Chronology of Efforts of LSU Shreveport to Expand Its Role, Scope and Mission  
To Meet the Needs of Shreveport Bossier City Metro Area  
2006 - 2012

Beginning in 2006, business, community and political leaders strongly supported the expansion of the Role, Scope and Mission of LSUS in particular the need for expanded offerings at the masters degree level and selected applied doctoral degrees. Unfortunately, these requests were ignored by the Regents in spite of demonstrated support by the following groups:

- Oct. 23, 2006 Committee of One Hundred
- Dec. 1, 2006 Embera Neuro Therapeutics, Inc.
- Aug. 17, 2007 Biomedical Research Foundation of Northwest LA
- Aug 28, 2007 Shreveport City Council, Resolution No. 145
- Sept. 4, 2007 Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce
- Oct. 24, 2007 Resolution form Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce
- Mar. 31, 2008 Caddo Parish Commission Resolution
- Apr. 10, 2008 Dr. Dennis O’Callaghan LSUHSCS
- Apr. 25, 2008 LSUS Mission Statement approved by LSU Board of Supervisors
- May, 2008 La. Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 69
- July 29, 2008 Bossier Parish School System
- Aug. 1, 2008 Alliance for Education
- Aug. 20, 2008 Consortia for Education, Research and Technology
- Sept. 29, 2008 Caddo Parish School System

The necessity for LSUS to transition and expand its role, scope and mission concentrating on upper undergraduate and graduate programs including selected applied doctorates was dictated by several factors; (1) the presence of two community colleges with open admissions and duplicating many of the freshman and sophomore core courses offered at LSUS, (2) lower tuition at the two 2-year schools, (3) implementation of admission standards at LSUS, (4) the financial crisis in Louisiana, and (5) the need for LSUS as the 4-year public university to respond to the economic development needs of business and industry to ensure that Shreveport/Bossier City can produce a workforce able to compete with other regions and states in the knowledge-based economy of the 21st Century.

The transition was heavily influenced by two studies (1) The Regents Ad Hoc Committee to Study Higher Education in the Shreveport area (1997) which recommended that LSUS be the higher education center for the metro area and (2) the Belden Daniels Strategic Analysis of Northwest Louisiana Volumes 1 and 2 (2003) which states “LSUS could more effectively meet the needs of business and industry and the citizens of the region, if it was supported in developing more graduate programs, including doctorate programs that meet agreed upon regional needs”.

- October 27, 2006, LSU Board approved Letter of Intent for Collaborative Ph.D. in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology between LSUS, LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport and LaTech.
December 5, 2007, Regents instructed LSUS Chancellor to provide an explanation of how three institutions came to collaborate and partner to offer a Ph.D. program. Report was written and submitted to the Regents.

A) December 5, 2007, Regents granted conditional approval for proposed Letter of Intent with the following stipulations. LSUS had to provide compelling evidence as to why it is critical and essential that it should participate in this program. “External consultants engaged by Regents to assess the prospective quality and need of the proposed program shall also be charged with recommending the level and extent of program participation by LSUS.” (This was a surprising request, since faculty at LSUS were the principal developers of the proposal with faculty from LSUHSCS and LaTech in concert with Bioinformatics consultant from the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. The LSUS Bioinformatics Core was rated as “Outstanding” by the National Institutes of Health in its participation with the LSUHSCS successfully being awarded a $10 million COBRA Grant.)

B) If and when the Board of Regents decides to allow LSU-S’s participation as a Ph.D. degree-granting institution within this collaborative, this authorization shall apply to this particular degree arrangement only. It will remain for the Board of Regents to decide later whether or not to expand the role, scope, and mission of Louisiana State University – Shreveport to allow for future doctoral program development.

C) The Board of Regents shall immediately engage the services of expert consultants to determine the extent and nature of all unmet postsecondary education needs in the Shreveport/Bossier City area. These consultants shall utilize the work already completed by Economic Innovation International, Inc, Eva Klein and Associates, and other relevant studies in their deliberations. These recommendations shall be due by May 1, 2008.

D) Within thirty days, the Commissioner of Higher Education shall convene a meeting between himself, the President of the LSU System, and the President of the UL System to discuss overarching considerations which have guided and will guide the development and assessment of the proposed collaborative. The Commissioner shall report the contents of these discussions at the January, 2008 meetings of the Board of Regents.”

The Board of Regents hired the National Center for Higher Education management Systems (NCHEMS) to conduct An Assessment of Unmet Postsecondary Education Needs in the Shreveport/Bossier Area of Louisiana. The study was submitted to the Board of Regents on May 19, 2008. The conclusions reached in this study are at polar opposites from the conclusions reached in the recent EKA study, yet it formed the basis on which the Board of Regents has made policy decisions for over 3 years. Among the conclusions of the NCHEMS study are the following:

Page 10, “There is little else in the current economic structure that creates substantial demand for college educated workers, especially those educated at the baccalaureate level and above.”
If you believe this, then you believe that our children, grandchildren, and the citizens of the Shreveport/Bossier City Metro Area should be satisfied with fewer higher education opportunities, minimal pay, and a substandard life style.

Page 20, “In sum, the greatest needs in educational programming for adults are the arena of adult literacy training. Beyond that, the need is to make programs that are housed at Tech (primarily) more readily available to individuals in the Shreveport-Bossier area. This is the case of both upper-division and masters-level programs.”

