A History of Southeastern Louisiana College.

Leroy Ancelet

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College
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A HISTORY OF SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA COLLEGE.

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A HISTORY OF SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA COLLEGE

A Dissertation

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by

LeRoy Ancelet
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ABSTRACT

The idea of establishing a college at Hammond, Louisiana, was first publically voiced by Linus Arthur Sims, then principal of Hammond High School, in January, 1925. Sims was assisted by leaders of the Hammond community in his efforts to implement his idea. Chief among his supporters was Dr. Lucius McGehee, a local physician who was also a member of the Tangipahoa Parish School Board.

Supporters of the college idea turned to the Tangipahoa Parish School Board for financial support and control. The board approved the idea of a college, but disagreement over its location caused board members to turn down parish-wide taxation to finance such a school. Promoters of the college did get board permission to let the voters in the four southernmost wards in Tangipahoa Parish decide whether or not they would tax themselves to support a college at Hammond. The voters approved the referendum July 7, 1925.

Hammond Junior College was operated under the auspices of the Tangipahoa Parish School Board until 1928. In that year financial problems caused college officials to request assistance from the State of Louisiana and absorption into the state supported system of higher education. By legislative act number 136 of 1928 of the
General Assembly, the institution became Southeastern Louisiana College, a state college under the control of the State Board of Education. Act Number 388 of 1933, an amendment to Section 9, Article XII, of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana was acted upon favorably by the electorate, thus establishing Southeastern Louisiana College by constitutional provision.

The institution which was to become Southeastern Louisiana College opened its doors to students as Hammond Junior College on September 14, 1925. The college consisted of a president, forty students, and four faculty members. Facilities of the Hammond High School were used. An eighteen thousand dollar bond issue was voted in 1928, the proceeds from which were used to purchase fifteen acres of land in north Hammond on which were situated a large residence and several smaller buildings. This acreage, which became Southeastern's campus, by 1967 had grown to a main campus of 375 acres and a second campus of 751 acres located three miles east of Hammond. Also by 1967 thirty-six permanent buildings had been built on the main campus, including fifteen academic buildings.

During the two-year junior college period and the period immediately following, the major objectives were to provide a two-year curriculum in teacher education and basic
undergraduate work in the arts and sciences. In 1930 a third year was added to the curricula. The Louisiana State Board of Education authorized the college to prepare curricula in diverse fields extending through four years and leading to the baccalaureate degree in 1937. The first baccalaureate degrees were conferred in May, 1939. A graduate program for Southeastern Louisiana College was approved by the State Board of Education on February 28, 1961.

From its inception in 1925 to the end of the Dyson administration in 1967, the predominant general attitude among administrators and students at Southeastern reflected a strong conservative concern for stability and order. With few exceptions, none of which was significant, student publications exhibited attitudes which were consistent with administration objectives and pronouncements. Overall, student bodies seemed to have been concerned with a no-nonsense vocational drive which mirrored regional socio-economic priorities.

The history of Southeastern Louisiana College was deeply influenced by politics. Every administration attempted to steer clear of partisan politics, but Louisiana's all encompassing political maelstrom continually tugged at the college. Those associated with the college were apprehensive and keenly aware of the political winds. But in
spite of all obstacles, natural and man-made, the insti-
tution grew and matured, a tribute to its administrators,
students, and supporters.
CHAPTER I

EVENTS LEADING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF HAMMOND JUNIOR COLLEGE

DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA

Three events occurred in early January, 1925, which led to the establishment of Hammond Junior College, which became Southeastern Louisiana College. The first event was a news release from the office of Thomas H. Harris, then State Superintendent of Public Education in Louisiana. The release was a statement by Harris which stressed the desirability of junior colleges in the state. It stated in part:

There is a growing demand in Louisiana for the establishment of locally supported junior colleges, that is, local institutions offering the first year of college work . . . .

I think that we have reached the point in the development of education in Louisiana when the question will require the most serious consideration and settlement, and my judgment is that it will be settled in favor of the establishment of locally supported junior colleges . . . .¹

The second of the three events was the publishing

¹State Times [Baton Rouge, Louisiana], January 6, 1925.
of the Harris statement in the Baton Rouge *State Times*
January 6, 1925.

The third event, which proved to be the catalyst, occurred later that same morning at the home of Linus Arthur Sims in Hammond. Sims, then principal of Hammond High School, was reading his morning paper at breakfast. His attention was attracted by the Harris article. According to Margaret Smythe (Grace):

Then and there he conceived the idea of having such a college at Hammond.²

Miss Smythe continued:

The more he thought of it the more feasible the idea seemed, and as he drove to school that morning he met Oscar Donaldson, president of the Chamber of Commerce, who approved the idea also.³

PROMOTING THE IDEA

Linus Sims and Oscar Donaldson were most successful in their efforts to enlist the help of the Hammond business and professional community. Dr. Lucius McGehee, a prominent physician destined to become a prime force in


³Ibid.
the development of the college, was consulted. McGehee was enthusiastic over the proposal. Informally, at first, the members of the Chamber of Commerce approved the proposal of a junior college for Hammond.

Emmett Herring, then Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, recalled that it was Donaldson who formally proposed Chamber support for the idea. The leaders of the junior college movement had done their work well, and the proposal was heartily approved.

The promoters of the junior college proposal realized the desirability of enlisting the support of Superintendent Harris. This support, according to one member of the Chamber of Commerce, was "not only desirable, but without his blessing or tolerance of the idea the project could not have succeeded." Harris, a strong political ally of Huey Long, was felt by many to virtually control major educational policy in Louisiana.

Harris' support was forthcoming during the developmental phases of the junior college, but there were two schools of thought as to how this was achieved.

Margaret Smythe (Grace) writing in 1929 following

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4 Statement by Emmett Herring, Sr., telephone interview, July 3, 1969.

5 Ibid.
Interviews with Mr. and Mrs. Linus Sims is quoted below:

The Chamber of Commerce wrote to State Superintendent Harris, who answered favorably. Then Mr. Sims went to a meeting of high school principals in New Orleans where he met and talked with Mr. Harris in person. Later, speaking before a committee composed of representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and the city and parish schools, Mr. Harris again expressed his approval and said that within a few years, if the college were a success, the state might reasonably be expected to assume control of it. He advised that steps be taken at once to provide funds for establishing and maintaining the college.

Eldridge Carroll stated in an article in the Hammond Vindicator in 1955 that support from Harris came about as follows:

In the midst of our talks regarding a college, Tom Harris, State Superintendent of Education, happened to stop over at the Oaks Hotel, and Dr. Lucius McGehee, on our local board, contacted him. The doctor quickly notified the Chamber of Commerce officers, who notified each member that a special meeting would be held in the private dining room of the Oaks. Attendance was mandatory.

They "put up" a job on Tom Harris. The entire membership was present, together with other prominent citizens, all seated at a long banquet table. Dr. McGehee stepped out into the lobby and invited Mr. Harris to meet and dine with our Chamber of Commerce. After considerable persuasion Mr. Harris was brought in, introduced, and seated at the head of the table.

After the banquet table had been cleared, the president went into the usual routine of business such as the secretary's report, and finally the report of the committee on a junior college. (Dr. Harris had never heard of it.) A number of splendid speeches were made. Finally, Charles Houlton made a wonderful speech, imploring Tom Harris to approve the project.

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6 Margaret Smythe, Le Souvenir (Hammond, Louisiana: Southeastern Louisiana College, 1929), n.p.
In reply Mr. Harris said that at the present he did not see the need of another junior college, but, considering the enthusiasm of our people, it might be possible to establish one in Hammond. Because of its location, Hammond was his choice if one were to be built. (So that was that!)

There was support for both stories among the living participants in the struggle for a junior college at Hammond. It seemed clear that Harris did offer some support, although the degree of support offered was debatable. He certainly did nothing to prevent the establishment of the college. But perhaps more significant in the development of the college was the position expressed by Harris in November of 1925. This position, the antithesis of the one expressed nine months before in January of 1925, might have seriously impaired the actual establishment of Hammond Junior College during the spring and summer of 1925 had it been solidified then. There is serious doubt that the junior college drive would have been launched at all if Harris' November statement had appeared in January. The statement which Harris wrote or sanctioned appears below:

There has been more or less discussion throughout the State of the subject of locally supported junior colleges, and several communities have indicated an interest in the matter, but so far only one such school has been established and is in operation.

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A district comprised of four wards was formed in the southern part of Tangipahoa Parish, a special tax of one mill voted, with the proceeds of which a junior college is operated in the City of Hammond. At least two other large centers are considering seriously the proposition of establishing junior colleges.

It is my opinion that we shall exercise wisdom to approach this question with caution. Junior colleges will necessarily prove expensive and when the expense is required to be borne locally the tax burden is liable to be greater than the people should be asked to bear, especially in view of the small numbers to be reached with junior college instruction. It is my opinion that we shall do well to support properly the educational institutions that we already have, without adding new and expensive types of schools.8

No evidence was found to establish a basis for the inconsistency of the Harris statements.

IMPLEMENTING THE IDEA

With the backing of the Chamber of Commerce and of other leaders of the Hammond community secured, proponents of the college turned their attention to the implementation of their proposal. As support solidified, opposition to the idea stiffened. Opposition was mainly the result of rivalries over the location of the college. Major opposition came from several towns, chief among which was Amite. The northern half of Tangipahoa Parish, Wards 1, 2, 3, and 4, were solidly opposed.

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Eldridge Carroll accurately pictured the situation which existed in late spring, 1925:

Now it was necessary to get the Tangipahoa Parish Board of Education to approve the college and recommend an election. All of the Board members from the north end of the parish were opposed, and it was voted down. Things looked dark.\(^9\)

The grammatical awkwardness of the official minutes of the Tangipahoa Parish School Board for May 25, 1925, may be an indication of the pressures which faced that body. The minutes say in part:

A committee accompanying the Parish School Board member from Hammond, Dr. Lucius McGehee, came before the board in the interest of a Junior College to be established in Hammond, for the purpose of taking care of all high school graduates throughout the parish thus saving the Freshman and Sophomore years in a college or university. After much discussion of the subject by members of the Board and the committee present, the matter of action upon the college was deferred, so that the matter may be well advertised and explained throughout the parish, so that the people may be able to vote intelligently upon the subject. A motion was made by Dr. McGehee duly seconded by Mr. Nesom that the Board be called together on Tuesday the 2nd day of June for the purpose of considering a one (\(\$\,001\)) mill parish wide tax for the establishing of this college. This motion was unanimously carried.\(^10\)

Leaders of the drive for a college at Hammond were disheartened but not surprised at the setback which they suffered. The approval of the Tangipahoa Parish School

\(^9\) Carroll, op. cit., p. 1.

Board was needed to establish the type of public college proposed and also to levy a tax for its physical creation and support. Thus, it was that Linus Sims, Dr. Lucius McGehee, and other supporters placed their final hopes on obtaining permission to let the southern end of Tangipahoa Parish establish the college.

The enabling resolution was considered by the Tangipahoa Parish School Board at its meeting held June 2, 1925. According to witnesses, the atmosphere was highly charged. All morning the discussion went on. "Tempers were hot and some members nearly came to fisticuffs." McGehee, who was a member of the Tangipahoa Parish School Board, as well as a crusader for a college at Hammond, must have sensed defeat as discussion of a parish-wide one mill tax dragged on. The minutes show that a majority of the Board members, for various reasons, decided against a parish-wide tax. Carrying out a strategy which the Board minutes clearly reveal, McGehee moved for adjournment. The motion carried.

The official minutes of the School Board tell

\*\*\*\*

12Carroll, op. cit., p. 2.
13Ibid.
graphically what happened next:

Immediately upon adjournment the Board was called into a second session.

It was moved by Mr. Hendry (W. D. Hendry) and seconded by Mr. Nesom (G. W. Nesom) that the Board reorganize for the purpose of taking up general business.

After much discussion in regard to the proposition of calling an election either by wards of the parish or a whole, it was finally moved by Dr. Lucius McGehee duly seconded by Mr. Cooper (C. O. "Champ" Cooper) that we establish a school district composed of fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth wards for the purpose of voting a one mill tax to establish, equip, and maintain a junior college at Hammond, predicated upon the opinion of the Attorney General. Carried unanimously.14

Opposition subsided, but by no means disappeared, following the meeting at Amite on June 2, 1925. Opponents of the junior college sought legal support from District Attorney Matt Allen. Allen's opinion was that the legality of the Tangipahoa Parish School Board's action was open to question. A committee was formed to discuss the constitutionality of the junior college plan with Attorney General Percy Saint. Many citizens were concerned that the one mill tax needed for the creation of a junior college might "encroach upon the remaining one mill of our constitutional eight mill maintenance funds."15

14Minutes, Tangipahoa Parish School Board, June 2, 1925, p. 369.

15Ibid.
Proponents of the college somehow learned of the proposed interview with the Attorney General and dispatched their own delegation to confront him. According to one account, Saint was amused at the passionate pleas of opposing forces which appeared before him one after another.\(^{16}\) His opinion was rendered in favor of the pro-college forces.

Supporters of the junior college began to promote the millage election, the success of which would make the college a physical reality. Plans called for the election to be held July 7, 1925. Approval of the proposal by popular and property vote would levy a one mill ad valorem tax on Wards 5, 6, 7, and 9 for five years.

Sims at his own expense went out day after day enlisting support and recruiting students for the hoped for institution. Smythe stated that Sims visited all the voting precincts, except two, during the thirty days legally required to advertise the election.\(^{17}\)

Sims, principal of Hammond High School, originator of the junior college idea and crusader in its behalf, was almost automatically appointed president of the proposed junior college by the Tangipahoa Parish School Board. He

\(^{16}\)Carroll, op. cit., p. 2.

\(^{17}\)Smythe, *Le Souvenir*, op. cit., p. 102.
showed his optimism by appointing a faculty days before the outcome of the election was known. Faculty members signed contracts with the understanding that these would be void should the election fail. The optimism was well founded. The proposal carried in popular votes and assessed valuations.18

According to Tangipahoa Parish School Board records the official count for the July 7, 1925, millage election was:

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>For said proposition</td>
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<td>$932,437.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Against said proposition</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>299,415.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority in favor of said proposition</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>633,022.00</td>
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Hammond Junior College, the name given the institution before its official approval, began its legal existence July 10, 1925. In the minds of many supporters, this was merely the christening. The birth had occurred some time before.

19 Minutes, Tangipahoa Parish School Board, July 10, 1925, p. 382.
CHAPTER II

HAMMOND JUNIOR COLLEGE--1925-1928

OBJECTIVES AND TRENDS

The results of the election which had been authorized June 2 and held July 7 were promulgated July 10, 1925. Amazingly, between this date and September, a college was born. Seven months after the inception of the idea, the college was a legal fact. Nine months after the inception, Hammond Junior College, housed in the Hammond High School building, opened its doors to students. Little need be said to emphasize the feverish pace and consistent drive of those who led the way in organizational efforts.

