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BOARD of REGENTS  
STATE OF LOUISIANA

*P. O. Box 3677*  
*Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3677*  
*Phone (225) 342-4253, FAX (225) 342-9318*  
[www.laregents.edu](http://www.laregents.edu)

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**AGENDA**  
**STATEWIDE PROGRAMS COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, June 14, 2023  
12:55 p.m.

Claiborne Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Thomas Jefferson Rooms A&B 1-136  
1201 North Third Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Consent Agenda

- A. TOPS Final Rulemaking – Amends Section 2103 of the Scholarship and Grant Program rules to add a mental health sub-type to the temporary disability exceptions available to students when they cannot meet certain TOPS continuation requirements.
- B. TOPS Exceptions – TOPS provisions that require students to remain continuously enrolled and to earn the annual credit hours required during the academic year.

IV. LUMCON Update

V. Adjournment

Committee Members: Darren G. Mire, Chair, Wilbert D. Pryor, Vice Chair, David J. Aubrey, Randy L. Ewing, Stephanie A. Finley, Felix R. Weill, Judy A. Williams-Brown

**Agenda Item III.A.**

**Consent Agenda: TOPS Final Rulemaking**

Consider publication of final rule to amend Section 2103 of the Scholarship and Grant Program rules to add mental health as a temporary disability sub-type for which students may be granted an exception to the requirements to enroll full time, to maintain continuous enrollment, and to earn the required annual hours for TOPS.

**Background:**

At its January 9, 2023, meeting, the Board of Regents authorized publication of a Notice of Intent to effect the below-described rule changes. The Notice of Intent was published in the Louisiana Register on February 20, 2023.

This rulemaking adds mental health as a temporary disability sub-type for which students may request an exception to the continuation requirements for TOPS.

**LOSFA Advisory Board Recommendation**

**The LOSFA Advisory Board recommends that the Board of Regents authorize publication of the final rule.**

## **Agenda Item III.B.**

### **Consent Agenda: TOPS Exceptions**

Requests for exception to the TOPS provisions that require students to remain continuously enrolled and to earn the annual credit hours required during the academic year.

#### **Background:**

Sections 705.A.6 and 7 of the TOPS administrative rules require TOPS recipients to continue to enroll in the fall and spring semesters of each academic year, to remain enrolled throughout the semester, and to earn the annual credit hours required by the end of the academic year. Section 2103.E authorizes the governing body to grant an exception to these requirements when the student/recipient has exceptional circumstances that are beyond their immediate control and that necessitate full or partial withdrawal from or non-enrollment in an eligible postsecondary institution.

Fifteen requests for exception were reviewed and approved by the LOSFA Advisory Board at its meetings on April 6, 2023 and May 9, 2023. The students have presented facts and circumstances that the students believe justify the granting of an exception as an exceptional circumstance.

#### **LOSFA Advisory Board Recommendation**

**The LOSFA Advisory Board recommends approval of TOPS requests for exception as presented.**

## **Agenda Item IV.**

### **LUMCON Update**

#### **Background:**

The Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON), a program of the Board of Regents, serves as a conduit for building networks in marine research and education. LUMCON connects Louisiana research communities by providing opportunities for teams to explore opportunities, combine expertise, and build career-long collaborations. LUMCON maintains lab facilities, a fleet of research vessels, and residential space for visiting researchers, teachers and students. The Consortium is comprised of all public and private institutions in Louisiana, and LUMCON activities take place at its Marine Center in Cocodrie, Blue Works facility in Houma, and across the state at member campuses.

#### **Staff Summary:**

The Board appointed Dr. Brian Roberts LUMCON's Executive Director and Chief Scientist in January 2023. Since assuming this role, Dr. Roberts has worked to secure new research and education opportunities, engage Consortium members, and begin to set a course for LUMCON's future. He will provide a full update on progress made in the first half of 2023 and plans for the coming years.

#### **Senior Staff Recommendation**

**This item is for information only. No action is needed.**