



GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY

BRIEF OVERVIEW: TOP EIGHT ISSUES & SOLUTIONS



Dr. Willie D. Larkin, President

Grambling State University

Brief Overview of Top Eight Issues and Solutions



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Grambling State University Mission</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Institutional Profile and Environment</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Grambling State University's Top Priorities</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Issue 1: Enhancing Recruitment Efforts</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Issue 2: Strengthening Fundraising Strategies</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Issue 3: Maintaining Accreditations</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Issue 4: Campus Safety and Community Policing</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Issue 5: The Library</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Issue 6: Deferred Maintenance Plan</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Issue 7: Creating A Financial Stabilization and Accountability System</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Issue 8: Creating Partnerships and Collaborations With Business/Industry and Workforce Development</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Summary</i>	<i>12</i>

GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY MISSION

Grambling State University is a comprehensive, historically black, public institution that offers a broad spectrum of undergraduate and graduate programs of study. Through its undergraduate major courses of study, which are undergirded by a traditional liberal arts program, and through its graduate school, which has a professional focus, the University embraces its founding principle of educational opportunity. With a commitment to the education of minorities in American society, the University seeks to reflect in all of its programs the diversity in the world. The University advances the study and preservation of African American history, art, and culture.

Grambling State University is a community of learners who strive for excellence in their pursuit of knowledge and who seek to contribute to their respective major academic disciplines. The University prepares its graduates to compete and succeed in careers related to its programs of study, to contribute to the advancement of knowledge, and to lead productive lives as informed citizens in a democratic society. The University provides its students a living and learning environment which nurtures their development for leadership in academics, athletics, campus governance, and in their future pursuits. The University affords each student the opportunity to pursue any program of study provided that the student makes reasonable progress. Grambling fosters in its students a commitment to service and to the improvement in the quality of life for all persons.

The University expects that all persons who matriculate and who are employed at Grambling will reflect through their study and work that the University is indeed a place where all persons are valued, "where everybody is somebody."



Institutional Profile and Environment

Grambling State University emerged from the desire of African-American farmers in rural northern Louisiana wanting to educate Black children in their region. The 590-acre campus is nestled in the heart of Grambling, Louisiana, a small, growing community in Lincoln Parish. The University is a few minutes west of Ruston and is within easy driving distance of Monroe, Shreveport and West Monroe and about two hours from Jackson, Mississippi.

Grambling State University combines all the strengths of a major university with the personality of a small college, allowing students to grow and learn in a nurturing, serene and positive environment with an academically rigorous educational program. The campus houses students in its 19 apartment-style and dormitory-style residence halls on two campuses.

The University enhances and promotes student life with numerous student activities throughout the year, many of them coordinated or facilitated by the student-led Student Government Association and the student-led Favrot Student Union Board. In addition, the University has an impressive student union and bookstore and appeals to other areas of life and improvement through buildings such as the dining hall, library, intramural center, and health center.

More than 45-degree programs are offered at Grambling State University in three colleges, the College of Education, Professional and Graduate Studies, the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Business. In addition, GSU recognizes stellar academic students through the Earl Lester Cole Honors College. Local, regional, national and international employers recruit graduates from Grambling State University's academic programs, including but not limited to its excellent nursing, computer science, mass communication, teacher education and STEM programs.

A wide variety of student associations, clubs and organizations ensure that each student has the opportunity to find an activity of interest. Honor societies, sports, art, religion, politics and Greek organizations are some of the organizations appealing to its diverse student body. One of the most popular groups is the University's World Famed Tiger Marching Band, frequently touted as the number one collegiate show band in the world. Formed in 1926 by GSU President R.W.E. Jones, the marching band has become a household name after performing at home and away football games, in numerous football classics and at national and international venues. The band has been featured in television commercials, the major motion picture "Drumline" and as guest entertainment on television shows. The GSU marching band entertained Liberian President William R. Tolbert at his 1972 inauguration. The World Famed was the only university marching band to participate in both of President Barack Obama's inauguration parades in Washington, D.C., in 2009 and 2013. Those are just a few reasons why the Grambling State University World Famed Tiger Marching Band has become known as "The Best in The Land."

Intercollegiate athletics has also made Grambling State University a household name. It was head football coach Eddie G. Robinson who became the head football coach with the most wins in all of NCAA Division I before he retired from GSU. Known as the "Cradle of Pros," Grambling also produced many black football players in the NFL. Tank Younger came out of Grambling in 1949 and was the first black from an HBCU to play in the NFL". Grambling State is the home of Doug Williams, the Most Valuable Player in the NFL's Washington Redskins Super Bowl win over the Denver Broncos more than 25 years ago. The basketball, football, and track and field programs have rich histories, including 31 track and field championships.