The purposes of Hammond Junior College formulated during the summer of 1925 were both objectives and reasons for establishing a junior college. It was impossible to separate the two. The official statement of purpose is cited below:

To offer courses that would give the student the best preparation possible for extensive work in any special field which he might desire to follow elsewhere.

To meet the needs of a great number of ambitious youths who are not financially able to attend schools farther from home.
The purpose of a locally supported junior college offering the first two years of four-year college courses is to enable the parents to avoid the necessity of sending their children away from home for their college education while they are too young to escape the evils that will inevitably surround them, and also to lessen very materially the expense to parents in financing their children through college.

The average high school graduate is from fifteen to eighteen years of age. It is a rather serious matter to have such young and immature people severing home ties and to place them among hundreds of others of like age with no restraining influence about their conduct.

If these young high school graduates can do the first two years of college work without leaving home, there will be no severance of home ties and influences, and the expense to parents will be kept at the minimum.

It is perfectly safe to say that the instruction in a small locally supported junior college is equal to that in larger institutions throughout the country. If care is exercised in the selection of a faculty, the instruction should be better, for the classes will be smaller and there will, therefore, be more individual attention.

The conservative, protective and somewhat provincial ideas expressed in this statement were not uncommon among institutions of higher learning in existence at that time. The statement accurately pictured predominant attitudes of future administrations at the Hammond College. Frugality, the preservation and protection of the status quo, a protective personalism with regard to students, and stability in all matters became hallmarks of Southeastern. These ideas were to develop into a general attitude considered

1Announcements--Hammond Junior College 1926-27 Session, pp. 8-9.
ideal by some and an intellectual impediment by others.

Harris' influence on the development of Hammond Junior College was again strongly reflected in the striking similarity between the above statement and the excerpts from Harris' January 6, 1925, speech which appear below:

Boys and girls finish their high school courses at an immature age, and their parents object to sending them away from home for their college education, as they believe they are too young to understand all of the numerous temptations that will be encountered by them. They believe that these young people should receive the benefits of home influences for at least two years after high school graduation.

Then, too, the expense of maintaining a student at college is something like $400 or $500 a year, even when the student has no expensive tastes. A majority of the parents who wish to give their children a college education find it difficult to raise that amount of money. Unquestionably the expense would be greatly reduced were their children able to remain at home while pursuing college course.

Junior college courses are kept within narrow limits, and while confined largely to such subjects as math, English, history and the languages, there is no reason why the locally supported junior college should not offer instruction of the class that is offered by the state-supported institutions; nor should the instruction be more expensive to the public.²

There can be little doubt that Sims kept the Harris statement near at hand as he provided leadership in formulating policies for Hammond Junior College.

² State Times [Baton Rouge, Louisiana], January 6, 1925.
ACADEMIC STRUCTURE

As first organized, the college offered courses in two "schools," Arts and Sciences and Teacher Training. Subjects offered in Arts and Sciences included general and cultural courses as distinguished from the strictly technical and professional courses. The second curriculum was organized to train men and women for service in the public schools of Louisiana. Courses offered were "academic and professional, theoretical and practical." All students who completed the two-year course in Teacher Training received State Elementary School Teachers' Certificates without further examination. Fifty-one courses in nine "departments" were listed. The departments were: Education, Library, English, French, History, Mathematics, Science, Art, and Music. The courses were to be offered on the basis of need. ³

In early February, 1926, Sims received a letter from Harris which was of great importance to Hammond Junior College. It is quoted in its entirety:

Dear Mr. Sims:

Responding to your request for a statement covering the legal status of the Hammond Junior College, I beg to advise:

³Announcements, op. cit., pp. 10-20.
The State Board of Education instructed the Committee on Education of the Board to prescribe courses of study to be pursued by your students for the present session, to outline standards to be met by the junior college faculty and to reach an agreement on the other essential elements such as a laboratory, library, etc., required for the government of a standard junior college. In the discharge of this duty, the Committee on Education, through this office, submitted to you courses of study which were agreed upon and I understand that these courses have been faithfully followed. Your faculty was approved, as were the general physical provisions of the school.

The State Board has recently adopted curricula for use in the state institutions under its control, and it is my understanding that it is your purpose to offer the first two years of the arts and science course and the two-year teacher-training course--lower elementary division. I understand further that you will be prepared next session to meet substantially the requirements of the Southern Association of Junior Colleges.

In view of the above conditions, I am prepared to say that if the Hammond Junior College maintains a faculty in sufficient numbers meeting the standards prescribed by the State Board of Education and pursues college courses that have been or may be approved by the Board, I shall recommend that the work of this institution be granted the same recognition that is given the other standard colleges; that is, I should recommend that the persons finishing the teacher-training course should be issued certificates entitling them to teach in the elementary schools, and that those finishing all or a part of the first two years of the academic college courses should be given full credit for the work completed.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) T. H. Harris
State Superintendent of Education

Harris' letter was given wide publicity and did much to improve the prestige of the college among its

^Ibid.
patrons. The query from Sims must have been intended almost solely for a public acknowledgment of support from Harris. Much of what Harris stated in his letter was widely known. The college, a creation of the Tangipahoa Parish School Board, had been chartered by the Board, and its curricula and faculty were approved in late summer, 1925.\(^5\)

GOVERNING AUTHORITY

The intermediate authority over Hammond Junior College from 1925 to the end of the 1927-28 academic year was the Board of Administrators. This board was composed of the total membership of the Tangipahoa Parish School Board. The board selected or authorized the formation of a five member Board of Advisors from wards which supported the college by a one mill tax. The Board of Advisors from Wards 5, 6, 7, and 8, Special District 101, met in the Tangipahoa Parish School Board offices after regular sessions and at other times and places. Together with the president of Hammond Junior College and the superintendent of Tangipahoa Parish Schools, they were in direct control and conducted college business. Usually the president of

the Board of Administrators (School Board) met with the group.

Supporting the Board of Advisors was a three-man Honorary Board. This board functioned primarily as a promotional agency for the college. Honorary members were members of the Tangipahoa Parish School Board from Ward 7, except one who served on the Board of Advisors.

FACULTY

Hammond Junior College opened its doors to students September 14, 1925. The first session had an enrollment of over forty students and a faculty conditionally engaged the previous spring. Besides the president, the group included a dean and four other members, one of whom served only part time.

According to Vickers, a member of the original faculty, the following men and women were members of this faculty:

Linus Arthur Sims was President of Hammond Junior College and also principal of the Hammond School system.

Walter S. McKay was dean and taught psychology and science.

Joseph Perry Montgomery taught education, mathematics and sociology.

Marie del Norte Theriot taught French, American and European history.
Dovie Evora Vickers taught English, speech, civics and was librarian for the college.

Ione Duncan was part time music and art teacher.

Mrs. Verna Joiner, a student in the first class enrolled at Hammond Junior College, has provided first-hand sketches of the first faculty:

Dreamer and builder, the late Linus Arthur Sims, a native of Alabama, spent twenty eight years of his life at Hammond. The son of a Methodist clergyman and a preacher himself, it was only natural that his early ideals were reflected in his teaching ministry, the greater part of which was done in Hammond first as principal of the Hammond schools, 1923-1928; and then as college president, 1925-1933. As running a college on meager funds required careful maneuvering—a common opinion was that he could make a dime go as far as anyone else could a dollar—and a deal of sacrifice. Mr. Sims sometimes found it necessary to turn his entire pay check back into the treasury to take care of urgent bills. It was with a sense of affection as well as necessity that during his time at the college every boy and girl graduate was photographed wearing the presidential cap and gown.

Well remembered by the students of 1925 is the first dean of the college, the late Walter S. McKay, a handsome brunette with a lively personality. There was nothing he liked better than a friendly argument, and many were the times his class led him unsuspectingly away from the problems of chemistry in a discussion that occupied the entire period . . . .

In sharp contrast to Dean McKay, Mr. Montgomery was a decided blond, efficient and businesslike, a good teacher. Though he was often dignified, yet, in general no one effervesced more wit and humor than he. Miss Vickers who had a large part in the making of Southeastern, taught English three years in the Hammond High School before she was transferred to the college. Always dainty and precise, a model of propriety, these qualities served her well in her life.

Dovie Evora Vickers, unpublished manuscript, n.d.
profession, and although her standards were high, her kindly interest in each student endeared her to them all.

The first glee club sponsored by Mrs. Ione Duncan still recalls the happy times when the little brunette directed such lively choruses as "Marry June" and "Nursery Rhyme Suite."

The other young woman making Southeastern history was Marie Del Norte Theriot, a charming French mademoiselle from Lafayette, who had recently returned from studies in Paris.7

The Hammond Junior College faculty changed somewhat the second year. Joseph Montgomery replaced Walter McKay as dean, and taught psychology and sociology. Mr. R. Thomas Pursley and Mr. B. A. Tucker began their teaching careers at the college in science and mathematics, respectively.8

THE STUDENT BODY

The group of students which gathered at Hammond Junior College when it first opened its doors to students were from the southern part of Tangipahoa Parish. The students were mostly freshmen with a few sophomores and a sprinkling of special students. Six sophomores, who had come from other colleges, organized and elected Gladys Torrence class president. These students were all enrolled

7Mrs. Verna Joiner, unpublished manuscript, 1951, pp. 5-8.

8Dovie Evora Vickers, unpublished manuscript, n.d.
in the teacher preparation course. Each did his practice teaching at the East Side Grammar School after completing the two-year course for teachers. This made possible a commencement at the end of Hammond Junior College's first year of operation. Certificates were awarded to May Addison, Mrs. J. B. Campbell, Tom Poster, Dorothy Snell, Gladys Torrence, and Verdia Tyce.9

The second year, 1926-1927, there was an increase in enrollment and a graduating class of fourteen, as follows: Florence Bourdier, Mabel Campbell, Lillian Crouse, Juanita Poster, Florice Gray, Genice Guenard, Pearl Knieper, Mrs. J. E. Lambert, Ouida Robertson, Vesta Wascom, Emily Etta Way, Wellington Way, Myrtis Williamson, Dorothea Volters.10

The 1926-1927 baccalaureate and commencement exercises were held jointly with the Hammond High School exercises. The Honorable J. Y. Sanders gave the graduation address; the Reverend Mr. Cain gave the invocation and Parish Superintendent W. J. Dunn presented the certificates.11

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10 Ibid., p. 29.

11 Mrs. Verna Joiner, unpublished manuscript, 1951, p. 10.
The college used the Hammond High School campus for the first three years, and this limited extra curricular activities. Joiner pointed out that social life consisted largely of a few banquets, picnics and numerous home parties.\(^{12}\)

A pep squad was organized in 1925. May Addison was elected cheer leader. This group performed for various area athletic events. The college had no organized athletic team of any sort until the winter term of 1928-1929.\(^{13}\)

In the spring of the first year, two one-act plays, *Two Crooks and A Lady* by Ben Hecht and *The Ghost Story* by Booth Tarkington were slated in the Hammond High School Auditorium. The performances, directed by Miss Vickers, were well received by the audiences.\(^{14}\)

**THE PHYSICAL PLANT**

For the first two and one-half years of its existence Hammond Junior College was housed in the Hammond High School building. The school campus was bound by East Morris, South Pine, and South Magnolia Streets. The

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\(^{12}\)Ibid.

\(^{13}\)Statement by Dovie Evora Vickers, personal interview, July 10, 1969.

\(^{14}\)Vickers, unpublished manuscript, n.d.
main building faced East Morris Street. Three of the five rooms in the upper east wing were used as classrooms, two on the north and the one in the southeast corner. Facilities of the high school laboratory and auditorium were available. On the first floor were the office of the president and principal and next to it a small room used as a library. The campus was shared by the high school and college students.15

The original Hammond Junior College library consisted of two hundred donated volumes. A fund of one thousand dollars was raised. A vigorous campaign to solicit book contributions for the library among the citizens of Hammond sponsored by Miss Vickers and her classes was most successful. Many private citizens and groups in the Hammond area contributed generously to the campaign. Among liberal contributors were Mrs. Charles E. Cate, Sr., and the Round Table Club.

Faculty members and students worked regularly scheduled hours and temporarily classified the donated books. No money was available to purchase cards for a card catalog, since all the money raised went for books. Despite the many obstacles, records showed that the Hammond

Junior College library had two thousand six hundred bound volumes by the end of the second year of operation.\textsuperscript{16} Out of town students who lived in Hammond while attending Hammond Junior College generally resided in private homes. The Miller home with its adjoining cottage afforded dormitory accommodations for twelve women. This popular residence was located on the corner of West Thomas and South Pine Streets just north of the present public library. The price of lodging was twenty dollars a month and included three meals a day.\textsuperscript{17} The college urged students not to accept unapproved rooms, some of which might cost more than thirty-five dollars a month with meals.\textsuperscript{18}

Students who resided in Special District 101 paid no college fees. This district was the one formed by the four wards in southern Tangipahoa Parish which had levied a one mill tax to establish the college. Students from areas other than District 101 paid fees amounting to $17.00 per term. Textbooks and laundry were considered personal items and were not included in computing fees. College publications proudly pointed out that the grand total for all costs including room and board would not

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid. \hfill \textsuperscript{17}Ibid. \hfill \textsuperscript{18}Announcements, op. cit., p. 12.
exceed $77.00 per term.\textsuperscript{19}

By the end of the second year, the facilities assigned to the Hammond Junior College had become so over-crowded that President Sims acquainted the public with the situation and then sought help.\textsuperscript{20}

Sims addressed the members of the Hammond Chamber of Commerce in early 1927 and pointed out to them the impending termination of the original three year millage commitment of School District 101. He pictured clearly the overcrowded conditions at the college. The Chamber appointed a committee of its members to study the possibility of moving the college to a new location. They were instructed to work in conjunction with Tangipahoa Parish school board members from School District 101.\textsuperscript{21}

The joint committee considered several alternatives. Committee members finally recommended the purchase of the Hunter Leake estate located in the extreme north end of Hammond. Selection of the Leake property produced mixed reactions, because it had experienced some flooding.

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., p. 15.


\textsuperscript{21}Margaret Smythe, \textit{Le Souvenir} (Hammond, Louisiana: Southeastern Louisiana College, 1929), p. 4.
According to Vickers the financing process for the purchase of the selected site was stormy. Bonding was accepted as the method for raising the money to purchase the Leake estate. The Tangipahoa Parish School Board, after much discussion, authorized School District 101, the same geographic area which had levied the one mill tax for the establishment of Hammond Junior College, to issue the bonds and pay for their retirement with the consent of the electorate. On September 12, 1927, the voters approved a bond issue of $18,000 for the purchase of the estate. Immediately, a new problem arose.

The bonding district could find no buyers for the bonds which had been authorized. The situation looked bleak. At this point William H. Nalty, a Hammond business man, purchased the bonds, thus making possible the purchase of the Leake property.

The estate consisted of fifteen acres at the north end of Pine Street. The family residence served as the president's home and women's dormitory with Mrs. Sims as matron; the remodeled two-story servants' house became an all-purpose college building in which were located classrooms, laboratories and the library. The barn later provided dressing rooms for the football team.

