



HBCU ADVISORY COUNCIL

Monday, April 28, 2025
 Claiborne Building, Iowa Room
 Baton Rouge, LA 70802
 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Members Present	Affiliation
Dr. Kim Hunter Reed	Board of Regents
Dr. James Ammons	Proxy, Southern University at New Orleans
Dr. Monique Guillory	Dillard University
Dr. Luria Young	Proxy, Southern University A&M
Mr. Dennis Shields	Southern University A&M, SU System
Dr. Marla Dickerson	Proxy, Southern University Law Center
Mr. Ronald Carrere	Proxy, Xavier University of Louisiana
Dr. Orlando McMeans	Southern University Ag Center
Mr. Richard “Rick” Gallot	University of Louisiana System
Dr. Martin Lemelle	Grambling State University
Dr. Aubra Gantt	Southern University Shreveport
Ms. Abbey-Lynn Gonzalez	Student Member, Dillard University
Sen. Ed Price	Designee, Senate President
Ms. Lakeisha Ricks	Proxy, NAACP
Mr. Preston Castille	Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
Dr. Toya Barnes-Teamer	Urban League of Louisiana
Ms. Kaffia Arvie	Proxy, Louisiana Workforce Commission
Dr. Larissa Littleton Steib	Delgado Community College
Ms. Jasmine Brown DeRouselle	Designee, Louisiana Economic Development
Rep. Jason Hughes	Designee, Speaker of the House
Members Absent	Affiliation
Rep. Ken Brass	House Education Committee
Mr. Michael McClanahan	NAACP
Sen. Royce Duplesis	Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus
Rep. Edmond Jordan	Louisiana Legislative Black Caucus
Sen. Katrina Jackson Andrews	Designee, Senate Education Committee



CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. The roll was taken and a quorum was established.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (FEBRUARY 2025)

Dr. Reed asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2025, meeting.

On motion of Dr. Orlando McMeans, seconded by Dr. James Ammons, the Council approved the minutes of the February 26, 2025, meeting.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Senator Ed Price expressed his gratitude to Dr. Reed and the Council for the invitation to participate in the meeting. He acknowledged that while the legislative process is progressing slowly, early discussions around the state budget have already begun. Senator Price also highlighted potential Medicaid cuts at the federal level and noted that he, along with other state legislators, has been in contact with Louisiana's Congressional Delegation to discuss the potential impacts on the state. Dr. Reed thanked Senator Price for his comments and encouraged higher education leaders to remain vigilant in voicing the critical needs of our state.

Dr. Reed noted that the Board of Regents had recently appeared before the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees to present higher education budgetary priorities. She then invited President Gallot to share his insights on the current legislative session. President Gallot expressed his appreciation to Senator Price and other legislators for their ongoing support of HBCUs. He also emphasized the need for continued dialogue with certain lawmakers as various bills begin to move through the legislative process.

PEPSI

Dr. Reed introduced Mr. Franklin Simmons, Senior Marketing Director at Pepsi. Mr. Simmons thanked the Council members and introduced his team, noting that many are proud alumni of Louisiana's HBCUs. He emphasized Pepsi's strong commitment to genuine engagement with HBCU students, campuses, and alumni communities across the country. He also highlighted Pepsi internship programs that offer 10-to-12-week immersive experiences, providing students with valuable exposure to business management, supply chain operations, marketing, and executive mentorship. Additionally, Pepsi expressed interest in exploring opportunities for campus co-branding, athletic sponsorships, and collaborative community initiatives. The Pepsi team affirmed their intent to follow up with Council members regarding potential institutional partnerships and reiterated their commitment to building long-term pipelines that support the advancement of HBCU students into leadership roles within the company.

BOARD OF REGENTS UPDATE

Mrs. Golden Phillips provided an overview of Regents' legislative priorities for the upcoming 2025 Regular Legislative Session and bills of witness.

- **Career Office Reform – SCR 38 Sen. Edmonds:** Establishes a Career Alignment Task Force to develop a campus scorecard based on findings of best and promising practices like early-onset career



advising (freshman year) and increased work-based learning opportunities to connect students to employment opportunities and address outmigration.