Source: <http://ulsystem.edu/index.cfm?mc=pagebuilder&tmp=home&pid=209>

Grambling State University's Top Priorities

The most pressing issues at Grambling State University are: 1) Enhancing Recruitment Efforts, 2) Strengthening Fundraising Strategies, 3) Maintaining Accreditations, 4) Campus Safety and Community Policing 5) Renovating or Rebuilding the Library 6) Developing a Deferred Maintenance Plan 7) Creating a Financial Stabilization and Accountability System, and 8) Creating partnerships and collaborations with business/industry, and Workforce Development. This report addresses current and future actions that will highlight these issues to position the University for growth.

ISSUE 1: ENHANCING RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

The chart below is according to the Louisiana Board of Regents Fact Book. The data provided indicates that while undergraduate enrollment is declining, graduate enrollment has steadily increased each year. It is important to note that many of the graduate programs offer online courses and courses that are taught after 5:00 p.m. making them more accessible to the students.

Grambling State University									
Enrollment Profiles	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Fall Headcount	5,210	5,282	5,025	5,008	5,219	5,282	5,085	4,518	
% Undergraduate	91.7%	91.1%	90.7%	88.1%	85.6%	84.1%	82.0%	78.2%	
% Graduate	8.3%	8.9%	9.3%	11.9%	14.4%	15.9%	18.0%	21.8%	
Annual FTE	5,062.7	5,128.3	4,835.9	4,889.9	5,079.6	4,885.2	4,603.0	4,293.1	
Lower Level FTE	2,716.7	2,648.1	2,342.0	2,152.4	2,085.1	2,030.4	1,938.9	1,800.8	
Upper Level FTE	2,015.2	2,103.3	2,098.5	2,225.2	2,363.0	2,160.8	1,940.2	1,764.9	
Grad FTE	330.8	376.9	395.4	512.3	631.5	694.0	723.7	727.4	

Source: Louisiana Board of Regents (<http://as400.regents.state.la.us/pdfs/Retention/hesfb/Louisiana-Higher-Education-Fact-Book.pdf>) 2/20/16

ACTION:

The University has established an aggressive recruitment plan as well as an energized enrollment management team that evaluates current practices and recommends changes. Social media is being employed more effectively to increase the number of applicants. In addition, databases are being utilized to identify prospective students who are likely to attend Grambling State University. As well, focus groups are held frequently with students to get their input as it relates to recruitment and retention. The feedback is used to improve practices and develop new techniques for attracting and retaining students. In addition, the transcript analysts and processors are focusing on increasing the number of students who transfer from community colleges to Grambling State University.

Although the majority of students enrolled at the University at the undergraduate level are traditional students, they have nontraditional obligations. The traditional time and method of delivering courses are being discussed. The possibility of additional night classes, weekend and more online courses is being explored to accommodate the needs of the diverse student population. These new methods of course delivery and availability should attract a larger population of nontraditional students. Also, the University has a history of attracting international students. Unfortunately, over the past few years, the international student population has decreased from over 600 to around 200

students. The enrollment management team is working towards reestablishing MOU's with a host of countries.

The University is developing other methods to grow the enrollment which includes the development of new academic programs. One program that is currently being developed in the Department of Criminal Justice is a comprehensive Cyber Security Program under a Title III, Part B grant from the Federal Government. The five (5) year multi-million dollar project focuses on enhancing the Academic Quality of the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) and Masters of Science (M.S.) degree programs. GSU will enhance these programs by incorporating Cyber Security as well as increasing the sustainability of specialized components of Forensic Science, Homeland Security, Advanced Investigative Techniques for Organized Crime, Terrorism and other areas of Crime Prevention and Crime Control.

Retention efforts work in concert with recruitment efforts. The President has established a pilot program that will be fully integrated into the University structure that addresses at-risk students. This initiative is known as the President's Student Leadership Initiative (SLI). The primary goals of this initiative are to improve retention, build leadership skills, develop persistence in spite of difficulty and opposition, leading to a timely graduate. All services offered to students through the program are designed to accelerate the learning curve, escalate personal development, and provide the necessary preparation for a successful professional career. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to increase the graduation and retention rates, thereby increasing the Alumni giving capable.

Students accepted into the SLI program must be a first-year freshman, enrolled full-time at Grambling State University as of fall semester, 2015, and have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better while demonstrating a commitment to civic and community involvement. Currently, there is space for 50 students and we are fast approaching our intake goal. SLI's initial active enrollment includes the Freshmen class President, Miss Freshman, a writer/photography for the Gramblinite, students that have achieved a 4.0 GPA in their first semester, and a very accomplished writer who has published her own book (Ebony Aiken, entitled: A Ray Of Hope), which is in bookstores now, available for purchase!