The president's home, which was used as a girls'
dormitory, housed twelve students at a monthly cost of twenty-five dollars per student. From his own salary, President Sims paid both the dormitory and college electricity bills. His sons served as unpaid janitors.  

THE STRUGGLE FOR STATE SUPPORT

During this transition period in late 1927 and early 1928, more and more supporters realized that School District 101 did not have the means to support the Hammond Junior College for an extended period of expected growth. Agitation for a state take-over began.

Harris, whose opposition to junior colleges had been building up for some time, openly opposed the take-over of Hammond Junior College by the state. There was evidence to indicate that college supporters were surprised at this move. Even though Harris' negative position on junior colleges had been publicized by this time, his position was not well known in the Hammond area.

Prospects for the institution to become state supported were not good, but supporters, upon the advice of the State Board of Education, decided to submit their plan to the 1928 Louisiana Legislature. Smythe in a 1929 article said the Board felt that no harm would be done and

22 Dovie Evora Vickers, unpublished manuscript, n.d.
good advertising would be gained by such a move. The board apparently saw little chance of success.

According to Smythe, representatives from almost every Hammond organization were in attendance when the plan was presented to a special legislative committee convened to hear the plan and make a recommendation to the Louisiana House of Representatives. State Senator Robert M. McGehee eloquently presented the plan to the committee. The committee unanimously approved and recommended the plan which became House Bill 747 introduced by Representatives Abels and Cutrer. The legislation was approved by the General Assembly July 12, 1928, as Legislative Act 136.

Act 136 changed the name Hammond Junior College to Southeastern Louisiana College and made the college a part of the state educational system under the direct control of the State Board of Education. The college was also granted the right to establish four-year curricula and to grant baccalaureate degrees, when the facilities of the college permitted and the state board approved. A local advisory committee was to be appointed by the State Board of Education to help administer the affairs of the college.

23 Smythe, op. cit., p. 4.
24 Ibid., p. 7.
The advisory executive committee consisted of Superintendent Harris as Chairman, and Dr. Lucius McGehee. The following year, 1929, another member, William Hodding Carter, who served until 1934, was added to the committee.25

The generosity of the 1928 Legislative Session was appreciated further when it became known in Hammond that an appropriation bill providing $75,000 for each of the two ensuing years had been passed. Elation was followed by anger and discouragement when Governor Huey P. Long vetoed the appropriation. The Times Picayune summed up Long's reason for the veto:

Governor Long declared that this appropriation was written into the bill by the Senate, which is unconstitutional, as all appropriations must originate in the House of Representatives.26

Apart from the stated one, Long's motives for vetoing the appropriation were never known. Many suspected that Long's opposition stemmed from his support of Louisiana State University at the expense of the smaller colleges. His presumed viewpoint was epitomized by the following quote:


26Times Picayune (New Orleans), July 14, 1928.
Huey Long was dead set on building up L.S.U., and decided that Southeastern and several other small colleges were useless and their funds might better be used for the building up of L.S.U. 27

After struggling for several months under what must have been chaotic financial conditions, Southeastern was granted $10,000 by the Board of Liquidation of the State Debt. The money was used to build two additional classrooms and to hire a new teacher, Mrs. Hugh J. Smith. 28


28 Smythe, op. cit., p. 8.
CHAPTER III

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA COLLEGE--1929-1939

OBJECTIVES AND TRENDS

College publications of early 1929 showed no basic change in objectives. President Sims' objectives of 1925 were still proper goals toward which "all should address themselves."1

High optimism was expressed for the success of Southeastern by major segments of the population in mid-1929. The Hammond Vindicator reflected this optimism in a September editorial:

Southeastern college opens next Monday morning, September 16, (1929) with a possible enrollment in excess of one hundred. In an interview with President Sims, he expressed himself optimistically regarding the ensuing term and declared that inquiries have been coming from many points of the Florida parishes and from several South Mississippi points. The gradual growth of Southeastern should be appreciated by the people of Hammond and Tangipahoa Parish and the best moral and financial support should be given it whenever needed.2

The editors of Le Souvenir, the college yearbook, were likewise optimistic. In a special tribute to

1Announcements--Southeastern Louisiana College 1929 Session, Hammond, Louisiana, p. 4.

2Hammond Louisiana Vindicator, September 6, 1929.
President Sims, they said:

The founding of an institution is not an easy undertaking, and we are fully aware of the countless hardships our president has overcome, and the tireless energy he has expended in the realization of this school. Therefore, to our president, Mr. L. A. Sims, we wish to acknowledge deep gratitude for his conscientious and praiseworthy endeavors in making this young college rank equal to the best in the state.³

The president's message to the students of Southeastern that September also mirrored the optimism expressed by others:

For four years I have given my best efforts for the betterment and uplift of this institution; the ambition of my entire life is now being consummated, and it is only natural that the advancement of our school in prestige and usefulness should be the greatest personal desire I might have. You have shown your sympathetic approval and like-mindedness in supporting every proposition with which we have gone to you, and if this relation continues, the aims, ambitions, and future of the institution are assured.⁴

The optimism and cohesiveness which were obviously felt by supporters of Southeastern Louisiana College in 1929 were soon challenged. In the decade ahead, the stormiest in the college's history, the institution's age of innocence was overwhelmed by the age of political realism.

³Le Souvenir (Hammond, Louisiana: Southeastern Louisiana College, 1929), p. 5.
⁴Ibid., p. 4.
As 1940 approached, Southeastern Louisiana College supporters looked back to the institution's short but dramatic fifteen years of existence. Physical, academic, and attitudinal changes had occurred at a most unusual pace for the time and place. The college had started on a "shoestring" without the blessings of some of the most powerful politicians, during Louisiana's most turbulent political era. Many of Southeastern's early leaders had not been supporters of the state administration; many held conservative educational philosophies. The nation's greatest depression ran concurrently with the college's first years of existence. The end of the period brought with it a state political scandal of unprecedented proportions and the polarization of the world's major powers and their satellite states. Yet over the campus loomed several major structures under construction.

Southeastern was to grow and become a first-class institution, but it was unlikely that at a later date there would be more mixed feelings of those associated with the college than at the beginning of the 1940's.

GOVERNING AUTHORITY

The period extending from late 1928 to early 1929 witnessed the passing of direct control of Southeastern Louisiana College from the Tangipahoa Parish School Board
to the Louisiana State Board of Education. The transition was orderly; those directly associated with Southeastern probably were unaware of the change. An advisory executive committee was established to act as liaison between the college and the State Board of Education. The Executive Committee of Southeastern Louisiana College, as the advisory group was called, included the State Superintendent of Public Education who was chairman, a prominent Hammond area resident, and the President of the College who acted as secretary. In 1929 a second Hammond area resident was added to the committee. The executive committee exerted a great influence over Southeastern affairs until its dissolution in 1944. All college business directed to the state board had to be approved first by the committee. The committee also originated many recommendations which were ultimately submitted to the board.

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Third-year curricula were added to Southeastern's offerings in 1930. When the State of Louisiana assumed control, commerce and physical education were added and the faculty was increased by ten members. The Department of Arts and Sciences offered three-year courses leading toward the Bachelor of Arts and the Bachelor of Science degrees. The two-year normal school provided programs
for teachers of the lower and upper elementary grades, and graduates of this course were given professional life certificates by the State Department of Education. 5

Southeastern Louisiana College held its first summer session in 1933. The session extended from June 3 to July 15. Eight instructors conducted courses in art, commerce, economics, education, English, geography, history, political science, mathematics, psychology, science, and sociology. Registration fee was five dollars, with a one dollar penalty assessment for late registration. Seventy students attended that summer.

Summer sessions were discontinued for two years after the first one; finances caused the postponement. In 1936 the summer sessions were revived and enrollment increased steadily. One hundred seventy students were enrolled in 1938. 6

At approximately the same time that Southeastern administrators were considering asking the state board for authority to grant bachelors degrees, 7 a move was made in


6Ibid., p. 381.

Baton Rouge to reduce already granted curricula additions beyond the two-year level. Superintendent Harris' recommendation which shocked Southeastern supporters was as follows:

I am of the opinion that the work of this institution (Southeastern) should be limited to two years, for I think it will be impossible at any time in the near future to secure the legislative support necessary to develop a four year college, and either four years or two years will have to be adopted. The institution cannot continue on a three-year basis for the reason that other colleges here and elsewhere will not recognize the third year credits. The institution should be limited to two years for two reasons: First, there is no necessity for offering facilities for three and four years. Students finishing the junior college course can with little inconvenience and additional expense secure the additional course required leading to degrees at L.S.U., Tulane, or other colleges in the state. In the second place, the enrollment in the third and fourth years will necessarily be small. There are now only a few students in the third year and the expense of providing instruction for them is entirely too great.  

Harris later withdrew his recommendation because the legislature had adopted a resolution making provision for a commission to study the question of college education in Louisiana. The change of position appeared at the same board meeting as did the recommendation. Harris' first position was on the agenda, but by meeting time he

had reversed himself. The move quickly faded and dis­appeared.

In a special "pilgrimage" commemorative brochure celebrating Southeastern's tenth anniversary, the assets of the college appeared as follows:

Southeastern Has

A faculty of twenty teachers
A student body of 340
A campus of 71 acres
Some shrubbery and flowers
A new classroom and administration building
A good gymnasium and equipment
An old science building and laboratories
Baseball, football, tennis and soccer courts.

Southeastern Offers

Accounting, shorthand, typing
Art, music, penmanship
Algebra, analytics, trigonometry
Biology and chemistry
Education and psychology
Economics, sociology, government
English and public speech
European and American history
French and Spanish
Health and general science
Orchestra, band, glee club.

The three presidents who served during the 1929-1939 decade did their best to improve the academic life of the college. Their tasks were made more difficult by other pressing and more visible problems of the infant institution. Each worked for cultural attractions,

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9Pilgrimage, a brochure commemorating the tenth anniversary of Southeastern Louisiana College, June 10, 1935.
accreditation, academic improvement and library holdings. President Y. L. Fontenot repeatedly petitioned the State Board for extra funds to hire faculty and bolster lagging academic offerings; he was most insistent from 1935 until his removal as president in 1937. Finally, on May 26, 1937, the state board in response to Fontenot's requests authorized and directed Southeastern to prepare courses of study extending through four years and leading to bachelor degrees. Fontenot was removed as president at the same meeting.¹⁰

Soon after his appointment as president of Southeastern Louisiana College succeeding Fontenot, Dr. Joseph Leon Clark submitted to the State Board of Education four-year curricula in liberal arts, teacher training, music, commerce, social sciences, and physical education. These curricula were approved February 28, 1938, and Southeastern was authorized to graduate students with the bachelor degree at the close of the session 1938-39. The first degrees were conferred in May, 1939.¹¹

Increases in departmental budgets occurred during the 1937-1938 school year. The library was given extra furniture and over three thousand dollars was spent on the

¹¹Clark, op. cit., p. 381.
purchase of books. A department of physics was established with fully equipped laboratories, and four additional instructors.\textsuperscript{12}

An amendment to Section 9, Article XII, of the Constitution of the State of Louisiana was acted upon favorably by the electorate in the November general election of 1938. This amendment established Southeastern Louisiana College by constitutional provision and granted it the same status as the other four-year colleges under the control of the State Board of Education.\textsuperscript{13}

\textbf{THE FACULTY}

Undoubtedly, a true statement with regard to the faculty members who served from 1929 to 1939 was that they were "overworked and underpaid."\textsuperscript{14} Proof of their dedication was evident on every side, however. The work demanded of the faculty was often both physical and intellectual; inadequate facilities in which the faculty worked during most of the decade required the expenditure of physical energies. Dr. Norval Garrett, who began teaching at South-

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Lion's Roar} \textit{SLC}, Hammond, Louisiana, March 22, 1938.

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Bulletin, Southeastern Louisiana College (General Catalogue)}, January, 1968, p. 25.

\textsuperscript{14}Statement by Dovie Evora Vickers, personal interview, July 22, 1969.
eastern in 1930, recalled President Linus Sims "wielding a shovel to open clogged drainage ditches." According to Garrett, everyone, including the president, did "what was needed to be done in order to get the job done," which was to promote the young institution. The faculty, fiercely loyal, accepted the task.

The Southeastern Louisiana College faculty in 1930 was composed of seven teachers and the president. By 1939 the number had increased to thirty-two members. During most of the period, college administrators taught classes in addition to administrative responsibilities.

The three presidents pushed themselves extremely hard and expected much of their faculties. President Fontenot's directives to his faculty illustrated this. One such directive was quite explicit:

Regular teachers of the college are required to be at their respective places of duty from 8:30 o'clock A.M., til 3:30 o'clock P.M., the librarian and registrar from 8:30 A.M., to 4:30 P.M. All have 50 minutes out for noon lunch.

A daily schedule has been set up for the 1935-36 session, consisting of six class hours of 55 minutes each, a 30 minute period of miscellaneous activities and a 50 minute lunch period, the first period opening at 8:40 o'clock A.M., and the last period closing at 3:20 o'clock P.M.

15Statement by Dr. Norval Garrett, personal interview, August 19, 1970.

16Minutes, Executive Committee of Southeastern Louisiana College, Ponchatoula, Louisiana, August 24, 1935, p. 36.
Faculty members taught or worked all six hours each day. President Fontenot, huge gold watch in hand, timed faculty arrivals and departures.17

Faculty salaries were low at Southeastern during the decade. Administrators did what they could to improve the situation. In April, 1936, President Fontenot petitioned the State Board of Education for an increase in salaries. The board turned down the request.18

Mr. Fontenot tried again in August, and, despite some opposition at first, that try was successful.19

The administrative and faculty salaries for the academic year 1935-1936, plus time of employment, revealed much about the period's financial conditions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y. L. Fontenot</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>$4,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Ruth Carter</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>$1,700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar and Manager of Bookstore</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>$2,700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Charles E. Kenney</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna P. Davis</td>
<td>Librarian and Library Science 12 months</td>
<td>$2,250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. L. Swanson</td>
<td>Director of Athletics and Coach 12 months</td>
<td>$2,700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. A. Tucker</td>
<td>College Dean and Mathematics 12 months</td>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. H. Bankston</td>
<td>Geography and Spanish 10 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 Statement by Dr. Garrett, personal interview, August 19, 1970.


19 Minutes, Executive Committee of Southeastern Louisiana College, August 5, 1936, p. 51.
Emily Beatty—10½ months  
English  $1,200.00

Mary E. Bush—10 months  
Art, Penmanship and Physical Education  1,500.00

Virginia E. Dawsey—on leave  
Music

Martina H. Ellis—on leave  
Social Science

R. N. Garrett—10½ months  
Commerce and Head of Department  2,000.00

Roy E. Hyde—on leave  
Social Science

Moise Israel—10½ months  
Psychology and Biology  1,700.00

E. L. McGehee, Jr.—10 months  
Physical Education and History  1,500.00

Clyde E. Pittman—10 months  
Mathematics and Education  1,500.00

Ralph R. Pottle—10 months  
Music and Head of Department  1,750.00

R. T. Pursley—10 months  
Science and Head of Department  2,250.00

Irene D. Smith—10 months  
English  2,000.00

Dovie E. Vickers—10 months  
English and Head of Department  2,250.00

A study of faculties by year for the years 1929 to 1939 yielded several major conclusions relative to credentials. Some instructors taught in areas for which they were poorly prepared. There was a shortage of terminal degrees during the period. No person in administration or instruction had a terminal degree for the first several years, but by the end of the period there were four. Professional leaves requested and granted reflected administrative and faculty concern for improvement.

