

# Continuing Education

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## Higher Education Quote of the Week:

"Welcome to a whole lot of work and all the blame."  
- Retiring Board of Regents Member Bill Fenstermaker to Blake David, a newly appointed member to the Board.

The Louisiana Board of Regents is recommending some major changes to the TOPS program for the 2018 school year.

First, students receiving TOPS would be required to complete 30 hours in an academic year instead of just 24 hours. The primary argument for this change is that students need to take more hours if they hope to graduate in four years.

The second major change would be to increase the TOPS award as students progress instead of provide the full award to freshmen. Under the new proposal, freshmen would receive 80% of their award, sophomores only, 90% and then the full award would be given to juniors and seniors.

"I love the idea of scaling back TOPS and rewarding those students who have already demonstrated that they can be successful at the university level," said Senator Sharon Hewitt, the sponsor of Act 619 which required the Board of Regents to make recommendations. **[For more on the proposed changes to TOPS click here.](#)**

## Local Higher Education News



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[Colleges and Governing Boards](#)

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- Bossier Parish Community College is projecting a \$1.92 million shortfall this fiscal year and has immediately begun implementing spending cuts. The shortfall is due to a reduction in state funding and declining enrollment. **[KTBS-TV, 01.12.17](#)**
- LSU Health warned legislators this week that it can't take many more cuts to state funding without cutting out some departments. "We don't have much left to cut (without sacrificing services)," said LSHUSC Chancellor Dr. G.E. Ghali. **[Shreveport Times, 01.12.17](#)**
- A survey of Louisiana Tech freshmen and seniors found about 90% of Tech students rate their overall education experience as either "good or excellent" and would "definitely or probably" choose Tech if they had it to do all over again. The survey was conducted by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). **[Monroe News-Star, 01.09.17](#)**
- The new Athletic Director at Grambling State University has plans for some major upgrades including an indoor facility, turf field, and a Jumbotron. Paul Bryant also hopes to start raising funds for these additions right away. "Now is the time. If you're into stock, Grambling is the stock to buy

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because now is the time. We're on the uprise," Bryant said. ***Monroe News-Star, 01.12.17***

- Valveworks USA has committed to giving \$100,000 to BPCC over the next four years to support programs in the schools's Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Division. Valveworks USA is a wholesale manufacturer and distributor of gate valves and wellhead components ***Bossier Press Tribune, 01.12.17***

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## Louisiana Higher Education News

- Governor John Bel Edwards says he does not believe higher education will be spared in the next round of budget cuts, but he does want to see more funding for 2018. Edwards told the media he would also like to see TOPS fully funded. ***NOLA.com, 01.12.17***
- Pharmaceutical company Crown Bio Science is setting up a laboratory and office at the New Iberia Research Center (NIRC), which is part of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. NIRC has 6000 animals used for research and is the largest primate research center in the country. ***The Advocate, 01.05.17***

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## National Higher Education News

- The Economic Policy Institute is reporting we now have in the U.S. the widest pay gap ever between college graduates and those with just a high school degree. On average, college graduates now earn 56% more than high school graduates, and they capture most of the new jobs. ***NOLA.com, 01.12.17***
- Non-profit college closures are rare, but some small liberal arts colleges in rural areas have closed in recent years, only to find the winding down process very difficult and often messy. "These situations are so unusual and so rare," said Robert Lambeth, president of the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia. "The kinds of people who serve as board members are probably the kinds of people who would not have encountered these situations in their normal business dealings. There are certainly things that are learned, and it's much more complicated than I think anyone would have thought." ***Inside Higher Ed, 01.05.17***

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For more information on higher education in Northwest Louisiana, please visit our website at [www.sbba4he.org](http://www.sbba4he.org)

Sincerely,

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

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*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](mailto:jmagner@sbba4he.org)*