ISSUE 2: STRENGTHENING FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

With the constant turnover in the administration of the University, it has been difficult to build relationships with various constituent groups that lead to continuous giving. The administration must regain the trust of its constituents toward providing financial contributions to the university.

ACTION:

Grambling State University's Office of Advancement provides a wealth of opportunities to give back to the University through the Annual Fund Program, Endowments, Parents Fund, and many other giving opportunities. The current major initiatives are:

- **Grambling 1000**
Donors donate \$1000 to Grambling State University. Funds will be used to attract new students to the university.
- **Tiger Pride Annual Giving Campaign**
The campaign challenges 10,000 alumni, friends, and supporters to give \$100 by April 2016.

- *Other Campaigns are ongoing to support academic units and special projects.*

The President and the Vice President for Advancement continue to build relationships with numerous business and industry constituents. These companies include but are not limited to: Frito Lay, PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, CenturyLink, AT&T, Apple and others.



ISSUE 3: MAINTAINING ACCREDITATIONS

Four departments and two colleges have faculty or resource needs that are linked to their successful reaffirmation. They are the College of Business and the College of Education, Engineering Technology, Computer Information Systems (CIS), Computer Science, Mass Communication and Kinesiology.

ACTION:

The College of Business has hired necessary faculty to meet the minimal needs for reaffirmation. Advertisements for additional faculty have been posted and the University is aggressively seeking to fill other faculty needs within the College (CIS and Finance).

With regard to Engineering Technology and Computer Science, the University is identifying funds that can be used to hire the necessary faculty to maintain accreditation in these areas. The College of Education has a reaffirmation of accreditation NCATE Legacy visit by the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Educators (CAEP) scheduled for April 16-19, 2016.

Also, faculty members travel to key workshops that help to enhance accreditation through faculty development. Faculty are encouraged to go to conferences and workshops to learn more about preparing their respective departments for reaffirmation.

ISSUE 4: CAMPUS SAFETY AND COMMUNITY POLICING

The University must demonstrate that it has a sufficient number of officers to maintain campus safety in order to maintain Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation. Grambling State University does not currently meet this requirement.

ACTION:

The University is in the process of hiring additional officers to meet the number required by SACS. University officers are equipped with body cameras to provide additional safety for the students and the officers. Additionally, the University is supported by a camera system that links cameras located in buildings, outside buildings, and in other strategic places. These cameras provide additional eyes and a presence for the University Police Department. Furthermore, workshops and information sessions are available to the faculty and staff to assist them with understanding what actions they should take in times of crises.

ISSUE 5: THE LIBRARY

The current library does not provide an environment conducive to studying or conducting research, nor are the facilities adequate for group collaboration. The resources available do not promote successful matriculation at the University; especially in the case of graduate students. In order to find holdings needed for research, students use Louisiana Tech University's library.



ACTION:

The administration submitted a request for funding a new library to the state. In the meantime, we are making use of various electronic databases in order to fill the resource void.

ISSUE 6: DEFERRED MAINTENANCE PLAN

With the acquisition of the West Campus Annex in 2013, the University now consists of 528 acres and 148 usable buildings. Nine (9) of its buildings that were erected between 1939 and 1960 were inducted into the National Registry in 2011. The campus has a 62,089 square foot Performing Arts building that houses a 242-seat theater, recital room, band room, computer lab and office space. Hence, the Performing Arts building is one of the most frequently visited buildings because of the flexibility of its use. Over \$125,245 was donated by alumni chapters and corporate sponsorships to upgrade the athletic facilities. Nevertheless, over the years, HVAC systems, roofs, and other physical plant issues have posed problems for the aging campus. And, recent flooding caused Woodson Hall, which houses a number of General Education faculty and classes, to be taken off-line for repairs.



ACTION:

The administration will develop a feasible deferred maintenance plan that takes into consideration the declining state budget. Managing deferred maintenance costs will be the motivation for seeking

federal and private funds to improve the physical plant. Opportunities to enhance the West Campus, expand the flexibility of its use, and cost effectiveness will be investigated. Improvements to Woodson Hall are underway.

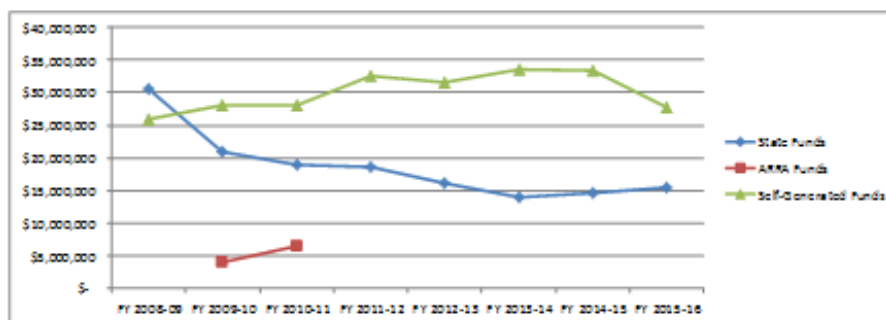
ISSUE 7: CREATING A FINANCIAL STABILIZATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

State appropriations continue to decline and currently the University is preparing for the possibility of a 32% budget cut. Managers must make certain that they are maximizing the use of financial resources and human capital.

