

Continuing Education

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Higher Education Quote of the Week:

"Higher education has been taking a haircut for seven years, and we've taken them when many others haven't. It's hard to take a haircut when you have no hair. Our spending per student is already lowest in the country."

- *LSU President
Dr. F. King
Alexander*



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Greetings!

Although we will not know for three more weeks just how severe the cuts to higher education funding will be this current fiscal year, we already know one thing: there is no escaping them.

It was determined over the weekend that the best case scenario will be a \$70 million cut to higher education to be absorbed in a 4-month period. That number includes \$28 million in TOPS payments that will never arrive and another \$42 million in direct cuts to higher education.

The worst case scenario is a \$200 million cut, which would occur if the legislature blocks all revenue increases. Higher Education Commissioner Joseph Rallo says a cut of that magnitude would undoubtedly lead to massive faculty layoffs, cancellation of summer school around the state, and in some cases, bankruptcy. ***[For more on the cuts click here.](#)***

Shreveport-Bossier Higher Education News

- With the announcement over the weekend of certain cuts to higher education, Grambling President Dr. Willie Larkin announced this morning that he is suspending the national search for an athletic director. "I cannot in good conscience proceed with the search process," he said. ***[Shreveport Times, 02.15.16](#)***
- Louisiana Tech announced some good news today: they have received a \$200,000 gift from Hunt, Guillot and Associates, an engineering firm in Ruston. The money will be put toward a new Integrated Engineering and Science Education building. ***[LATech.edu, 02.15.16](#)***

Louisiana Higher Education News

- The popular TOPS program is on the chopping block for next year, with a proposed cut of 80 percent. If this cut goes into effect, which could well be the case if legislators do not raise additional revenue, the ACT score required to qualify for the award would go from 20 to 28. ***[The Advocate, 02.15.16](#)***
- State Treasurer John Kennedy provided the Republican

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response on Thursday night following Governor Edwards' televised address, and in that response he mentioned there were 400 areas where legislators could cut the budget. LSU Professor Bob Mann looked into those areas and wrote about the list in his blog. [BobMannBlog.com, 02.12.16](#)

- The Nicholls State University President is considering closing the college for two weeks as part of his plan to absorb the already certain mid-year cuts. It is not known how a mid-semester closure might affect grades or accreditation. [NOLA.com, 02.15.16](#)

National Higher Education News

- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has released a report arguing that employers should create their own certifications as an alternative to university accreditation systems. This move is in response to the number of employers who say college graduates are not ready for the workforce. [Brookings, 02.09.16](#)

For more information on higher education in Northwest Louisiana, please visit our website at www.sbba4he.org

Sincerely,

***Johnette Magner, Ph.D., Executive Director
Shreveport-Bossier Business Alliance for Higher Education***

You are welcome to forward this newsletter to others in your network who are interested in higher education.

For more information on becoming a member of the SBBA, or providing direct support for our work, please contact Dr. Johnette Magner at jmagner@sbba4he.org