- **Physician Shortage/TOPS – HB 275 Rep. Berault:** Allows a TOPS-eligible student who previously opted out of TOPS to receive the award if returning to attend an in-state medical school. This priority is specifically designed to address Louisiana’s physician shortage.
- **Geaux Teach – HB 109 Rep. Thompson:** Makes this existing scholarship for future educators a first-restricted-dollar scholarship to cover tuition, books, and instructional materials.
- **Financial Aid Alignment – HB 161 Rep. Hughes:** Aligns TOPS Tech Early Start, TOPS Tech and M.J. Foster Promise eligibility based on the critical workforce needs identified by the Louisiana Workforce Commission.
- **TOPS Tech Early College Credit – HB 70 Rep. Brass:** Expands eligibility criteria for a TOPS Tech award to include the attainment of early college credit in high school through completion of dual enrollment courses or other approved skills and learning measures.
- **Retirement – HB 24 Rep. Bacala:** Requests that the optional retirement plan (ORP) managed by the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL) include provisions for: expansion of participation in ORP; allowing employees to move from ORP to TRSL after seven years of service; allowing persons over 60 to opt out of TRSL; increasing the employer contribution rate to better align with other southern states; and allowing for creation of an ORP Advisory Committee as a component the TRSL Board.
- **Healthcare Task Force Consolidation – HB 544 Rep. Turner:** Creates a committee/subcommittee structure for the Health Works Commission, Nursing Supply and Demand Council and Simulation Medical Training and Education Council.
- **HBCU Advisory Council – HB 142 Rep. Mena:** Creates additional membership on Council, provides for student member travel payments, and allow for examination of campus safety on HBCU campuses.
- **Dual Enrollment Taskforce – HB 71 Rep. Brass:** Revises the membership of the Dual Enrollment Task Force by removal of two obsolete members and addition of two new members.

Bills of Interest

- **NIL Income Tax –HBs 166 Rep. McMakin & 168 Rep. Young:** Relative to individual income tax deductions on NIL.
- **SPORT Fund –HB 639 Rep. Riser:** Allocates certain revenues from online sports betting to newly created SPORT fund to support public postsecondary athletic departments w/ NCAA Division 1 athletics competing at football subdivision levels.
- **NIL Task Force –HR 15 Rep. Young:** Establishes a statewide NIL Taskforce.
- **Deferred Maintenance – HB 335 Rep. Turner:** Requires the treasurer to deposit \$100M from the State General Fund (Direct) to the College and University Deferred Maintenance and Capital Improvement Fund.



- **DEI in State Agencies – HB 421 HB Chenevert:** Requires state agencies to abolish all DEI programs, offices, and positions and all DEI performance requirements for employees.
- **State Services and Benefits – SB 100 Sen. Miguez:** Requires each agency defined in the proposed law to determine the eligibility of individuals receiving state services and benefits from the agency, including determining which individuals attempting to receive state services and benefits are "illegal aliens" or "unaccompanied alien children."
- **ICE Reporting – HB 307 Rep. Henry:** Requires a state agency or political subdivision to report individuals who seek public assistance and are not citizens of the U.S. to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Dr. Reed thanked Mrs. Golden Phillips for her presentation and acknowledged the importance of the HBCU community engaging with legislators to discuss the impact legislative actions have on each respective HBCU campus. She noted that the Governor has recommended a stand-still budget, and Regents will continue to have ongoing conversations on budgetary matters. Additionally, she highlighted legislation that sought to provide additional recurring funding towards deferred maintenance and that the agency will provide updates to the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget in May 2025. Regents will seek additional funding for campus safety and state financial aid programs such as the M.J. Foster Promise and GO Grant programs.

Ms. Jasmine Brown-DeRousselle spoke about aligning HBCU initiatives with Louisiana's economic development goals, particularly in retaining graduates to contribute to the state's workforce.

Senator Price highlighted several bills that the Legislative Black Caucus is opposing. Rep. Jason Hughes echoed his concerns and added that some HBCUs are actively engaged in discussions with the Appropriations Committee chairman to secure funding for their institutions.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Dr. Reed invited the institutions to share out federal or state concerns impacting their respective campuses:

Grambling State University

President Martin Lemelle acknowledged the institution's internal strategic conversations around how to position GSU as an institution of choice for international students. No federal grants have been impacted, and funded projects continue to advance. He noted that the Congressional Subcommittee on HBCUs is convening a task force on campus safety and security and inviting university campus police to participate in these conversations.