FYs 2009–2016 Budget Operating Fund Revenue

Operating Fund Revenue	FY 08-09	FY 09-10	FY 10-11	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	FY 14-15	FY 15-16	Variance
State Funds:									
General Fund Direct	29,210,902	19,702,475	17,928,779	17,554,671	15,044,750	12,864,728	13,808,347	7,834,126	(21,376,776)
Statutory Dedicated	1,288,847	1,280,750	1,071,439	1,051,625	1,071,736	1,027,221	757,357	7,614,219	6,325,372
Total State Funds	30,499,749	20,983,225	19,000,218	18,606,296	16,116,486	13,891,949	14,565,704	15,448,345	(15,051,404)
Interagency Transfers - ARRA		4,070,342	6,488,929						
Self-Generated (Non-recurring) Carry Forward				2,970,064					
Self-Generated Funds	25,912,567	28,129,440	28,129,440	29,670,306	31,564,922	33,637,191	33,403,664	27,811,934	1,899,367
Total Revenues	56,412,316	53,183,007	53,628,587	51,246,666	47,681,408	47,529,140	47,969,368	43,260,279	(13,152,037)

	State Funds	ARRA Funds	Self-Generated Funds
FY 2008-09	\$ 30,499,749		\$ 25,912,567
FY 2009-10	\$ 20,983,225	\$ 4,070,342	\$ 28,129,440
FY 2010-11	\$ 19,000,218	\$ 6,488,929	\$ 28,129,440
FY 2011-12	\$ 18,606,296		\$ 32,640,370
FY 2012-13	\$ 16,116,486		\$ 31,564,922
FY 2013-14	\$ 13,891,949		\$ 33,637,191
FY 2014-15	\$ 14,565,704		\$ 33,403,664
FY 2015-16	\$ 15,448,345		\$ 27,811,934



ACTION:

A financial stabilization and accountability system is essential in order for the University to utilize financial resources and human capital in a prudent manner. The system will allow for a review of the financial operations of the University and determine how to minimize waste, if such exists. Additionally, the system will strengthen the current culture of accountability and increase the possibility of external funding towards enhancing the University in academic and other areas. Moreover, the system will teach employees how to manage tasks more efficiently towards increasing productivity. The budget reduction committee has been reestablished to make recommendations to the President as it relates to budgetary matters.

ISSUE 8: CREATING PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS WITH BUSINESS/INDUSTRY AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In order to ensure that students are prepared for the workforce, it is imperative that the University increase opportunities for student access to business and industry towards enhancing workforce development.



*Geoffrey Lucas, Computer Science Corporation,
Quentin Messer, President & CEO of New Orleans
Business Alliance & Retired Lt. Colonel Payne*



*Christine Bartlett
IBM Representative*

ACTION:

Currently, Grambling State University is focusing on student exploration, preparation, and connection to career opportunities. All students enrolled at the University are required to participate in service-learning activities, which serve as a precursor to additional interaction with business and industry. The University is preparing to add a new concentration in workforce development and develop additional relationships with business and industry. The intent of the business and industry partnerships is to increase internships, cooperative education and permanent employment opportunities for our students. Currently, business and industry partners participate in career fairs, guests lecture presentations, and student/faculty roundtable discussions. Partners also review the curricula to ensure that students are being equipped with the appropriate skill sets to fill high demand job openings. Our goal is to prepare students who can go to work and contribute from Day 1.

SUMMARY:

The associate vice-president for academic affairs was charged with chairing the Strategic Planning Committee during the fall, 2015 semester. The steering committee met with the chair and a consultant in November and began establishing guidelines and timelines for the Strategic Plan. The associate vice-president recently resigned from the University and new chairs have been selected. The chairs are in the process of scheduling meetings with various constituent groups to discuss the strategic plan. April 8, 2016, has been established as the date that all constituent groups will come together to finalize the Strategic Plan and establish additional priorities. In addition, to stabilizing and growing the institution, addressing these priorities will enable GSU to continue to provide quality lifelong learning and outreach opportunities inclusive of economic/workforce development initiatives for individuals, faith/community-based organizations, and engage in institutional partnerships. The finalized plan will be available May 2016.