed only the Student Success Objective. This allows the institution to retain tuition authority for the next academic year, but not eligible for autonomies.

RED – Institution has failed the Student Success Objective or has failed all performance objectives. The institution loses the ability to raise tuition in the next academic year or seek autonomies. This designation will also require the institution to submit through their Management Board a remediation plan to the Board of Regents outlining the specific action to be taken to get the institution “back on track” to achieve its Student Success Performance Objective.

Institution specific GRAD Act agreements and supporting documents can be found at www.regents.state.la.us by clicking on the GRAD Act logo.

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