Dillard University

President Monique Guillory discussed the impact of Dillard experiencing a suspension of a \$20 million Clean Energy grant from the Environmental Protection Agency, a project that involved multiple community partners. She also highlighted the recent ribbon-cutting for a new greenhouse focused on alternative food production, as well as the graduation of Dillard's first cohort of master's degree students in Nursing. President Guillory noted ongoing campus safety concerns related to inadequate



lighting and emphasized that student mental health continues to be a significant challenge. The university is taking proactive steps to enhance support services and promote holistic student development through its academic programs.

Southern University System

President Dennis Shields reported that several federal research grants were canceled, though some had since been reinstated. He expressed concern about potential future losses and the broader impact on federal funding, particularly emphasizing the critical role of Pell Grants. Addressing campus safety, he acknowledged it remains a continuing concern at Southern University A&M, especially in light of the recent tragic hazing-related death of Caleb Wilson. He affirmed the Southern System's commitment to preventing such incidents in the future.

Southern University Shreveport

Chancellor Aubra Gantt shared that the campus has recently installed a series of new cameras, significantly enhancing the effectiveness of the university police department. In addition, blue lights and emergency telephones have been placed throughout the campus. The university has also partnered with local law enforcement to improve campus safety and will continue to build relationships with community members to address safety concerns.

Southern University at New Orleans

Chancellor James Ammons reported that their visas of two students were terminated and expressed concerns about the status of federal funding. He noted that the institution has updated its campus safety plan to include additional training for students, faculty, and staff, and emphasized ongoing partnerships with federal, state, and local agencies. He also highlighted the upcoming graduation of the institution's first cohort of Nursing students.

Southern University Ag Center

Chancellor Orlando McMeans stated that, in terms of campus safety, cameras have been strategically installed throughout the campus grounds. He also addressed the significant impact of grant cancellations on the Ag Center, estimating a loss of \$300–\$400 million. While six grants were initially terminated, he shared that four have since been reinstated and discussed the implications of these developments.

Xavier University of Louisiana

Mr. Ronald Carrere, Associate Vice President of Government and Community Relations, expressed concerns regarding the future of Pell Grants and the Federal Work-Study program. He noted that four federal grants were cancelled, though two were already in their final year. He highlighted the upcoming Centennial Gala to celebrate the 100 years of Xavier and excitement that a statue of Dr. Norman C. Francis will be unveiled in May 2025. Mr. Carrere acknowledged the recent passing of a student and emphasized that the campus has provided robust support services, particularly in light of the growing stressors affecting international students.

Southern University A&M

Dr. Luria Young expressed concern over the abrupt cancellation of funding, specifically referencing the termination of an NSF grant. She also highlighted several partnerships, including one with the Jed



Foundation, aimed at prioritizing student mental health and developing a strategic plan to address related challenges on campus.

Southern University Law Center

Dr. Marla Dickerson shared that the Law Center has hired additional security personnel in response to inadequate lighting around the campus. She also mentioned that faculty and staff are being encouraged to register for the “Jag Safe” app, which aims to enhance safety, improve security, and integrate technology across Southern University's campus. Additionally, Dr. Dickerson highlighted the impact of several federal grant cancellations, including of a significant \$2 million grant previously awarded by the Department of Energy.

Delgado Community College

Chancellor Larissa Littleton Steib expressed concerns about the impact of recent federal executive orders on Delgado’s campus, as well as growing issues related to student mental health. She also addressed campus safety, noting that the institution has carried out a series of safety assessments and implemented several security measures, including the installation of cameras, emergency red lights, and a lockdown system in every building and classroom.

Student Member

Ms. Abbey-Lynn Gonzalez, SGA President at Dillard University, emphasized to the Council the importance of student support and shared several campus highlights such as the upcoming unveiling of a new residence hall, transition ceremony for the new SGA president, and an event honoring student achievement on campus.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were provided.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mrs. Golden Phillips provided additional instructions to the Council regarding the schedule for the rest of the day.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Dr. McMeans, seconded by Dr. Guillory, the meeting was adjourned at 11:56 a.m.