



30 June 2011

Dear Alumni and Students of the College of Liberal Arts:

What a year it's been for UNO! It seems as if this legislative session has overshadowed everything else for most of the Spring semester. Now, as I am sure many of you know, we simply await the Governor's signature to move us from the LSU System to the UL System. The deans and other administrators have already rolled up our sleeves to begin taking appropriate steps to make the transition period both smooth and short, so that UNO can begin a new and promising chapter in its history.

There have been so much confusion and complexity surrounding the various House and Senate bills that affected UNO that it is probably worthwhile to review the final legislation and what it means for us.

What the legislation does:

The bill (SB 266) changes the management board of the University of New Orleans from the Louisiana State University System to the University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors. It also provides for several transitional issues, provides a funding mechanism for the transition, and requires both systems to cooperate in the transition. To read the full text of the bill, go to

<http://www.legis.state.la.us/billdata/streamdocument.asp?did=758781>.

What the legislation does not do:

The bill does not merge UNO with any other institutional entity. It does not change the name of UNO to ULNO or anything else. We remain UNO. It does not relinquish any UNO asset to the LSU System.

What the change means to UNO:

It means, first, a transitional period during which we work with our accrediting agency and both Systems to guarantee that we remain fully accredited when we make the official switch.

Second, it means that UNO will join a management board accustomed to working with universities of our research ranking. Whereas the UL System houses both the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Louisiana Tech, the other Research II universities in the State, UNO was alone in that category in the LSU System.

Third, the UL System is comprised completely of 4-year universities; whereas the LSU System includes non-teaching units, such as the Agriculture Center, the Pennington Biomedical Research Center, and the Health Sciences Center. It is our hope that a more university-focused system will better serve UNO's needs.

Related residual effects of the legislative session—bad news first:

UNO has suffered in the press during this session and has been described erroneously as a "failing institution" and a "sick cow." The first quote was the initial conclusion of the governor who supported the original legislation to merge UNO and SUNO, and the second was used to describe both UNO and SUNO by a legislator who opposed the merger. In addition, UNO was described as "racist," "uncaring," and "money grabbing" at various times, to support various agendas.

Although none of these statements was supported by facts, they were repeated in the media, where very few tried to check facts or understand, much less applaud, UNO's incredible role in educating the middle-class of this great city, graduating 75,000 students of all races, beliefs, and nationalities over the last 48 years—and creating a research university with an outstanding faculty record of external funding, publications, and creative accomplishments in the process.

Very few, if any, found time to understand how so-called graduation rates are measured, so that only students who start as new freshmen and graduate from the same institution within six years get counted as graduates of that institution. Even more significant for an urban university like UNO is that students who transfer in from LSU or another state institution and graduate from UNO within the six-year limit count as graduates *of LSU or the other institution*, **not** UNO. At graduation this May, I proudly shook the hand of our Dean's Award winner and summa cum laude graduate with a perfect 4.0 average, Kelly Marie James. Unfortunately, because she transferred to UNO from Southeastern during her sophomore year, Southeastern—not UNO—will get credit for her in its official graduation rate.

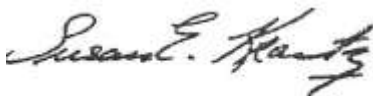
Now for the good news:

Although UNO was never invited to make its case in mass media outlets, it was able to make a positive impression among legislators, private and public leaders in our region, and UNO stakeholders. During the legislative session, many, many friends and well-wishers offered their voice and assistance in spreading our successes through their own networks and through letters and conversations with legislators. A new organization, 100 Voices for UNO, was formed under the leadership of Barry LeBlanc, a member of both the UNO International Alumni and UNO Foundation boards. COLA alum Clancy DuBos listed UNO as the first legislative “winna” in *Gambit's* [bestofneworleans.com](http://www.bestofneworleans.com). (See <http://www.bestofneworleans.com/blogofneworleans/archives/2011/06/24/da-winnas-and-da-loozas>.)

In addition, it looks as if UNO escaped further major budget reductions by the state and will be able to persevere in its post-Katrina recovery and resilience efforts. In COLA, we have several academic initiatives, which we hope to bring to fruition during the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Among them are new programs in Transportation Studies (BS); Disaster Resilience (Graduate certificate and undergraduate minor); and low-residency Arts Administration (MA and graduate certificate options). We will continue to support our current programs and presented a plan to the Provost to replenish lost faculty in many of them so that our students will have more course options and flexibility. In addition, I am eager to explore new instructional, creative, and research options with my counterparts in the UL System as soon as the dust settles a bit. Finally, the college has rededicated itself to recruiting, retaining, and graduating the students of this region and beyond, through enhancing a variety of support services, increasing coordination with community colleges, and maintaining best practices in instructional delivery.

I closed my holiday letter to you by wishing “you and UNO peace, joy, and hope for a long and happy future.” For UNO, at least, the peace was delayed, but our hopes are high and our future looks bright. Thank you for your continued interest in and support of the College of Liberal Arts and this great university as it builds the second half of its first century in a new System home.

Have a great Fourth of July,



Susan E. Krantz, PhD
Dean