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Commission Approves Streamlining Recommendations for Higher Education

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BATON ROUGE, La. – Members of the Postsecondary Education Review Commission approved four recommendations today aimed at streamlining Louisiana’s system of higher education. The recommendations came at the end of a two-day meeting focusing on the impact of role, scope and mission on academic program review in an effort to improve institutional efficiency. The approved motions are as follows:

- I. The Board of Regents, in consultation with the management boards, will undertake a rigorous statewide review of academic programs for unnecessary duplication and excess hours required for degree completion and eliminate such duplications and excess hours accordingly.

This recommendation passed by a vote of 7 yeas and 0 nays. (Five votes are necessary for a motion to pass.)

- II. The Board of Regents, in consultation with the management boards and institutions, will undertake a rigorous review of role, scope and mission statements with the aim of eliminating or minimizing mission creep in order to create a better fitting system of higher education.

This recommendation passed by a vote of 6 yeas, 0 nays and 1 abstention.

Role is a statement of audiences served, programs and services provided, and unique characteristics of a given institution. Scope includes the boundaries or limitations placed on the role, and mission is a broad statement of an institution’s fundamental purpose.

- III. The Board of Regents will continue to conduct regular reviews of academic degree programs that consider the following:
 - a. Program quality
 - b. Alignment with statewide and regional workforce needs and economic development priorities
 - c. Cost effectiveness
 - d. Student completion rates
 - e. Institutional role, scope and mission
 - f. Residency of students enrolled and to the extent possible,
 - g. Information on graduate employment and continued education

The Board of Regents shall furnish an annual report to the Governor, the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, the Senate Education Committee and the House Education Committee of the legislature outlining the review process used, the programs reviewed the preceeding year, and the progress of reviews of academic programs for unnecessarily duplication and excess hours required for degree completions and any program approvals or eliminations.

This recommendation passed by a vote of 7 yeas and 0 nays.

- IV. The Board of Regents shall establish a formula by which to uniformly allocate funding for all associate degree programs and to implement such formula not later than the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year.

This recommendation passed by a vote of 6 yeas and 0 nays.

The next meeting of the Postsecondary Education Review Commission will be December 14-15, 2009. The topic of the two-day meeting will be higher education finance including all funding mechanisms.

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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