Ibid., pp. 52-55.
THE STUDENTS

Southeastern Louisiana College began operations in 1930 with 120 students. It ended the decade with 574 students in the day school and 125 students attending night classes. Classes during the decade were generally small, which led to the development of a camaraderie among students and faculty that became a hallmark of the institution. For most of the period the major portion of the names which appeared on student rosters listed addresses within the geo-political area of Louisiana identified as the Florida Parishes. With the coming of hostilities preceding World War II, more and more non-area students attended the institution, although they composed a small minority. The influx of non-area students increased as the decade ended and the United States entered the conflict. Provincialism was not badly shaken, however. Some modification came the following decade. Traditionally conservative student attitudes which developed during the early years of the college's existence were so solidly evident that different ideas brought by in-coming students were absorbed by the numerically superior area students. For example, student publications of the period contained

21 *Lion's Roar* /SLC, Hammond, Louisiana*, January 9, 1940.
no controversial or radically different topics. Rather, the emphasis was on mundane matters of immediate importance to the college.

By the end of 1931, Southeastern Louisiana College officially listed the following organizations as part of campus life:

The Leather-Stocking Club, the oldest literary society on campus, since 1927 had produced and promoted plays and other literary events.

The Girls' and Boys' Glee Clubs had provided vocal music for many events for several years.

The Thirteen Club was organized during the fall semester of 1930-31 by the thirteen members of the first junior class at Southeastern. This was the college's first honor society. The thirteen charter members were Wunzie Conerly, Archie Bray, Vera Cook, Fay Copes, Gladys Higginbotham, Adah Hinman, Mrs. Aileen Noyes Inman, Stella Kinney, Elmer Sanders, Florence Neal, Doris Robertson, Ruth Stevens, and Eleanor Turner.

Zeta Pi Delta, a social club, was chartered in the fall of 1931.

The Yellow Jacket Club, the first social club at Southeastern, was organized by Stella Kinney and Doris Robertson during the fall term of 1929.

During the fall semester of 1930, the first boys' social club at Southeastern, the C.O.Q.'s was organized by Elmer Sanders and Sam Blossman.

Zeta Gamma Alpha sorority was organized the first term of the school year 1931-32.

Finally, an honorary social club composed of freshmen boys called "The Stagg," was organized during the fall term of 1931.²²

The Southeastern Bugler, the first student newspaper, was organized in 1933. The paper was a mimeographed

weekly edited by Louis Varga, Milton Stokes, Harry Nelson, and J. C. Kirstens. Hodding Carter, always eager to encourage intellectual activity, wrote in his Hammond Daily Courier . . . "it is hoped that this is the beginning of a real weekly or monthly for Southeastern." The weekly floundered after a short time. In 1937 the Lion's Roar began publication. That newspaper became the permanent voice of the student body.

According to Vickers, the 1929-1939 decade at Southeastern Louisiana College was one during which students "worked hard, played hard, exhibited unashamed pride of their institution and generally supported the faculty and administration." There were, said Vickers, the usual gripes about facilities, faculty and national affairs, but uppermost in the minds of most students was college preparation for their future obligations.

THE PHYSICAL PLANT

When the excitement of moving to a new campus had subsided in early 1930, it became evident to President Sims

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23 Hammond Louisiana Daily Courier, February 9, 1933.

and his faculty that the facilities were grossly inadequate. Sims immediately enlisted the support of the State Board and local legislators in order to get emergency appropriations. The college was granted a legislative appropriation of $22,500.00, a Board of Liquidation Loan of $10,000.00, and a State Board donation of $2,600.00. Two additions to existing buildings and additional maintenance were provided by the proceeds.

Southeastern's perennial problems of physical growth reached serious proportion in early 1932. The physical facilities included four structures at that time.

The most imposing structure on campus was the president's home. The dwelling, which had been used as a girls' dormitory in addition to quarters for President Sims and his family, was a two-story pitched roof, stuccoed, frame building, constructed in 1913.

The science building was the second most imposing structure. Originally built as a servants' home, the building had been enlarged several times. It was a two-story wooden building whose outer walls were stuccoed. All classrooms and science laboratories were located in this structure.

26Clark, op. cit., p. 378.
A cluster of seven small sheds used for storage and for quarters for the athletes was available. Converted stables of the former Hunter Leake property served as dressing rooms for the football team. A garden hose reportedly was used for shower facilities.

The athletic field, which was little more than a cleared field in early 1932, composed a fourth facility. Despite the hard work which had gone into the construction, remodeling, and upkeep of these facilities, an insurance audit several years later revealed the true value. Insurance Audit and Inspection Company retained by the state board estimated the insurable value of the president's home as $10,500; the science building was valued at $9,000; the seven structures, including the stables dressing room, at $1,000, and the athletic field and equipment at $2,500. The total physical investment had an insurable value of $23,000. This estimate did not include equipment.

Patrons and officials of the college were concerned.

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27 Minutes, State Board of Education, February 29, 1936.

28 Statement by Dr. Norval Garrett, personal interview, August 19, 1970.

29 Minutes, State Board of Education, February 29, 1936.
Hodding Carter in an editorial in April, 1932, expressed general concern about the inadequate physical facilities.

We believe that Southeastern Louisiana College is the most important single institution in the educational development and business growth of Hammond . . . . Southeastern has made amazing progress in its comparatively brief history. There are over two hundred students attending classes each day. The faculty, headed by Professor L. A. Sims, is composed of graduates of the best universities and colleges in the country. Credit for the present two-year course is accepted by Louisiana State University and by other leading educational institutions.

But Southeastern is deserving of a full four-year course. To attain this, and recognition as a fully accredited four-year college, there must be had additional equipment.

Southeastern is a state institution. We urge the Louisiana Legislature when it convenes May 9th to consider the needs of Southeastern . . . . We urge every Florida Parish Representative to back Southeastern up. The school has done much and deserves much.30

Carter felt a strong affinity for Southeastern. The Carter family had been major promotors and supporters of Southeastern from its inception. William Hodding Carter, Hodding's father, was a member of the Executive Committee of Southeastern Louisiana College. The foregoing editorial, as well as others up to this time, was conciliatory because of the college's great need, but never again would Carter be conciliatory in addressing Louisiana Legislatures of the thirties. Events were building up which, for some

30 Hammond /Louisiana7 Daily Courier, August 24, 1932.
time to come, would threaten the very existence of Southeastern Louisiana College. The "Anti-Long" stigma which was attached to some of the college's major supporters deeply affected the college for many years to come.

In 1932, the Louisiana Legislature appropriated $100,000.00 for buildings, $30,000.00 for maintenance, and the State Board provided $15,000.00. The construction money was earmarked for a new administration-classroom building and a gymnasium. Part of the appropriation was to be used to purchase equipment and to purchase acreage from the Cate estate.  

Governor Oscar K. ("O.K.") Allen turned down the plans for the erection of a new building and the purchase of adjoining lands.  

The battle was joined between Hodding Carter and O. K. Allen. Carter fired away the following editorial:

Two little sentences. "I'll stick by my representatives," and "You folks vote against us and then come asking for favors." It is O. K. Allen, governor of Louisiana, by the grace of Huey Long speaking. His remarks are directed at the president and two trustees of Southeastern College . . . .

The refusal of Governor Allen to endorse the plans for Southeastern is a political bludgeon, plain and simple . . . . Now there is the thinly

31 Clark, op. cit., p. 381.
32 Hammond /Louisiana7 Daily Courier, August 23, 1932.
veiled threat that Southeastern will be moved away from Hammond, and that funds for construction won't be available.

The citizens of Hammond voted a tax upon themselves to found Southeastern College, the college was accepted by the state through direct legislation which made it a state school with Hammond as its domicile. Legally and morally it should not be moved "a few miles into the country where land is cheaper."33

The appropriated money was made available by the state after a considerable amount of footwork by friends of the college. The records did not show what caused Governor Allen to change his position, but the removal of President Sims soon after the money was made available was probably part of the solution.

Plans were set to begin construction on the gymnasium, one of the two structures for which the money had been earmarked. The year 1932 ended on a cautiously optimistic note with the purchase of fifty-six acres of land from the Cate estate. Later, four acres were accepted from the Cate heirs by the State Board of Education in lieu of reimbursement for taxes paid by the board on the land purchased from the estate. The board also authorized the purchase of property adjoining the college for a sum not to exceed $1,200.00.34

33 Ibid.

34 Minutes, State Board of Education, May 27, 1933.
The first completely new major building constructed on the Southeastern campus, a gymnasium, was placed in use in 1933. The completed cost of this building was $12,000.00. It had a light steel frame with board walls and roof. The structure became a landmark on campus and it served a variety of purposes for thirty-six years. It first became the center of most athletic activities on campus and social events were also held in the building. Later the building became primarily a women's gymnasium. Subsequently it became part of the Southeastern High School and Southeastern Laboratory School facility. This building was destroyed by fire December 22, 1969.

At a meeting held in January, 1934, the Louisiana State Board of Education authorized construction of a classroom-administration building in cooperation with the Civil Works Administration. The estimated cost of the building was approximately $100,000.00. The Civil Works Administration agreed to pay $9,000.00 on the cost of materials for the building and to pay for all labor costs, estimated at $25,000.00. About $90,000.00 of the legislative appropriation of $100,000.00 made in 1932 was the proposed source of Southeastern's cost of erecting the

35Ibid.
building. The architectural firm of Weiss, Dreyfus and Seiferth of New Orleans was appointed. The state board in justifying its application to C.W.A., declared that an emergency existed at Southeastern. It stated that the building was necessary for the welfare, safety and health of the student body.\textsuperscript{36}

Construction actually began in April, 1934. The \textit{Hammond Daily Courier} had this to say about the event:

The faculty and student body of the college are elated over the fact that the work has at last been started after so many false hopes, and it is expected that the building and other improvements will cause the parish's college to take rank with any similar institution in the state.\textsuperscript{37}

The completed cost of the building was $90,100.00 including architects' fees.

Among the major problems encountered by Southeastern's struggling football team in the early thirties was the lack of physical facilities. R. Norval Garrett, the first coach who was appointed in 1930, remembered the "stable dressing room and the cow pasture field." In 1931 Garrett was replaced as coach by A. L. "Red" Swanson. Swanson found no facilities worthy of the name, no money budgeted for football and a student body and community with

\textsuperscript{36}Minutes, State Board of Education, January 22, 1934, pp. 3-5.

\textsuperscript{37}\textit{Hammond Louisiana} Daily Courier, April 24, 1934.
"football fever." Swanson raised money by raffles, dances, and various other means. He was assisted by members of the faculty and some townspeople and students. 38

The following article written by Eldridge Carroll and verified by several living participants illustrated the great support accorded Southeastern by its friends. The article also showed the physical problems faced by those who promoted athletics at the college. Carroll spoke first of Swanson, discussing Swanson's football successes and his generosity in spending part of his salary on his "boys." Carroll identified himself as the "then Secretary-Treasurer of the Drainage Board." At the time of the story the Drainage Board was using laborers paid by the Federal government:

The writer was provided with funds for the cleaning and clearing of canals. The canals finally being completed, it was discovered that some funds were yet on hand which must be returned to the government, and the laborers discharged.

The writer took a chance (a criminal one) and switched this labor and about three-weeks pay toward the preparation of a football field at Southeastern College on the east grounds. Jimmy Fourmy voluntarily surveyed and started off the field. It was a hand proposition and every wheelbarrow and every shovel that could be found in Hammond was borrowed.

When these funds were exhausted, Gus Loustalot, a member of the police jury, had some funds and labor available and he also switched his funds and labor.

38 Statement by Dr. Norval Garrett, personal interview, August 19, 1970.
When the field was nearly finished we met Fred Reimers, who asked, "What are you going to do for a fence to enclose the field?"

"We don't know; we will cross that river when we come to it," was our reply.

Said he, "We are demolishing a sawmill in Mississippi and you may have all of the second hand lumber you need just for the loading and railroad freight on the same." Glory be! What a break!

At once, with Red Swanson, we headed for the sawmill and selected two full carloads of splendid lumber of various dimensions. We persuaded the foreman to load it without cost and we had to hustle up and get donations of over $50.00 to pay the freight. Also, Charles B. Joiner, who was a freight truckman in Hammond, agreed to deliver the lumber without cost.

There happened to be a number of handymen and "jackleg" carpenters on relief, who quickly erected a splendid fence with enough lumber left over for the building of a rough grandstand that would seat, perhaps two hundred people. The hardware merchants of Hammond donated nails, hinges, pipe, etc.

Now, with a very good football field nearing completion, without a nickel's expense to the college, we needed it lighted.

An advertisement was seen in a Kansas City newspaper offering for sale complete equipment for field lighting. Moise Israel, head of the Athletic Department, was contacted, and he stated, "It's impossible, we have no funds." We told him, "We'll pay as we can."

"But we can't even buy the light poles," said Mr. Israel, "and they will cost a lot of money."

"Forget it, Moise," we said, "A certain party is hauling a lot of long piling here to be shipped and he can, and will--without cost--dump a few of these long poles for the lights and the Louisiana Power Company will gladly finish the job."

Moise Israel sponsored the raffling of an automobile to pay for the lights and other expenses. Five thousand people came to the game and milled around without seats. Tom Harris was at the game and noted this.39

39Eldridge Carroll, Hammond /Louisiana/ Vindicator, Friday, August 26, 1955.
Y. L. Fontenot, who assumed the presidency at Southeastern the fall of 1933, used every opportunity to publicize Southeastern's physical needs. In 1935 Fontenot felt the college's immediate needs were:

... Two fireproof dormitories
Two more good classroom buildings
An assembly auditorium and music building ...