This statement is clearly anti-LSUS and intended to prevent the development of LSUS, or it is simply made out of ignorance. More significantly, the consultants ignore the 1997 report of the Board of Regents own Ad Hoc Committee to Study Higher Education in the Shreveport/Bossier Metro Area. The Board of Regents report states that, “By virtue of its strategic location within the City of Shreveport, the history of collaboration in bringing programs to the S/BMA, the availability of excellent library resources housed in the new Noel Memorial Library, extensive computer and technology facilities, LSUS is the logical and best equipped entity to serve as the Higher Education Center for the S/BMA.” The 1997 Regents report includes the following recommendations: “LSUS should be designated, with regard to upper level undergraduate and graduate level programs and coursework, as the Higher Education Center for the S/B Metro Area, and, as such, LSUS will serve as the facilitator, coordinator, and partner (as appropriate), in bringing programs at these levels to the S/BMA from other higher education institutions.” One must ask did the Regents staff withhold the 1997 Ad Hoc Committee Report from the consultants; or did the consultants just ignore this study?

Conclusion #2, “The need affecting the largest number of individuals (and employers) is the need for greater levels of basic workplace skills among the members of the working-age population.”

Conclusion #3, “With few exceptions, any programs needed in the region are already available within the region....”

Conclusion #4, “...the most important need is at the K-12 level.”

In conclusion, #5 on page 27 NCHEMS states that “No changes in mission are required in order to meet the needs of the region at either individual or community levels.” This statement is pointedly subjective and anti-LSUS and is designed to prevent the evolution of this university to offering selected doctoral programs to meet the needs of the metro area.

Although LSUS, LaTech, and the HSC-S prepared a full proposal, BoR staff advised both LSU and the UL Systems that no action would be taken pending BoR approval of the LSUS Role, Scope, and Mission.
Request for Change in Role Scope and Mission

January 29, 2008  Members of the BOR and its staff met on the LSUS campus with representatives of LSUS and educational, business and governmental leaders of the greater Shreveport/Bossier area.

February 12, 2008  Commissioner Savoie wrote the Chairman of the LSU BOS about this meeting. According to Commissioner Savoie,

“The original intent of this meeting was to resolve some confusion among the Shreveport community regarding recent Regents’ actions concerning a Letter of Intent submitted by LSU-S, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center-Shreveport, and Louisiana Tech University to jointly offer a projected Ph.D. program in Bioinformatics/Computational Biology. It is instructive to note that the Regents approved this Letter of Intent with caveats regarding the essential nature of LSU-S involvement in the projected program and provisions for immediate educational needs assessment study for the greater Shreveport/Bossier area.”

Further, Commissioner Savoie explained that the issues raised by the Shreveport community were timely, given that the BOR’s Master Plan for Higher Education was underway at the time.

“The Board of Regents is responsible for establishing the mission of each public post-secondary institution and statutory provisions specify that such decisions shall be made in cooperation with the affected higher education management board and institution head. Although this process is a standard part of the development of a new Master Plan (scheduled for later this summer), it is apparent that the issue of LSU-S’ role, scope, and mission has taken on particular and exigent importance to the people of Shreveport. Accordingly, we seek input from the Louisiana State University to the following questions:”

There were seven questions related to LSUS programmatic plans and changes in the current role scope and mission to which LSUS and the LSU System responded.

April 25, 2008  The LSU BOS approved the following change in the Role Scope and Mission Statement of LSU-S for the 2008 Master Plan and submitted the recommendation to the Board of Regents.

Replace: “The University will offer a wide range of baccalaureate programs and will be committed to graduate education through the
master’s degree offering graduate programs to meet regional or state needs.”

**With:** “The university will offer a wide range of baccalaureate programs and will be committed to graduate education through the master’s and selected doctoral degrees.”

**June 2008**
The Louisiana State Senate passed Concurrent Resolution No. 69, 2008; “Request the Board of Regents to approve the expanded Role, Scope, and Mission to include selected doctoral degrees at LSU Shreveport.” Regular Session of 2008.

**November 30, 2011**
NCHEMS Study “Developing a Postsecondary Education System to Meet the Needs of Louisiana”

NCHEMS presents a restrictive and limited ability for institutions to change their Role, Scope and Mission. Where such changes are needed NCHEMS proposed that “delivery should be under the auspices of an institution with a role and scope that allows delivery without seeking additional approval—either as a joint program with the degree awarded by the “authorized” institution or as a program delivered by an “authorized” institution at an off-campus-site.” This meaning is explicit in prohibiting the expansion of the RSM of an institution to effectively limit and prohibit its logical evolution and development in serving the needs of its citizens. Thus LSUS as a regional university serving the Shreveport/Bossier City Metro area will never enjoy an expansion of its RSM to respond to the needs of its citizens and businesses as the need for new programs can only be met by an “authorized institution”.

**February 7, 2012**
LSUS submitted a response through LSU System President John Lombardi to the BOR/NCHEMS Study of November 30, 2011, objecting to the failure of NCHEMS to change the RSM of LSUS and proposed the change of RSM as approved by the LSU Board on April 25, 2008.

**February 28, 2012**
The Board of Regents adopted the NCHEMS Report without changing the LSUS Role, Scope, and Mission Statement as recommended by the LSU Board of Supervisors. On that same day, the Board of Regents approved the Eva Klein Report and the merger of LSUS and LaTech.

The result of all this maneuvering and foot-dragging for more than four years is that LSUS is still held hostage to an obsolete Role, Scope and Mission Statement, which effectively prohibits the university from meeting its responsibility as an urban comprehensive university for the Shreveport/Bossier City Metro Area.

April 23, 2012