



**MASTER PLAN  
FOR  
PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY  
EDUCATION  
IN LOUISIANA: 2011**

**Board of Regents  
Revised April, 2012**

training and postsecondary courses in preparation for further education and four-year universities will deliver baccalaureate and graduate education, teacher training, and essential research. Louisiana's professional schools, specialized institutions and units have unique missions and by design serve statewide educational, research, and service needs. In some instances, institutions provide services across RMLAs due to proximity, transportation corridors, and/or the specialized nature of a particular educational program.

Regional input is essential in determining local/regional needs, areas of economic development, and the better alignment of institutional offerings, research, and service with these needs. Understanding the particular needs of a region and the State will help to better define the role, scope and mission of Louisiana's postsecondary institutions. At a minimum, regional input is needed in:

1. Determining the definition of work-ready for the region and identifying the economic engines upon which the region will focus its future;
2. Developing plans for more effective and efficient delivery of postsecondary education services in the region;
3. Strengthening cooperation between and among public postsecondary institutions in the region, regardless of management board affiliation, through expansion of such initiatives as dual degree programs, faculty and personnel exchange, dual faculty appointments, and the sharing of special equipment and facilities; and
4. Identifying training and services to meet the needs of area employers.

### ***DEFINING ROLE, SCOPE AND MISSION DESIGNATIONS***

This section of the Plan describes the roles, scope and mission of each public postsecondary education institution in the state as those missions are currently being enacted.

#### Need for Differentiation

Basic to planning for Louisiana's postsecondary education system is the recognition of the need for differentiation of functions among the various colleges and universities serving the state. It is neither possible nor prudent for the state to provide the funds necessary to develop within each institution the capacity to serve all the needs of all citizens. Each institution must contribute its own unique strengths to a system of institutions that collectively meets the postsecondary education and workforce needs of the people.

Maintaining and fostering both excellence and diversity among institutions of postsecondary education in Louisiana continues to be a primary goal of the Board of Regents. From the Regents' perspective, each institution should occupy a niche in the postsecondary education system. Some institutions are larger than others, and some offer a wider variety of degree

programs at more levels than others. Yet quality is not defined by size, nor is excellence a mere function of the number and levels of programs offered. Although Louisiana's institutions collectively should provide a wide range of programs for the state's system, each institution must also identify its particular strengths in serving the higher education needs of the region and the state.

Traditionally, the basic functions of all institutions of postsecondary education have been identified as instruction, research, and public service. Differences among institutions exist in the level of participation in these functions. From the Board of Regents' statewide perspective, the components of a balanced system of higher education can be simply categorized as (1) comprehensive research universities, (2) specialized units, (3) statewide universities (4) regional universities, and (5) community and technical colleges

A comprehensive research university offers a wide range of programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels, but does not usually offer programs below the baccalaureate level. Research is generally directed to the solution of societal problems and the advancement of knowledge. Public service is far-reaching and varietal in nature. Typically, selective admissions and higher tuition characterize the comprehensive research university.

Specialized units often offer academic and community education programs, conduct research, and provide services in a particular field such as agriculture, law or health sciences. Like the comprehensive research university, specialized units which enroll students are typically characterized by selective admissions and higher tuition.

Statewide universities offer a wide range of programs at the undergraduate and masters' levels, with selective offerings at the doctoral level. Research is selective in nature, focusing in those areas of graduate expertise. Typically, moderately selective admissions and higher tuition characterize the state university.

Regional universities offer a wide range of programs at the undergraduate and selected graduate offerings, primarily below the doctoral level. Research is typically related to the institution's instructional mission and is directed to the support of that mission. Public service activities generally emphasize services to the citizens, government agencies, business, and industry located in the region served by the institution. Typically, regional universities use a traditional admission process based on courses completed, GPA, and standardized test scores and are less selective than statewide and flagship universities.

Two-year community and technical colleges are characterized by open admissions, low tuition, and a wide variety of technical associate degree, certificate and diploma programs. Liberal arts and science programs are offered for students planning to transfer to four-year institutions. Research activity is limited in the two-year college, and public service activities are geographically restricted to the immediate area of the institution.

### Role, Scope and Mission Designations

The Board of Regents' designation of role, scope and mission for each institution follows a common framework by delineating:

1. Audiences to be served
2. The general array of programs to be offered
3. Any special or unique features of institutional mission

1. Audiences.

Among the characteristics of audiences to be served are those expressed in terms of:

- a. Geography. What geographic area is the institution expected to serve?
- b. Academic preparation. Does the institution admit only students with high levels of academic preparation, or does it serve adults regardless of prior levels of academic preparation?
- c. Age/full-time status. Does the institution primarily serve recent high school graduates, or does it have a special role in serving older (often part-time) students?
- d. Race/ethnicity. Does the institution have a special role in serving specific subpopulations?
- e. Employers. Is the institution expected to serve employers
  - 1) In a region?
  - 2) In specific industries?

2. Array of Programs and Services.

Chief among the considerations in this dimension are:

- a. Level of program. Is the institution authorized to offer doctoral programs?  
Master's programs?

- b. Academic fields. In particular, what professional programs is the institution authorized to offer (where "professional" is defined broadly to include applied programs such as business, education, engineering, and nursing, as well as the more typically acknowledged professional programs of law, medicine, dentistry, etc.)?
3. Special Features.

Among the factors in this category are:

- a. Academic programs. Does the institution offer programs which are unique in the state or region? Do any of the academic programs hold regional or national distinction?
- b. Research emphasis. Is research a primary expectation for the institution? Is the institution expected to create research capacity in specific fields?
- c. Land-grant status.

Role and scope changes should not be a common occurrence and will most likely involve substantive change reviews by regional and, where applicable, programmatic accreditation agencies. An additional determinant in the decision to approve a role and scope change should be the long-term impact of the state "mix" of institutions with specific role and scope functions.

A possible exception to the set of guidelines stated above – the instance in which change of role and scope is forced by an accrediting or licensure organization (as occurred, for example, when entrance to the practice of pharmacy was determined to require a Doctor in Pharmacy). In such cases, approval would be granted with the stipulation that approval does not infer opening the door to expanding role and scope in fields where change is not essentially mandatory.

The role, scope and mission statements in this document reflect institutional operations as they currently exist and are not designed to be aspirational in nature. The statements which appear as Appendix D are organized according to the five major types of institution delineated by the Board of Regents – comprehensive research university (flagship), specialized units, statewide universities, regional universities, and community and technical colleges.