President Fontenot's frugality, vision and no-nonsense attitudes were clearly reflected in records of the college. The depression was raging during his administration, but somehow Southeastern remained solvent. No detail seemed too small for his consideration. The minutes of an executive committee meeting held August 25, 1935, illustrated this:

Before the ERA suspended work, I submitted an application for some needed repairs on the President's home ... I have planned to pay for the materials on this job, which I estimated at $400.00. The labor necessary would probably cost $500.00 to $700.00, which I have not provided for. If government labor cannot be obtained, I suggest that you authorize me to go ahead and have the most needed repairs made to the extent of an expenditure of $400.00 or $500.00.41

The 1936 Le Souvenir provided further evidence of Fontenot's vision as well as his persistence. In this

40 Pilgrimage, a brochure commemorating the tenth anniversary of Southeastern Louisiana College, June 10, 1935.

41 Minutes, Executive Committee of Southeastern Louisiana College, Ponchatoula, Louisiana, August 24, 1935, p. 36.
publication appeared the first public explanation of his seven-point building program. The program was ambitious, especially since money was in such short supply. In order of priority these were:

1. An additional fire-proof classroom building, to be located east of the flag circle.
2. A fire-proof science building, with equipment for chemistry, physics, botany, zoology, and domestic science, to be located west of the flag circle.
3. A fire-proof music building with assembly auditorium, to be located in the southeast corner of the campus park facing Dakota Street.
4. A concrete stadium to accommodate at least 5,000 people, to be located on the football field.
5. A fire-proof dormitory to accommodate one hundred men students, to be located on the southwest corner of the campus park facing Dakota Street.
6. A fire-proof dormitory to accommodate one hundred women students, to be located on the site now occupied by the old science building.
7. Sufficient increase in the annual maintenance appropriation to take care of the necessary increase in the faculty and staff. 42

The May, 1937, meeting of the Louisiana State Board of Education was very important to Southeastern. President Fontenot was replaced by Dr. Joseph Leon Clark. At the same meeting Richard W. Leche, Governor of Louisiana, first exhibited publicly his special interest in Southeastern. The minutes showed that he caused $150,000.00 to be appropriated for the purpose of constructing a stadium-

dormitory at Southeastern. The Works Project Administra-
tion had approved the project and had agreed to participate
in the cost. Edgar N. Jackson had been appointed to super-
 supervise the construction. Edward F. Neild, the architect,
had already submitted plans for an 8,000 spectator stadium.
The building had been estimated to cost $200,000.00; the
State was to pay slightly over fifty per cent of the cost
and the Federal Government slightly under fifty per cent.

Architect Neild had also presented completed plans
for two other buildings at Southeastern. One of the build-
ings was to provide facilities for chemistry, physics,
biology, and mathematics. Also presented and accepted by
the Board were the completed plans for an Arts and Science
Building for classrooms, including an assembly room to
accommodate 1,000 people.43

The records did not show when or by whom building
priorities were established, nor did they show who repre-
sented Southeastern in planning the buildings. All plans
presented to the state board were completed plans ready
to be implemented. More difficult to understand was the
fact that two weeks before state board approval of the
plans on May 12, Governor Leche had officially turned over

43 Minutes, State Board of Education, Bulletin No.
344, May 26, 1937.
the first spade of dirt for the new stadium-dormitory.

The construction of the stadium-dormitory proved to be an unusual enterprise. With top priorities accorded the project by the governor, hundreds of federal laborers were pulled from jobs in the area and put to work on the stadium. Work was conducted day and night during most of the construction period. In less than sixteen weeks, on September 17, 1937, the $209,000.00 structure, Strawberry Stadium, was dedicated at a football game between the Louisiana State University freshman team and the Southeastern Lions. Coincidently, Governor Leche took the microphone and discussed state administrative plans. The completed building contained a cafeteria, a social room, athletic offices, training rooms, dormitories for boys and had a seating capacity of 8,200.

Carroll told his version of how the stadium came to be in a 1955 newspaper article:

How did we get the handsome Strawberry Stadium? Here's how: Knowing that Governor Leche had helped and was a friend to the college, Charles Anzalone, Powell P. Vail, Harold Forbes and myself decided to call on him and ask for help toward repairs. (Of the old football field.) While talking over the matter, this group had hoped for fifteen or twenty thousand dollars. We sat in the lobby of the governor's office nearly all day, watching different

committees without appointments. Finally, about 4 p.m., the coast was clear, and we surrounded the governor, all talking at once. Said the governor, "It's not my business to build buildings, it's the business of the Board of Education." We informed the governor that we knew that, but we believed with his influence he could be a great help. "Please, governor," we said, "Will you not recommend it at once and we may get results?" So, he promised he would.

In a few days his architects looked over the situation and sent a copy of plans to this committee to be approved. We were astounded. The plans called for a full length-of-the-field stadium at the entrance side and a small one on the east side. However, the governor and his architects were not satisfied with the location, and the field was too small. Plans were then drawn and the contract let for the present Strawberry Stadium.45

It must have seemed to friends of Southeastern that suddenly their college's needs had been recognized. President Fontenot in his farewell address was happy because "Governor Leche's big and willing heart has authorized the expenditure of a half-million dollars immediately. I am happy because the program is on, though disappointed because they are putting the athletic cart before the academic horse."46

The State Board of Education meeting which had proved to be so important to Southeastern recognized the deplorable condition which existed in other institutions

45Eldridge Carroll, Hammond Louisiana Vindicator, August 26, 1955.

46"President Fontenot Bids Farewell to College Graduates and Friends," (Memorandum), May 31, 1937.
under its control. President Fontenot had repeatedly pointed out the great needs of Southeastern to the board. Other college presidents had also complained. The whole board finally acknowledged the situation and unanimously declared that:

All of the institutions under the direction of the State Board of Education are inadequately financed. These institutions have outgrown their support.\(^7\)

Southeastern supporters felt that their institution suffered the worst neglect. On March 22, 1937, the *Lion's Roar* carried the following comparisons of state college budgets projected for 1938:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
<th>Cost per Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana Tech</td>
<td>$425,000</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>$210.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>425,000</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>210.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwestern</td>
<td>425,000</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>210.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeastern</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>130.00(^8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Louisiana Legislature in 1938 (Legislature Act No. 6), under the sponsorship of Governor Leche, provided for a $6,000,000.00 bond issue for construction work at state schools; $3,000,000.00 also was obtained from the Public Works Administration. Southeastern was allocated approximately one million dollars.

\(^7\)Minutes, State Board of Education, May 26, 1937.

\(^8\) *Lion's Roar* /Hammond, Louisiana/, March 22, 1937.
The building program received a minor set back in October, 1938. Because of unforeseen expenditures and the necessity of keeping a reserve fund, the original estimate of the sum to be received was reduced to $350,000.00 from the state and $433,636.35 from the PWA, or a total of $963,636.35. The original plans called for an expenditure of $1,299,000.00. This had to be altered to reduce the amount by $360,000.00. President Clark announced that Southeastern would get the same number of buildings by reducing the cost of each.  

The contract for the first, a science building, was let in November, 1938. Contracts for the remaining six units were let as follows: Liberal Arts and Teacher Training, March 14; Library, April 18, 1939; President's home, women's dormitory, gymnasium, May 16, 1939. On May 14, 1939, Governor Leche arranged for a special appropriation of $28,000.00 for a program of beautification of grounds.  

Estimates of the proposed structures were listed as follows by the *Lion's Roar*:

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49 Clark, op. cit., p. 382.

50 *Lion's Roar* /Hammond, Louisiana, September 15, 1938.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts Building</td>
<td>$274,137.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Building</td>
<td>158,005.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training School</td>
<td>230,914.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Dormitory</td>
<td>214,686.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Building</td>
<td>144,384.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President's Home</td>
<td>20,782.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gymnasium Building</td>
<td>74,961.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underground service and tunnels, walks, roads, grading, lighting, and landscaping</td>
<td>182,896.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nostalgia in the face of the tremendous building boom at Southeastern was evident in the following *Lion's Roar* editorial. The article probably epitomized the mixed feelings of many alumni, faculty, students, and friends when they realized that the slow-paced bucolic era of Southeastern was nearing an end:

Old landmarks of Southeastern are passing; the old barn which stood behind Dr. Clark's home has been torn down; the S.L.C. pop stand, social meeting place of the past, has vanished. What's wrong? The era of progress is upon us. The use of these humble buildings, though once a part of the nucleus of Southeastern, is gone. Recollections of days before Strawberry Stadium and Lucius McGehee Hall will come to some of the present upperclassmen, faculty members and alumni when they see the absence of these buildings. Perhaps someone will recall that the big barn behind the Science Building, though recently a garage for the S.L.C. bus, was once the dressing room and gymnasium for Southeastern gridiron heroes. Our present Mr. Garrett, I believe, served his time there as coach of the Lions, at that time still in the cub stage. High school and small junior colleges furnished the opposition in those days, yet school spirit ran high. The science building was the building then, a college complete in itself, administration, science, library, commerce and other departments

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51 Ibid., March 22, 1938.
were all in one. Heat? You stoked those coal stoves yourself . . . .

Now we have progress and the building of South-eastern into a really significant institution. And to have this progress we must make way for tomorrow; we must eliminate those old landmarks of the past, which have no place in the present scheme of things. Let us turn about and face the bright gold of the future.52

An even more nostalgic note was indicated by a Lion's Roar editorial in May, 1939. The editorial eulogized the "Pop House" and the bench which surrounded the trunk of Friendship Oak. The editor concluded:

Would that we could recall some of the days when at noon the students crowded into the Pop House to purchase nickel hamburgers and cold drinks for lunch.53

SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

Southeastern Louisiana College was struck a heavy psychological blow by the State Board of Education in May, 1933. The minutes of the board told the story:

Superintendent Harris stated that he had received requests from a number of prominent citizens of the Hammond community and other communities in the vicinity that there be a change in the presidency of South-eastern, that the complainants were of the opinion that Mr. Sims for various reasons should not be continued. Mr. Harris suggested the wisdom of President White's appointing a committee to investigate the

52 Ibid.

53 Lion's Roar [Hammond, Louisiana], November 14, 1939.
complaints made against President Sims, and that the reports of the Executive Committee be approved with the exception that the question of a president for next session should be left open until the committee appointed by President White should have time to report. Mr. Harris said that he was not stating that Mr. Sims should be eliminated, but that he was of the opinion that Mr. Sims' critics should be given a hearing.

Mr. Gelpi moved that a committee of three be appointed by President White to make an investigation of the complaints made against Mr. Sims and to report back to the Board at a later date. The motion was properly seconded and carried, Mr. Burke (Walter J., New Iberia) and Mr. Fuller (Parrish, Oakdale) voting "no." 54

Sims was replaced as president of Southeastern Louisiana College at the beginning of the fall semester, 1933, by Mr. Y. L. Fontenot.

Lydel Sims, son of President Sims and reporter for the Memphis Commercial Appeal, reminisced in an article which he wrote for his paper when notified that his father was seriously ill in 1949. One part of the article referred to his father's dismissal as president of Southeastern Louisiana College:

He was too stubborn to get along with politicians. He refused polite invitations to sit on the platform at political rallies down at the bandstand on Railroad Avenue. He wouldn't even vote right. Those things get around.

Ten years after he landed in Hammond he was booted out of the college he had founded. Or rather, he was

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given an alternate: Resign and be given a job elsewhere, or be fired and have every public school in the state slammed shut on him. My brother and I were both in college by then; Dad checked his bank account, wrestled with his conscience, and resigned.55

Sometime between the summer of 1933 and the spring of 1934, William Hodding Carter resigned or was removed as a member of the Executive Council of Southeastern Louisiana College. Official records were not clear on exactly why or when Carter left the committee. State board records first showed the name of a new committee member in July, 1934. Hodding Carter, Pulitzer Prize winner and son of the committeeman, recalled why his father was removed in an article in Readers' Digest in 1955:

. . . Then Huey Long had him removed as all of Long's opponents were removed from any position which the Kingfish could control. I don't think anything ever made Dad as angry or heartsick as did being kicked off the board of the college he helped start . . . 56

Southeastern lost the service of one of its most ardent supporters with the removal of William Hodding Carter.

In January, 1935, Dr. Lucius D. McGehee died. McGehee had served on the Parish School Board from 1925 to 1927, and on the Executive Committee for Southeastern


Louisiana College from its beginning to his death.\textsuperscript{57} Students, faculty and patrons of the college were shocked. McGehee had become a part of Southeastern. Local and regional papers carried eulogies and articles praising his work. On March 20, 1935, the State Board of Education, responding to the feeling of its members and to a petition from students and faculty of Southeastern, voted to name the new administration-classroom building, just completed, the Lucius McGehee Hall. The board adopted a resolution which stated in part:

\begin{quote}
\ldots Dr. McGehee was instrumental in the establishment of the Southeastern Louisiana College. He always manifested a very earnest and constructive interest in the institution. He knew personally the members of the faculty and all of the students. He attended all public exercises given by the institution and all athletic contests when he could arrange to be present \ldots

The members of the State Board of Education knew Doctor McGehee personally and entertained for him feelings of warmest friendship. Professionally, they realize that in his death education has lost a good friend and the Southeastern Louisiana College one of its strongest and most influential supporters.\textsuperscript{58}
\end{quote}

The administration of President Fontenot came to an end in May, 1937. The minutes of the state board indicated that Harris said:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{57}Clark, op. cit., p. 381.

\textsuperscript{58}Minutes, State Board of Education, Bulletin 291, March 20, 1935.
\end{quote}
It seems desirable that there should be a change in the presidency of Southeastern Louisiana College at Hammond. There are no criticisms of the administration of Mr. Y. L. Fontenot. I think he has managed the affairs of the institution efficiently and that he has been reasonably successful as president of the college, but for reasons which I shall not enumerate here, I think it desirable that someone else be selected as president of Southeastern, and I recommend for your consideration the name of Dr. Leon Clark who was, for a number of years, at the head of the Department of Education at Southeastern and who is now a member of the staff of the Louisiana State University. I am inclined to the opinion that Dr. Clark is the wisest selection that the Board could make for the post and in this recommendation the Executive Committee of Southeastern joins.

I wish to say also that while Governor Leche has no direct official connection with Southeastern and has expressed no desire to be consulted in the administration of its affairs, still it is true that the Governor has met Dr. Clark and has expressed the opinion that from all of the information which he has received concerning him he would be a wise selection for the post of President. The Governor's approval, in any event, would be desirable but, in this case, it is especially so since he is manifesting an unusual interest in the development of Southeastern. 59

Joseph Leon Clark was accepted as President of Southeastern Louisiana College and Fontenot was appointed President of the State School for the Blind at the same meeting. 60 Immediately, construction began at Southeastern.

President Fontenot's official farewell was given May 31, 1937, at the graduation program for ninety-eight

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60 Ibid.
students. In his address, emotional and somewhat exag-
gerated, Fontenot pointed out his accomplishments. One
part, however, was unusually visionary:

Faculty meetings at Southeastern have been con-
ducted as cabinet meetings rather than as legislative
bodies. Students are treated like sensible men and
women. They pay uniform fees. Our plan is democratic.
There are no special privileges to intellectual aristo-
crats. There are no scholarships except for services
rendered. There is no such thing as "four cuts and a
failure"; in fact, there are practically no failures.
The traditional precedent of the three hour final
examination has been abolished. In the last four
years there has been no examination longer than one
hour and a majority of our students do not suffer the
ordeal of any final examination at all. Everything
is done in the interests of students. The President,
faculty members, and other employees are servants of
the State, for the benefit of its boys and girls.61

During most of the decade 1929-1939, rumors cir-
culated that Southeastern's charter would be dissolved,
or the college would be moved from Hammond. Carter
attacked this threat in his Daily Courier in August of 1932.
Written records validating these threats were not available.
Carroll touched on this subject in a 1955 article. The
other participants in this story, O. P. Waldrep, was
contacted by telephone.62 Waldrep did acknowledge the
trips to Baton Rouge with Carroll. His memory was not clear

61 "President Y. L. Fontenot Bids Farewell to College
Graduates and Friends," (Memorandum), May 31, 1937.

