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## **Redesign of Mathematics Programs to Improve Student Access to Success**

***Note to Media: This release contains specific campus information to localize stories.***

**BATON ROUGE** – Campuses in the University of Louisiana System are focused on successfully getting more students through freshman math courses that in 2006, 52 percent of UL System students either failed or withdrew before failure. In an effort to improve student math performance, the UL System, along with nine other public university systems, has joined forces with the National Association of System Heads (NASH) and The Education Trust (Ed Trust) for the Mathematics Success Project.

“Too many of our students fail or withdraw from college algebra and calculus and thus have to repeat those courses. This prolongs their time to graduation, and the longer it takes to graduate, the more it costs the student and the state,” said UL System President Sally Clausen.

“We simply have to do a better job of advising students and teaching them. For example, we have learned that wiser use of technology and active learning actually enhances more direct faculty-student time,” said Clausen.

According to Janis Somerville, Executive Director of NASH, the Mathematics Success Project seeks to improve student performance without sacrificing academic rigor. “There is evidence to suggest that this can occur by shifting mathematics instruction from a traditional, lecture environment to one which more actively involves students in learning.”

In addition to examining and implementing successful approaches, the UL System and its eight institutions will benefit from participating in the project through data sharing, providing insights into best practices, and creating tools and templates for other campuses to use to ensure student success in mathematics.

“The University of Louisiana System is doing the right thing,” said Danette Gerald, Assistant Director of Higher Education Policy for The Education Trust. “They’ve examined their data, identified the problem and developed a comprehensive plan to address it. This is how institutions make real student achievement gains.”

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### **Universities**

Grambling State University

Louisiana Tech University

McNeese State University

Nicholls State University

Northwestern State University

Southeastern Louisiana  
University

University of Louisiana at  
Lafayette

University of Louisiana at Monroe

### **Dr. Sally Clausen President**

#### **The UL System:**

- Ranks among the 20 largest public systems in the U.S.
- Enrolls approx 80,000 students
- Employs over 8,000 faculty/staff
- Awards more than half of the public college degrees in Louisiana

The Mathematics Success Project is an extension of a much larger Access to Success Initiative, which was launched nationwide on Oct. 31. The UL System is one of 19 university systems across the nation that has joined with NASH and Ed Trust in an effort to increase college access and success for low-income and minority students. United States Secretary Spellings applauded this initiative in a recent meeting with System Heads in Washington D.C.

"I'm excited about business and industry partnerships like the one between NASH and EdTrust and nineteen participating systems that are doing good work on behalf of our nation's most disadvantaged students," Secretary Spellings said. "They are holding themselves accountable and focusing on important issues like how we can help ensure our poor and minority kids graduate high school fully prepared for college and the workplace."

In concert with the NASH Access to Success Initiative, the UL System Presidents have established aggressive goals that include: exceeding the national graduation rate by 2012; cutting the achieving gaps in half, and increasing the number of college graduates from 1,200 annually to 1,700 by 2015.

Those graduates will be targeted in areas of math, science, nursing, engineering and education. UL System Chair Jimmy Long has been most pleased with the eight universities' lofty goals. "We are really into measuring our results by students' success," he said. "We expect more students to meet higher standards and graduate so they can become productive wage-earning citizens".

### **CAMPUS MATH STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS**

#### **Grambling State University**

- Utilize ModuMath Software in a study skills laboratory in addition to classroom teaching
- Focus on first-time freshmen with the use of supplemental instruction and materials
- Offer concrete examples of concepts that students find difficult and other practical teaching approaches through the Center for Mathematics Achievement in Science and Technology (CMAST)

#### **Louisiana Tech University**

- Utilize a web-based homework delivery system called WeBWork for Mathematics and Statistics Program courses
- Provide tutoring programs for developmental math, college algebra, trigonometry, and math for business and social sciences
- Utilize a web-based tool called ALEKS in College Algebra and Developmental Mathematics and that is a self-paced tutorial and homework delivery system

### **McNeese State University**

- Require student meetings with instructors twice per week
- Require homework assignments/quizzes/tests to be completed in the Mathematics Computer Lab two hours per week
- Offer peer tutoring in the mathematics computer lab by graduate and undergraduate students majoring in mathematics, mathematics education, computer science, or engineering

### **Nicholls State University**

- Offer increased laboratory periods to supplement classroom math instruction
- Administer internal placement tests to further assist and appropriately place students according to their needs
- Offer tutorials and supplemental instruction through the Mathematics Enrichment Workplace, a multimedia facility housed in the library and staffed by instructors, graduate assistants and upper-level mathematics tutors

### **Northwestern State University**

- Utilize technology such as Enablearning software, graphing calculators, and projection systems
- Provide peer tutoring in a mathematics lab that stays open more than 40 hours a week
- Offer online tutoring to students and high school students

### **Southeastern Louisiana University**

- Require a five-hour College Algebra course that mixes classroom and laboratory instruction for students who have math ACT scores of 20 or lower
- Utilize MyMathLab software that provides interactive, guided homework problems and practice tests, online tutorials and assessments, and student progress tracking
- Conduct a conference for high school teachers in order to help address student problems with the transition from high school to college in math courses

### **University of Louisiana at Lafayette**

- Utilize real world problems to increase student understanding of complicated mathematical concepts
- Infuse technology into classrooms such as the use of graphing calculators for statistical analysis and algebra-based predictions
- Customize coursework for students who do not have calculus in their curriculum

### **University of Louisiana Monroe**

- Incorporate a modular approach to teaching College Algebra courses that reaches beyond traditional classroom lectures
- Utilize the Math Resource Center for supplemental instruction including both online and face-to-face tutorials
- Utilize state-of-the-art mathematics software which tracks student progress and provides online tutorials, homework assignments, quizzes, and tests