



Grambling State University
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
Grambling, Louisiana

*Farewell Message from
President Willie David Larkin*



"ONE GRAMBLING: Honoring History, Keeping Promises and Fulfilling Dreams"

President's Impact - Dr. Willie D. Larkin
Grambling State University
July 2015 – June 2016

University-wide accomplishments:

- Implementation of a “Shared Governance” culture at the university to foster accountability, partnership, and equity. Examples of this concept were as follows:
 - The establishment of the President’s Extended Cabinet (PEC) which expanded the President’s Vice Presidential cabinet to include university deans and department heads.
 - **Strategic Plan for 2016 – 2021** was developed with participation and approval from representatives of *all* GSU affinity groups (students, alumni, faculty, staff, retirees and community participants) setting a clear direction for the next phase of the development of Grambling State University.
 - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) established between GSU and California Community Colleges and initiated expansion of the university’s Community College Collaboration program.

Fund Raising:

- \$9 million in partnerships was cultivated, but as a result of “instability” at the University, the funders decided to go in another direction
- To date (June 2016), over \$1,050,000 has been raised. This reflects an increase of over 40% from FY 2015. Highlights:
 - The 10 for \$10 Campaign raised over \$55,000
 - \$50,000 donation from AT&T
 - University employees and staff supported the University by donating over \$80,000
 - Grambling University Foundation raised over \$100,000
 - Received \$300,000 from Louisiana Economic Development agency and IBM
 - Received a \$10,000 scholarship donation from CenturyLink
 - Received over \$25,000 grant funding from Walmart

Enrollment and Recruitment:

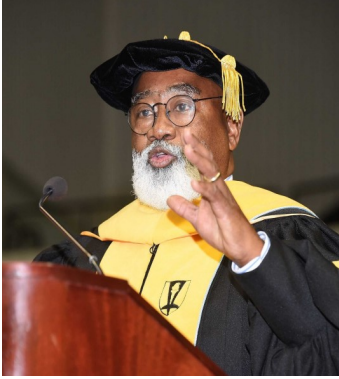
- During the Spring 2016 semester, Grambling State University had a 67% increase in the number of students registered in Dual Enrollment courses: 85 students enrolled in Dual Enrollment courses, as opposed to the 51 students who were enrolled in spring of 2015.
- We anticipate a 7% increase in overall student enrollment from fall 2015
- Grambling State University’s 2015 first to second-year retention is 68% and has been in this range for the last four years. Our stretch goal for first-to-second year retention is 75% by 2021. Currently in the process of developing the enhanced enrollment management program and the implementation of the comprehensive retention plan.

Retention:

- During the 2015-2016 academic year, successfully expanded students’ tutoring options in the Mathematics Clinic. We now offer scheduled after-hours peer tutor sessions and tutoring for specific groups of students by co-curricular interests, and the “mobile clinic” concept, which allows the clinic to be available in other academic buildings and residence halls.
- Established the President’s Student Leadership Initiative (SLI) program for at-risk students with the goal of improving retention by helping students build leadership skills, develop persistence in spite of difficulties, and ultimately graduate.

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Dear students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends of GSU,



To every thing, there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

For nearly 43 years, I have committed my time to fulfilling the purpose of helping to transform the lives of young people and others through the power of higher education. It is with this same purpose in mind and positive expectancy in heart, that I wholeheartedly accepted the call of service to Grambling State University (GSU) in the capacity of President.

My ultimate goal since day one was to always lead with the principles of Honesty and Integrity, serving as the foundation upon which all of my decisions as president would be based. It was my endeavor to stand firmly with you, the faculty, staff, student body, alumni and friends of GSU as we mapped out the blueprint for the future and devised ways in which together, we would take our fine university and transform it into the first class "state of the art" institution it was meant to be. Regardless of the hours required, or the challenges faced, I believed that through our combined knowledge, skills, and through the utilization of the tools of strong leadership, team building, effective communication, transparency and a shared vision, we would build one great success after another.

Now, as the end of my season of service to Grambling State University approaches, I yet believe that greatness lies within these legendary halls. It dwells within the hearts of our students, who have selected this institution to equip them with the tools they need to accomplish the goals and dreams they envision for their futures. Greatness resides in the departments and offices of faculty and staff who are committed to rendering excellence in service to our students and each other, as they execute their various duties and responsibilities. Greatness also lingers on the minds of alumni, who fondly recall memories of happy times experienced and lessons learned when they too were once students, and who stand ready willing and able to lend a hand or donation to help others along the way.

Although I originally envisioned a much longer period in service, I realize that we all have a set time in which we must carry out the duties assigned to us. The intricate details and duration of the seasons of life are often unpredictable, but each day we are blessed to see, is a day filled with new opportunities to do the right thing, to treat others with respect and as we would want to be treated, and to do our individual part to make the world a better place. It is not so much how much time you have, as to what you do with the time allowed that matters most. Give your best, and you will have no reason to look back with regrets.

Finally, as I look towards the future, I do so with peace of mind and in anticipation of my next assignment. Although I will no longer be on the campus, Grambling State University will remain on my heart and in my prayers. Vivian and I will forever be part of the GSU family because, a family member is a family member, regardless of the demographic location. So I encourage you, our Tiger family, to continue to persevere in unity towards the goals set forth, supportive of leadership, one another and always with an optimistic attitude. Most important, do not allow anyone or any circumstance to extinguish the flame of hope that burns within. As long as you can focus and believe that there is indeed light at the end of the tunnel, the darkness will not overtake you and Grambling State University will continue to stand strong on the shoulders of the faculty, staff, students, alumni and others who hold it so dear.

Thank you for the honor of allowing me to stand with you. Thank you for the privilege of allowing me to be a "G" and part of one of the greatest families in the world!



With Great Enthusiasm,

Willie David Larkin, Ph.D