62 Statement by Mr. O. P. Waldrep, telephone inter-
as to the incidents related here:

The Legislature had not forgotten Long's (Huey) idea of closing several small colleges, and an act was offered, aided and abetted (it was learned afterward) by Dr. Smith (James Monroe) of L.S.U. It was not yet known that he was an embezzler, and he probably had in mind to make Southeastern a part of L.S.U. Our legislators had been duped into believing this, but they soon changed their minds. The bill had been introduced and was to be voted on by the Legislature in a few days. President Y. L. Fontenot and the entire faculty of Southeastern had decided that this was the finish of the college. Most of Hammond believed it, but no one did anything about it. Things looked dark.

... The writer walked all over Hammond trying, and totally failing, to get a delegation to contact Harris (T. H.) who was thought to be the sponsor of the bill. The writer met up with O. P. Waldrep and they decided to tackle it alone.

Tempers were at the boiling point, when we arrived at Mr. Harris' office, and that gentleman received quite a tongue lashing. When Mr. Harris finally got a chance to speak, he was found to be very much in opposition to the bill, and said that it was the Legislature that wanted the bill.

"Well, Mr. Harris," we said. "Why didn't you talk to the Legislature?" Said he, "It is not my business to tell the Legislature what to do. They tell me."

"Have you talked to our two legislators?" we asked.

"No," he replied. "But if you meet them, send them to my office."

We left the office and met Charlie Anzalone (Tangipahoa representative) at the elevator.

"Charlie, Mr. Harris wants to see you," we told him. "Go to his office at once, and we will wait for you there."

Anzalone came back very angry, saying that he had been misled into believing that the bill was to help the college. Now, seeing his mistake, he would immediately withdraw his support of the bill and work against it.

We went back to Hammond, sure that we had started something, if only it were not too late. The next day, still worried, the writer went over to have another talk with Mr. Harris, who said, "We will
call up Governor Leche and talk to him." The Governor was not in but we made an appointment to see him the next day.

Upon hearing of the situation, the Governor was much surprised. In his coarse, rasping voice he remarked, "What are they trying to do? Close up that college? Why I think a lot of that school, and I want to see it grow." Then to his secretary, he said, "Get me the author of that bill on the telephone." He then proceeded to "pour it on" the author of the bill telling him to withdraw it at once for he would veto it.\textsuperscript{63}

Carroll concluded by stating that officials in Lee Laycock's office (House Clerk) the next day revealed that the bill had been withdrawn.\textsuperscript{64}

\textsuperscript{63}Carroll, \textit{Hammond Louisiana Vindicator}, August 19, 1955.

\textsuperscript{64}Ibid.
CHAPTER IV

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA COLLEGE--1940-1951

OBJECTIVES AND TRENDS

The objectives of the college in 1940 showed little change from previous years:

1. To offer courses that will give students the best foundation possible for extensive work in special fields which they may desire to enter.
2. To establish personal contacts between good instructors and students. At Southeastern the classes are small, and the teachers have opportunity to take personal interest in the progress of each student.
3. To train young men and young women for business life.
4. To train young men and young women for the teaching profession in the schools of Louisiana.
5. To prepare young folks for good citizenship and happy living by training them in arts and science.¹

With one exception the 1940 college objectives were identical to those of the previous decade. All preceding lists of objectives included one objective which was omitted in 1940. The deleted objective read:

To meet the needs of numbers of ambitious youths not financially able to attend school farther away from home.²

¹Catalog, Southeastern Louisiana College, 1940-41 Session, pp. 12-13.
²Announcements, Southeastern Louisiana College, 1938-39 Session, p. 8.
As the decade progressed, college objectives, almost certainly a reflection of general attitudes, began to omit terms such as young folks, young men, young women, and youth. In 1946 the general objectives gave way to more specialized objectives to coincide with Southeastern's new academic divisions. The 1950 college objectives were a clear indication of the institution's approaching maturity:

Division of Liberal Arts

1. To provide the student with a broad cultural education that will help him live a full, rich, and well-balanced life.
2. To offer such courses as are necessary for entrance into professional schools, such as law, medicine, dentistry, and engineering.
3. To prepare the student for advanced study in graduate schools.

Division of Education

1. To prepare teachers for service in the elementary and secondary schools.
2. To render in-service training to the teachers of Southeast Louisiana through the sponsoring of educational conferences and through the intervisitation of the college faculty and public school personnel.

Division of Applied Sciences

1. To provide students a combination of cultural and specialized education necessary for success in certain vocations in the fields of agriculture, home making, industrial arts and trades, business administration and commerce, and forestry.³

³Announcements, Southeastern Louisiana College, 1950-51 Session, pp. 22-23.
The period from 1940 to 1945 was one of the least productive in the history of Southeastern Louisiana College. The complete national involvement in World War II, the demoralization of state institutions brought about by Louisiana political scandals, and internal administrative-faculty dissention badly hurt the institution. Returning World War II veterans caused a sharp rise in enrollment. The veterans brought attitudes which revitalized Southeastern. Never again would the college be as slow-paced as it had been.

Dr. Gladney Jack Tinsley, who became president in 1945, was extremely well suited to understand the temperament and the spirit of the times. Tinsley's dynamic personality matched the period, as he helped to usher in a new era for Southeastern.

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENTS

A primary pilots' flying course under the direction of the Civil Aeronautics Authority was instituted at Southeastern in September of 1940. There were over sixty applicants for the ten available positions. A. E. Wilder was sponsor of this flying unit. Successful completion of the course led to a private pilot's license.

In 1940 a four-year curriculum in home economics

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4Lion's Roar [Hammond, Louisiana], October 1, 1940.
was approved by the State Board of Education. The curriculum offered studies in house planning and furnishing, home nursing, home management and child care and training.\(^5\)

No significant academic change or addition was noted from 1941 to 1945. On January 8, 1945, Southeastern received permission to establish a degree program in agriculture.\(^6\)

Southeastern's academic structure was reorganized into three divisions in January, 1946. The new divisions were Applied Sciences, Education, and Liberal Arts.\(^7\)

Southeastern Louisiana College was formally approved and accepted into full membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools as a four-year, degree-granting college on March 3, 1946.\(^8\) This event was viewed by President Tinsley and his administration as one of the significant events in the history of the college.\(^9\) In March of 1947, Dr. Tinsley announced that

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\(^8\) Ibid.

\(^9\) Statement by Dr. Norval Garrett, personal interview, August 19, 1970.
Southeastern had been accepted into membership in the American Association of Teachers' Colleges. Accreditation was considered more proof of the academic respectability of the college.\(^\text{10}\)

As the decade of the forties moved to a conclusion there appeared to be little doubt that academic respectability, about which all other administrations had spoken and to which all had contributed, was a fact. Absent from college publications were courses ordinarily associated with high school curricula. Academically, Southeastern had come of age.

THE STUDENTS

The September, 1940, enrollment showed an increase. This proved to be the largest enrollment in the history of the college, and it was to be the largest for several years to come. Six hundred twelve students registered.\(^\text{11}\)

Southeastern graduated eighty-four seniors on May 29, 1941, the largest graduating class of seniors in the college's history.\(^\text{12}\)

\(^{10}\) *Lion's Roar (Hammond, Louisiana)*, March 14, 1947.

\(^{11}\) Report of the Dean to the President of Southeastern Louisiana College for the 1940-41 Session, unpublished report, n.p.

\(^{12}\) *Lion's Roar (Hammond, Louisiana)*, May 14, 1941.
President J. Leon Clark had expected a decrease in enrollment by the fall semester 1941. A variety of national defense programs was expected to bite deeply into enrollment figures. The September, 1941, enrollment was five hundred forty-three.\textsuperscript{13}

College publications issued the fall of 1941 indicated concern for the worsening world crisis. Reaction to the December 7, 1941, Japanese attack was typical. There seemed to have been an inability among the students to grasp the proportions of the attack. A December 10, 1941, editorial in the \textit{Lion's Roar} mirrored a somewhat selfish concern:

The immediate effect of the war with Japan, which struck so suddenly last Sunday, was a question of grave concern here last Monday. It is believed that, since the nation is now at war, many men students who have been deferred from selective service training under the student exemption clause of the Selective Service Act may now be called into service before the termination of the deferment period. At the same time, there were rumors that the deferment of men past 28 will no longer be effective and that several faculty members, who received deferrals for this reason may be called into service . . . .

From various sources come arguments that this will be an air and naval war and that the need for soldiers is not much greater now than before the attack by the Japanese. Many on campus express themselves as thinking that those men who have an opportunity for college training should get it with the view to the reconstruction period following the crisis.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Lion's Roar}, September 24, 1941.

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Lion's Roar}, December 10, 1941.
Seventy-nine seniors received bachelors degrees May 25, 1942. The commencement address was delivered by Dr. Rufus C. Harris, President of Tulane University.¹⁵

Student enrollment declined steadily during the war years as students were absorbed into its many facets. Total enrollment decreased from six hundred twelve in 1940 to three hundred ninety-four in 1942. Evening classes and the freshmen classes were severely affected. Proportionally, more students from Tangipahoa Parish withdrew than from any other parish or state represented in the student body. A large part of the reduction was in Arts and Sciences which accounted for one-third of the loss. The enrollment in Elementary Teacher Training, then a part of Arts and Sciences, decreased alarmingly.¹⁶

The reduction in enrollment in the Elementary Teaching Curriculum was surprising because records showed most of the enrollees to be girls. While girls of the general age level represented were not generally employed in national defense projects, they probably resigned to replace older in-service teachers who moved into defense projects.

¹⁵*Lion's Roar*, May 20, 1942.

At a special convocation held Monday, December 7, 1942, President Leon Clark and members of his administration discussed military obligations with concerned students. The meeting was partly motivated by the lagging enrollment. The administration's message was that students could serve their country best by staying in school until called into the army. Dr. Clark, Dean Fisher, Dean Bond, Dr. Albritton, and Jack Purser were present at this meeting with the students.17

The increasing armed forces enlistment among Southeastern students was indicated in a speech by President Clark and Dean Bond, in January, 1943. Students were once more encouraged to stay in college and do their best work until the army called. They were promised a fee refund if they were called before mid-term and credit for courses if they were called any time after mid-term.18

Local and regional newspapers and the college newspaper were preoccupied with world events during 1943. The Lion's Roar printed letters from servicemen, encouraged activities to help the war effort, and attempted to reflect a "business as usual" attitude.

In November of 1943, a granite monument was dedicated

17Lion's Roar, December 9, 1942.
18Lion's Roar, January 27, 1943.
to the Southeastern students who had already lost their lives in World War II. Students and faculty participated in the ceremonies at the site of the monument, which was placed in the circular pathway behind McGehee Hall. An article recounting the event clearly showed that this act brought to full recognition the degree to which the war had affected Southeastern.  

Returning veterans swelled Southeastern's enrollment in 1946. The college achieved a record enrollment that fall of nearly nine hundred students. The influx of veterans meant more than just numbers to Southeastern. Veterans from southeast Louisiana still dominated the rolls but in increasing numbers home addresses of Southeastern students represented distant state. Many earned degrees and remained in the area. Others earned degrees and returned home. Fred Trapp, one who came and stayed, told why he came to Southeastern:

I finished high school in South Raintree, Massachusetts, in June of 1943, enlisted immediately in the Navy and was discharged in January, 1946. After being home a short time someone suggested that I take an aptitude test paid by the Veterans Administration, conducted by Harvard College, and sponsored by the YMCA. The results were terrible. I qualified for practically nothing.

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19 Lion's Roar, November 17, 1943.
20 Lion's Roar, September 20, 1946.
This prompted me to obtain more education. I checked the various colleges in Boston—B.C., B.U., and Northwestern. With the end of World War II and the mass discharge of men from the services, colleges in the East felt the sudden surge of students. My grades were not at the top of the list and with their former students returning the usual reply was "Come back in 1950."

June of 1946, I was able to get accepted into a business school in Boston on the condition that if too many of the former students returned, I would be dropped.

In the evening a few of my former high school buddies and I would get together and through them I learned that a lawyer from Quincy, Massachusetts had told them that they had football scholarships to Southeastern Louisiana College. My buddy down the street and I weren't eligible for football scholarships, but we got the address of the college from them and sent for applications . . . .

Each day I checked the mail for my letter of acceptance. Without it I would not be able to receive veteran's assistance and that was my sole means of income for college.

The Tuesday before Labor Day my friend received a beautiful letter accepting him with open arms. I got nothing. By Friday I had had it. I sent a telegram requesting some acknowledgment. I got a wire Saturday morning that said something to the effect, "If you can get into any school in the country, you can get into Southeastern." It was signed, Ruth Carter, Registrar.21

A memorial service for former Southeastern students who lost their lives during the war was held on the campus on May 8, 1947. The service was held outdoors in Friendship Circle near the granite monument, bearing twenty-eight names, which had been previously dedicated. President Tinsley invited the parents of those being honored; hearts

21Note from Frederick Trapp to writer, September 10, 1970.
were heavy.  

The memories of war were slowly fading by 1950. Every enrollment was larger than the preceding year. The 1950 graduating class set a record. Among the two hundred forty-four to whom degrees were awarded were a large number of veterans "who had helped to bridge the gap between the old and the new Southeastern."  

THE PHYSICAL PLANT

The January 9, 1940, edition of the Lion's Roar presented a report on the growth of Southeastern. The paper proudly pointed out that in 1930 the estimated value of the total college property was from $15,000 to $20,000. The college in 1930 had only seven teachers and a president with an enrollment of one hundred twenty students. The college had a campus of fifteen acres, and the library contained between one thousand five hundred and two thousand books. The value of Southeastern property in 1940 was estimated as being between $1,500,000 and $2,000,000. The enrollment at the time of the article was five hundred ninety-four in day school and about one hundred twenty-five at night. There were thirty-two faculty members. The

22 Lion's Roar, May 20, 1950.
23 Ibid.
library had about twelve thousand books.\textsuperscript{24}

The Southeastern Training School opened January 16, 1940. This was a "significant occasion, not only because it marked the completion of the second of seven new buildings in the program, but also because it showed progress in a field which Southeastern had long emphasized, the education of students for the teaching profession."\textsuperscript{25}

The Music and Dramatic Arts Building was completed and opened one month after the training school, in February, 1940. This building was the largest and most costly of all the new buildings on campus.\textsuperscript{26} The library\textsuperscript{27} and an $80,000 Men's Gymnasium\textsuperscript{28} were also completed in 1940.

