

# At SU, Courses Going, Jazz Coming

Contributed by Venicia Gray -- Black College Wire  
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Officials announce cutbacks, concert series for Baton Rouge campus

In addition to more than 158 course cancellations, a Jan. 8 press release from the Board of Regents listed Southern among several Louisiana colleges and universities targeted as having underperforming programs.

According to the release, Commissioner of Higher Education Sally Clausen called for a review of what she termed 'low-completer' programs, as a first step to curb costs.

Southern's Baton Rouge campus has eight under-performing programs. In comparison, Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge) has 28 and Grambling State University, six.

'What we have to do over the course of the next few months is justify why they [low-completer programs] should not be closed down,' said Kofi Lomotey, chancellor of SUBR.

'In some instances, new programs haven't had a chance to develop yet. We may have to combine similar programs, or even close some programs.'

Among the programs in danger of closing are the doctorate in special education, and 'several other programs within the college of education,' he said.

Lomotey said that Academic Affairs, along with recently acquired provosts, are reviewing the programs to decide if they should close or be reorganized.

'During this entire budget reduction process, we have held paramount a goal of having as little effect as possible as an expenditures of students. We're not losing any classes because of the reduction in faculty, we're losing classes because we offer too many classes, and it's not financially wise the way that we've done it.'

On a lighter note, Lomotey plans to bring a new event to the campus: a jazz series.

'The Outdoor Jazz Concert Series is named in honor of Albert Batiste, a former jazz professor here. It's actually starting near the end of the semester and extending beyond the semester, in part because while of course we want to encourage students and other members of the university community to attend...and begin to feel comfortable again being on campus, so we can start doing other kinds of things with them,' Lomotey said.

The artists in question are both nationally and locally known, and will perform for little, most for the cost of transportation. Among them, said Lomotey, are former teachers and students of the university.

'The first one will be where we'll name our Jazz Institute after Mr. Batiste, and we'll have an hour, hour and a half concert each week for four weeks following that,' said Lomotey.

A new initiative to the university is 'LAGNIAPPLE (Leadership, Accountability, Giving, Nurturing, Integrity, Accessibility, Pride, Patience, Excellence),' an acronym to embody areas strength for the school to the public.

'One of the things that I thought was very important was that we begin talking about these four foundational areas for the institutions-- academic excellence, customer service, critical continuum and database decision making--was the need to have a shared vocabulary, and a shared value system to move the institution forward. We thought it would be good to have an acronym that people would remember those values, so we're going to have banners, flyers, t.shirts. We're going to kick off the campaign this month.

'They're all qualities and values that we want members of the university community to embrace.'

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Venicia Gray is editor in chief of the Southern Digest, the Southern University-Baton Rouge student newspaper, which originally published this article.