In September of 1940, a $35,000.00 paving and beautification project was completed. Some forty to fifty WPA workers labored for nearly two months to complete new streets and driveways. Paving was extended from Oak Street westward around Friendship Oak.\textsuperscript{29}

The State Board of Education in November of 1940 authorized the purchase of the Cullom property on the

\textsuperscript{24} Lion's Roar, January 9, 1940.

\textsuperscript{25} Lion's Roar, February 6, 1940.

\textsuperscript{26} Lion's Roar, February 20, 1940.

\textsuperscript{27} Lion's Roar, September 18, 1940.

\textsuperscript{28} Lion's Roar, September 25, 1940.

\textsuperscript{29} Ibid.
western edge of the campus for $2,900.92. This property, a lot fifty by one hundred fifty, jutted like a finger onto the main campus.  

In the fall of 1942 the old Leake residence which had served many functions was renovated and became a residence hall for the Home Economics Department. The home provided practical experiences in home management, buying and budgeting for a nine-week period for home economics majors.

The State Board of Education authorized the purchase of fifteen acres of land for $4,000 in October of 1943.

By May, 1946, land purchase had increased the acreage of the campus to three hundred seventy-five acres. Land purchased as the result of a State Board of Education emergency grant of $84,675.00 had been acquired from the Harris, Cate, Blanche, Moak, Penniman, Levine, Roberts, Aaron, Nesom, McClimans, Raub, and Hopper families. This expansion program assured space for the location of new buildings for years to come.

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30 Lion's Roar, January 15, 1941.
33 Minutes, State Board of Education, May 3, 1946, pp. 5-6.
The federal government moved to help the physical problems of higher education institutions across the nation in 1946. The Bureau of Community Facilities, upon the recommendation of the United States Office of Education which in turn had honored a request of the Southeastern administration through the State Board of Education, donated to the college a number of temporary buildings. These buildings, former army structures, included a cafeteria, a laundry, a health center, a workshop and a number of classroom buildings, all to become known as "G" (for government) buildings. Also in 1946 the United States government donated to the college for use as men's housing, two steel navy barracks. After renovation and modification, each building accommodated one hundred male students. At this time, the Federal Public Housing Authority erected forty apartments for married students on campus.  

The college purchased from the War Assets Administration four buildings in 1946 to be used for a kindergarten, a nursery school, student publications, and publicity and journalism offices and work areas.  

Looking to the future, President Tinsley and his administration in early January, 1947, asked the State Board  

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35 Ibid.
of Education for permission to apply to the War Assets Administration for acquisition of land and structures owned by the United States Government adjacent to the Hammond Air Base. The board approved the request, and the transfer was consummated in September of 1947. The War Assets Administration donated to Southeastern Louisiana College 751.69 acres and twenty-six buildings consisting of 39,500 square feet of space. A "fair price of $118,000.00 less one hundred per cent discount" was the agreement.

Speaking to the Hammond Rotarians in March, 1947, President Tinsley predicted an ever greater upsurge in enrollment. He told of a "desperate housing situation" for women students and of needed classroom space. He suggested that the budget would have to be increased. Tinsley worked feverishly for appropriations. Two years later his drive for additional funds caused him to be reprimanded by the State Board of Education. In his efforts to get financial support for Southeastern, he went directly to the governor, circumventing the state board.

37Minutes, State Board of Education, September 15, 1946, p. 20.
38Lion's Roar, March 14, 1947.
Southeastern observed its Silver Jubilee through a series of events during April and May, 1950. The program on May 20, 1950, included a symbolic presentation of recently completed buildings by Governor Earl K. Long. George T. Madison, president of the State Board of Education, gave the response and dedicated five buildings which included two girls' dormitories, a student union building, a creamery and dairy plant, and an annex to the Science Building.

One of the girls' dormitories, completed in December, 1948 at a cost of $360,000.00, was named Gertie Lee Mims Hall in memory of a deceased long-time faculty member. A $280,000.00 Student Center, officially designated as the War Memorial Student Union in memory of the members of the student body who lost their lives in World War II, was occupied in November, 1949. In 1949 the second girls' dormitory, costing $390,000.00, was designated Southeastern Hall. The creamery and dairy plant, which cost $45,000.00, was finished in 1950. The Science Annex, costing $160,000.00, was completed in 1950.40

SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

A continuous series of political scandals made

headlines in Louisiana papers during all of 1940. Higher education became one of the areas to be purged of political influences, with investigating bodies organized to study all state supported institutions.

Clark, acting on behalf of the State Board of Education, released a statement to the faculty and staff with regard to political involvement. The statement was long and ended with the following admonition:

Each appointee by the State Board of Education to any office, member of the faculty, or any position of trust in any of the departments of any such institution, shall be so appointed or employed with the distinct understanding that such employment is not dependent upon any political affiliation or favoritism; but that any such appointee who will assume to exceed the exercise of his right to perform his duty as a citizen unhampered and uncontrolled by any political super-control, and shall engage in factional politics, shall be declared to have forfeited his right to the trust reposed in him; and will be subject to removal.41

The above statement had been passed unanimously at a State Board of Education meeting in Baton Rouge, August 2, 1940. Present at that meeting had been newly elected Governor Sam H. Jones, newly elected State Superintendent John E. Coxe and five new members of the board. At that same meeting, Boardman George T. Madison moved that the presidents of Louisiana Polytechnic Institute,

41 Letter to Faculty by President J. Leon Clark, August 12, 1940.
Louisiana State Normal College, Southeastern Louisiana College, the State School for the Deaf, State School for the Blind, Southern University, and the Louisiana Negro Normal and Industrial Institute be placed on an acting basis. The Educational Committee was directed to investigate each individual situation thoroughly and make recommendations to the board in December relative to the employment of permanent heads for the institutions named. Madison's motion was unanimously passed. 42

In January, the state board unanimously adopted the following resolution:

It is moved and seconded that at a meeting to be held March 3, 1941, the Board elect permanent presidents for the year 1941-42 for all institutions under the Board's control;

Further, that the incumbent acting presidents will be given an opportunity to be heard in their own behalf if they wish to succeed themselves;

Further, that the State Superintendent of Education submit to the members of the Board his nominations for the presidencies of said institutions in ample time to allow the members of the Board an opportunity to consider them;

Further, that the Board instruct the incumbent acting presidents of these institutions that they refrain from having their faculties, staffs, and student bodies engage in any activity in the interest of their candidacies. 43

42 Minutes, State Board of Education, August 2, 1940, p. 6.

43 Minutes, State Board of Education, January 20, 1941, p. 9.
President Clark was removed from acting status and accorded full status at the March meeting in Baton Rouge. Two other presidents were replaced; one had resigned.\textsuperscript{44}

Mrs. Eleanor H. Meade, a member of the State Board of Education, headed a committee in 1940 to study conditions of institutions under the jurisdiction of the board. Mrs. Meade's report was submitted to the Board in January of 1941; her statement about Southeastern was glowing:

\begin{quote}
... the physical set-up of this small college is one of the most attractive in the state. ... There is every evidence that the college is meeting the needs of the community both in educational and in a cultural way. ... The president, himself, has all the necessary degrees and educational qualifications necessary for the presidency.\textsuperscript{45}
\end{quote}

Early in 1941 Governor Jones employed the firm of Griffenhagen and Associates to conduct a study of the state government of Louisiana and to make recommendations for its reorganization along more efficient lines, a survey which included higher education. The one-year study was funded by a $100,000.00 legislative appropriation.

\begin{flushright}
Edwin O. Griffenhagen, senior partner of the public
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\textsuperscript{44}Minutes, State Board of Education, March 3, 1941, p. 18.

\textsuperscript{45}Lion's Roar, January 15, 1941.
administration consultant firm of Griffenhagen and Associates, was a native of Chicago, Illinois, a management engineer turned political scientist. Griffenhagen's firm had been employed by many cities and states to help reorganize various phases of local and state government.46

Griffenhagen handed his recommendations to Governor Jones on June 30, 1941. Called by some "the Griffenhagen Report," the recommendations were extremely critical of all higher educational institutions. Southeastern was criticized in every area.

The most surprising general criticism was the recommendation that Southeastern be made a junior college, preferably a branch of Louisiana State University. Another recommendation was that Southeastern cease preparing teachers. At one point in the general report the prediction was made that there was little hope for growth at Southeastern. Severely criticized were curricular offerings, administrative procedures, financial policies, the physical plant and student services.47

The report was probably over-sensitive to certain

46 Statement by Dr. Clarence Scheps, Executive Vice president of Tulane University and member of the Griffenhagen Survey Group, telephone interview, June 3, 1971.

problems in higher education. Parts of it clearly reflect the negative attitude of most investigative groups anxious to remove the taint of political pressures, favoritism, "featherbedding," and graft from all aspects of Louisiana life. Parts of the report were excellent, and some of the recommendations have since been implemented. The general recommendations regarding Southeastern were largely disregarded; little local publicity was given the report.

Southeastern weathered the Louisiana political scandals and investigations of the early forties very well. No scandal or unethical practices were linked to the college.

The Louisiana Intercollegiate Conference recommended the discontinuance of all intercollegiate athletics for the duration of the war in November, 1942. Officials planned to emphasize intramurals to compensate for the lack of intercollegiate competition. In January of 1943, the State Board of Education officially authorized the discontinuance of intercollegiate athletics for the duration of the war and encouraged the annulling of existing contracts whenever possible in institutions under its jurisdiction.

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48 *Lion's Roar*, November 25, 1942.

49 Minutes, State Board of Education, January 11, 1943.
The year 1944 was an unhappy year for Southeastern Louisiana College. World War II had peaked. Interest in world events seemed to have dwarfed everything else. The enrollment had diminished to three hundred thirty-one. Dissention and factionalism appeared within the college community between some faculty members and the administration. Other members of the faculty sided with the administration. Complaints were lodged with the State Board of Education.

On July 19, 1944, the state board appointed a committee composed of board members H. H. Holloway, Chairman, Mrs. Eleanor H. Meade and Bronier Thibaut to plan an investigation of conditions at Southeastern and to investigate the continuance of J. Leon Clark as president of the college. The committee held eight separate hearings in Hammond on July 27, 28, and August 7, 1944. Eighty-three witnesses from southeast Louisiana appeared before the committee. Every person who sought to be heard was heard; others were asked to attend. The recommendations of the investigating committee, which were later approved by the full board in November, deeply affected the college.

President Clark was removed and Dr. George W. Bond was appointed acting president until the board could name a president. The executive committee members were relieved of their duties. This committee, which had functioned
since the acceptance of Southeastern as a state college, was never revived.\textsuperscript{50}

The state board directed board president Leon Godchaux to appoint a committee for the "purpose of nominating a president at Southeastern Louisiana College" at a meeting held January 8, 1945. Godchaux appointed Mrs. Eleanor Meade, Mr. Bronier Thibaut, Mr. Merle Welsh and Mr. George Gibson. Mrs. Meade was appointed chairman.\textsuperscript{51}

President Bond proved to be a stabilizing campus influence during the months which followed his appointment as acting president. The dissention which had troubled the campus for some time prior to Clark's removal subsided.

In May, 1945, the committee appointed to consider candidates for the presidency at Southeastern submitted its report, recommending Dr. Gladney Jack Tinsley. The state board approved the appointment on May 8, 1945.\textsuperscript{52}

President Tinsley, forward-looking and quick-moving, immediately began action to improve Southeastern's physical and academic growth.

\textsuperscript{50}Minutes, State Board of Education, November 3, 1944, pp. 12-15.

\textsuperscript{51}Minutes, State Board of Education, January 8, 1945, p. 57.

\textsuperscript{52}Minutes, State Board of Education, May 8, 1945, p. 36.
Southeastern Louisiana College observed its Silver Jubilee during the spring of 1950. Numerous festivities occurred in April and May. The graduation exercises held June 1, 1950, terminated the celebration. On that day, Vice-president of the United States Alben W. Barkley addressed a huge crowd in Strawberry Stadium. He was accompanied by some of the Louisiana Congressional delegation from Washington and top administrative officials of Louisiana.53

President Tinsley's tremendous drive on behalf of the college began to weaken by the end of 1950. His health deteriorated, and his close associates were worried. Tinsley died suddenly from a heart attack on Saturday, December 8, 1951, after returning from a trip to Baton Rouge on college business. The trip had been undertaken against the advice of friends and relatives who knew he was ill.54 In the words of one faculty member who served with Tinsley, he "gave his life for the college. No one could ask for more."55

President Tinsley had been an extremely popular

54Lion's Roar, December 14, 1951.
55Statement by Dr. Norval Garrett, personal interview, August 19, 1970.
administrator. His death profoundly shocked the community. Voluntary testimonials of grief filled the December 14, 1951, *Lion's Roar*.  

After eulogizing President Tinsley and his contributions at the meeting of December 18, 1951, the State Board of Education appointed Luther Haley Dyson, Dean of the College, acting president. President Dyson was to fill out the unexpired term of President Tinsley which ended in June the following year. The board's Education Committee was instructed to consider the appointment of a permanent president by the end of that period. 

56 *Lion's Roar*, December 14, 1951.

57 Minutes, State Board of Education, December 18, 1951, p. 10.
CHAPTER V

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA COLLEGE--1952-1967

OBJECTIVES AND TRENDS

The written purposes of Southeastern Louisiana College changed during the period from 1952 to 1967. The purposes reflected a much broader cultural and academic concern. Research was formally recognized and stressed as was the institution's commitment to provide various services on and off campus for the people of Southeast Louisiana. The college appeared to fulfill its objectives, as records clearly showed much growth in all the areas of concern.

Physical and academic change dominated the period, and by its end, the college was twice the size in almost every physical and academic category than it had been in 1952.

Change in general administrative, faculty, and student attitudes apparently did not keep pace with physical change. The period was one of conservatism, and traditionally conservative values thrived. Stability in all facets of college activity was encouraged. Much emphasis was placed on scholarship, and academic standards remained
high. No disruptive activity took place during the period.

SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS

No significant event was recorded during President Dyson's brief term as acting president following the death of President Tinsley. Dyson continued as many of Tinsley's projects as he could. Dyson's approach carried the college community through a difficult period of adjustment.

All through the late spring and summer of 1952, rumors about the Southeastern presidency made the rounds of the academic community. On May 16, 1952, the state board announced that Dr. Clark L. Barrow had been appointed president. The appointment went into effect July 1, 1952. Dyson resumed his former position as Dean of the College.¹

President Barrow's presidential efforts were directed almost immediately to physical problems at Southeastern. His assessment of physical needs, such as predicting perennial enrollment,² was visionary. However, almost from the beginning, according to Garrett, there were "rumors of a short tenure for Dr. Barrow."³

¹Minutes, State Board of Education, May 16, 1952, p. 3.
²Lion's Roar, March 6, 1953.
³Statement by Dr. Norval Garrett, personal interview, August 19, 1970.
Barrow submitted his resignation to the State Board of Education in early August, 1953. The resignation was accepted by the board on August 7 and went into effect the next day. The board appointed Dr. Luther Haley Dyson president of Southeastern at the same meeting, the appointment becoming effective on August 8, 1953.

Barrow's resignation after one year did not surprise Dyson, then Dean of the College. Dyson felt that Barrow believed he could render a greater contribution as Director of Higher Education in the State Department of Education, the position he filled after leaving Southeastern. He was, according to Dyson, "a fine man who left of his own volition for purely professional reasons."

The transition between the Barrow and Dyson administration was smooth. Dyson had been at Southeastern since 1945. He had served as acting president for the greater part of a year, and he was Dean of the College when appointed president. Few persons could have known more about the affairs of the college than did Dean Dyson.

Integration of the races came to Southeastern in

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5Statement by Dr. Luther Dyson, personal interview, August 8, 1970.

6Lion's Roar, September 18, 1953.
1955. The college, racially segregated by Louisiana law since its founding, accepted black students for the first time the summer session of that year. The excerpts which follow have described the integrative process at Southeastern. The first, a letter written by Dyson to W. C. Perrault, First Assistant Attorney General of Louisiana, reported in part:

In compliance with your request of recent date, I am recounting for you the circumstances surrounding the attempt of a group of Negroes to register at Southeastern Louisiana College, September 9, 1954.

The group came to the campus about 2:00 p.m., on September 9, 1954. The Negro students took places at the end of the line leading to the Registrar's Office. When I realized that they were here I invited the leaders of the group, four men, by the name of Haynes of Ruston; Byrd, N.A.A.C.P., representative of New Orleans; Lawson, newspaperman of New Orleans; and Clark, a local Negro, to come into my office.

Byrd presented to me a list containing the names of thirteen Negro students who, he said, were qualified and wished to register as students at Southeastern. I am attaching the list hereto for your information. I told Byrd that it was contrary to the law under which the college was established to admit Negroes and showed him a certified copy of the Act which I had secured from Mr. Wade O. Martin. He said that he understood my position but that it was necessary for them to apply for admission and be refused so that they could take the next step necessary to secure entrance to the students. This would be to appeal to the State Board of Education to reverse my decision and then to enter suit if the State Board did not reverse me. He assured me that other colleges would be in the same boat, as he expressed it. I made no comment on this point. He asked if he might have a copy of the catalogue, and I supplied him with two packages containing ten copies each. He explained that some of the students were attending Southern University and wished to transfer to Southeastern because of finances. He
asked me if it would be necessary to fill any special form for their transfer. I explained to him that I would tell him what the regulations for transfer are so far as white students are concerned. This I did.

Lawson then asked if he might take some pictures, and I told him I preferred that he not do so. The question of my making a statement to the students was raised, and Byrd agreed with me that this would not be necessary. I will again call your attention to the fact they represented themselves to be leaders of the group and speaking for the students.

After a brief discussion of matters not related to the purpose of their visit they left.

The above is a true narration of what happened to the best of my recollection. Mr. C. J. Hyde, Registrar of the College, was present during all of the conversation which I had with them.

For several months President Dyson tried to get legal direction from the State Attorney General's office and from State Board attorneys. Dyson had heard that Judge Herbert W. Christenberry had granted an injunction, but he had a difficult time receiving it. Finally on May 14, 1955, Dyson received the official judgment handed down by Judge Christenberry of the United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana, in regard to Wells vs. Southeastern Louisiana College, Civil Action No. 4679.

Judge Christenberry, ruling in favor of the plaintiff, Thomas C. Wells, et al., said in part:

7Letter from Dr. Luther H. Dyson to Mr. W. C. Perrault, September 20, 1954.
... It is Ordered, Adjudged and Decreed that a permanent injunction be issued in this matter, and that accordingly the defendants, the Louisiana State Board of Education, and the defendants Luther H. Dyson, president, and C. J. Hyde, registrar, the agents subject to the authority of the Louisiana State Board of Education, governing and controlling the acceptance and admission of applicants for admission to the Southeastern Louisiana College, Hammond, Louisiana, either through their agents, servants or employees, and each of them, their successors in office and their agents and employees, be and they are hereby restrained and permanently enjoined from refusing, on account of race or color to admit plaintiffs, and any other Negro citizen of the state, similarly qualified and situated, to the Southeastern Louisiana College, Hammond, Louisiana for the purpose of receiving their training and education in said Southeastern Louisiana College.  

Integration came to Southeastern quietly and in an orderly fashion. In the words of Dyson, "No problems were experienced due to the integration of the student body then or later."  

In early 1960, Dyson spoke to alumni gathered for an annual banquet. His remarks summarized what had been accomplished during the fifties and predicted what might occur during the sixties. He noted that during the fifties nine new buildings and eighty apartment units for married

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8Civil Action No. 4679, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, New Orleans Division, May 12, 1955, Thomas C. Wells, et al., vs. Southeastern Louisiana College.

9Statement by Dr. Luther H. Dyson, personal interview, August 8, 1970.
students were constructed on campus and that several of the older structures were enlarged or renovated. The new buildings included two classroom buildings, five dormitories, a cafeteria, and a coliseum.

The president also noted that plans for the sixties called for the construction of an administration building, another classroom building, and a structure to house the agriculture department and creamery.

President Dyson also took note of Southeastern's rising academic standards, an aspect of college life which he continually stressed. He suggested that a School of Nursing and a Graduate School might be established.

Pointing to enrollment trends, the president said Southeastern's total enrollment had increased seventy-eight per cent in the decade and that the faculty had increased forty-eight per cent. The total number on the payroll at Southeastern in 1950 had been one hundred ninety-nine; the college in early 1960 employed three hundred fifty-one persons.

The number of volumes in the Linus A. Sims Memorial Library increased from thirty-nine thousand to fifty-nine thousand during the same ten-year period.

Turning to the future, President Dyson predicted that the college would have an enrollment of more than three thousand students by 1970. He did not foresee increased
faculty loads, but he felt that the school day would be lengthened and some classes would be held at night.

Dyson said that during the sixties a more intensive use of present buildings would be made. He added that new structures to be built would include a library, industrial arts building, infirmary, additional dormitories, a gymnasium and an auditorium. ¹⁰ His speech was an accurate summary of past events and future undertakings.

At Homecoming Ceremonies during the football season of 1960, the playing field at Strawberry Stadium was dedicated and re-named Carroll Field. This dedication was in honor of Edlridge Carroll, longtime friend of Southeastern.¹¹ Permission to name the field had been granted by the State Board of Education in November of 1960.¹²

Growth problems continued to dominate the Southeastern scene in 1962 and 1963. Dyson told the alumni on May 4, 1963, that the total enrollment increase since 1959 was seventy-three per cent. The enrollment in 1959 had been


one thousand seven hundred thirty-four; it was over three thousand in the spring of 1963.\textsuperscript{13}

The administration solicited the help of alumni, legislators and other supporters of the college in its efforts to keep up with the fast growth. Hundreds of supporters worked for increased budget allotments for Southeastern whose seventy-three per cent enrollment increase since 1959 was accompanied by a 1.3 per cent budget increase. The student-teacher ratio, 1 to 27, was the highest in the state; the per student allocation of $647.00 was the lowest in the state. The college's average yearly student increase was twenty per cent or over; the national average was roughly ten per cent during the same period. Relief from this critical situation came slowly.

The Alumni Association moved into a remodeled former residence at 611 North Pine Street in June of 1964. The property was donated to the college by Heyward G. Hill and Arthur M. Hill in memory of their late parents, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel L. Hill.\textsuperscript{14} The State Board of Education accepted the Hill property, valued at $30,000.00, October 18, 1963.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{13}Southeastern Louisiana College Alumni News, VII, No. 5 (July, 1963), p. 17.
\textsuperscript{14}Alumni News Briefs, Southeastern Louisiana College Alumni Association, VIII, No. 3 (April, 1964), p. 1.
\textsuperscript{15}Minutes, State Board of Education, October 18, 1963, p. 7.
The move into the Hill House was an improvement over former accommodations for the Alumni Association. The association had been in temporary quarters since its inception in 1927. From 1953 to 1963 the organization was housed in the South Lounge of the War Memorial Student Union Building. In spite of obstacles, both physical and non-physical, the association year after year rallied alumni support for Southeastern.

In the spring of 1967, rumors about President Dyson's health circulated around the campus, rumors which were confirmed. Dyson was granted a three-month leave of absence effective April 1, 1967. The Dean of the College, Dr. J. B. Wooley, was authorized to act in President Dyson's behalf in administering the institution.¹⁶ Wooley functioned in this capacity until August 18, 1967, when the State Board of Education accepted the resignation of Dyson as president and appointed Wooley acting president of Southeastern Louisiana College.¹⁷

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Southeastern's academic program reached maturity

¹⁶Minutes, State Board of Education, April 1, 1967, p. 6.

¹⁷Minutes, State Board of Education, August 18, 1967, p. 5.
during the period 1952-1967. One of the reasons for this was the leadership of Dyson, who served as president during most of this period. Speech after speech delivered by Dyson and quoted by college publications and the press reflected his strong emphasis on high academic standards. In an August, 1970, interview, Dyson pointed out that he considered the academic progress made by his administration as being his most important contribution. He recognized the significant physical progress made by his administration, but he had the highest praise for those in administration and on the faculty who helped him to complete some of the academic upgrading begun by President Tinsley. He referred with pride to those "quiet, efficient members of the academic community who, without fanfare, provided the academic stability with which Southeastern became identified."¹⁸

Southeastern was given permission to prepare plans for graduate studies at the July, 1960, meeting of the State Board of Education. This action followed a legislative resolution to establish graduate programs at the college.¹⁹ In a speech that summer, Dyson stressed the importance of developing a sound graduate program without

¹⁸Statement by Dr. Luther H. Dyson, Amite, Louisiana, personal interview, August 8, 1970.

¹⁹Minutes, State Board of Education, July 29, 1960, p. 5.
sacrificing any of the college's high standards. The state board approved Southeastern's proposed graduate program in February of 1961. Graduate studies were offered only in the Division of Education, and classes began that summer.

Graduate work was authorized in other areas in 1963. The college was given permission to offer Master of Arts degrees in English, history, and in business administration. Master of Science degrees could be awarded in biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics. The Master of Music degree was also authorized.

In late 1963, Southeastern was given the authority to establish a Division of Nursing for the 1964-65 academic year. The new program got underway in the fall with twenty students enrolled. In the spring of 1966, the division received approval from the state to admit students to nursing.

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20 Alumni News Briefs, Southeastern Louisiana College Alumni Association, IV, No. 3 (September, 1960), p. 3.


22 Minutes, State Board of Education, April 5, 1963, p. 11.


As Southeastern began its fortieth year in September, 1964, a number of organizational changes went into effect. A separate Department of Agriculture was formally established in the Division of Applied Sciences. Music and Art were separated into two new departments. A computer center was established. The Department of Publications was separated from High School Relations and Placement.  

A Department of Accounting and a Department of Physics were authorized by the State Board of Education in January, 1966. As the period neared an end in 1967, the letting of a $1,280,300.00 contract for a chemistry-physics building was announced. The facility, which was expected to fill science needs at the college for the future, symbolized Southeastern's determined efforts to achieve academic excellence.  

THE PHYSICAL PLANT  

Soon after his appointment, President Barrow took a careful look at the institution's physical plant. What  

he found must have disturbed him, because he arranged for the state board's building committee to meet on the Southeastern campus. The committee met in March of 1953, and showed its concern by directing Horace R. Brown, Supervisor of College Plants, to conduct an immediate preliminary study of building needs and campus improvement needs.  

Brown's recommendations to the State Board of Education substantiated statements made to the board's building committee by President Barrow and Mr. Walton Reeves, Business Manager at Southeastern. At least forty-two percent of classroom space and fifty-seven percent of laboratory space were located in temporary frame buildings. The college dining hall was also located in the same area. Seven departments were housed in temporary frame buildings. Fifty-five percent of the available housing facilities for men consisted of two steel naval barracks.

Aggravating the housing problem was a serious drainage problem; an open ditch bisected the campus. Future expansion was seriously limited by faulty drainage.

Brown told the state board that at least $200,000.00 was immediately necessary for campus needs, that a minimum of two and one-half million dollars was needed for construction

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28 Minutes, State Board of Education, April 7, 1953, pp. 121-122.
at Southeastern, and that the highly hazardous temporary frame buildings should be eliminated at the "earliest possible date."\textsuperscript{29}

The critical housing problem at Southeastern was not caused by the lack of effort on the part of any administration; each one strived hard for funds for the college. Two causes of the problem were obvious. The tremendous influx of returning veterans overwhelmed all efforts by administrators to keep up with Southeastern's physical needs. In addition, appropriations from the state were not in line with burgeoning enrollments, nor seemingly, with appropriations made to some of the other state colleges.

On April 11, 1953, the State Board of Education authorized President Barrow and Brown to "draw-up specifications or requirements for replacing surplus camp buildings at Southeastern Louisiana College and establish the money necessary for this."\textsuperscript{30}

The State Board of Education was fully convinced of Southeastern's physical needs by the fall of 1953. The board approved capital outlay requests amounting to $2,620,000.00 and approved as part of this capital outlay

\textsuperscript{29}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{30}Minutes of the State Board of Education, April 11, 1953, p. 8.
plan two classroom buildings, a second story to the Science Annex, two boys' dormitories, a cafeteria, an infirmary, equipment for the above buildings, utilities improvements, drainage relief and repairs. Legislative appropriations did not make immediately possible the implementation of the items approved by the board. In time, however, all were implemented.

President Dyson, anticipating future physical needs, planned to cope with these.

A new classroom building was dedicated in 1955. The building, Tinsley Hall, was formally opened in November and contained fourteen classrooms and fourteen faculty spaces in an adjoining annex separated from the main building by an attractive patio.

An apartment complex, Pine Oaks Apartments, was purchased from the Federal Housing Administration by the college in 1955. The building located one-half block off campus on North Pine Street contained twenty apartments for married students.

The State Legislature in 1955 appropriated

31Minutes, State Board of Education, October 3, 1953, p. 54.


$350,000.00 to the Tangipahoa Dairy Festival Association to construct a building to be used jointly by the Association and Southeastern. Governor Robert F. Kennon turned over the first shovel of earth for this building in January of 1956. The coliseum was built on Southeastern property by special agreement with the State Board of Education. The Tangipahoa Dairy Association and Southeastern were to have joint use privileges, but Southeastern had direct control of the building. The coliseum had room for three thousand six hundred spectators and contained a show ring, a stage, and a basketball court.34

A second story was added to the Science Annex in 1956, providing additional classroom, laboratories, and faculty offices.35

A new cafeteria was completed and opened in 1956. It was designed to serve food to eight hundred students every thirty minutes. The structure and its plan of operation won various awards: the First Honor Award by the Gulf States Conference of the American Association of Architects, a merit award for food service and sanitation presented by Institution Magazine, and a Better Design award in the

34 *Lion's Roar*, January 13, 1956.

35 *College Bulletin, Southeastern Louisiana College*, 1968, p. 27.
School Executive Competition. Construction cost was $259,000.00; kitchen and dining room equipment was $84,000.00.

The administration at Southeastern submitted capital outlay requests totaling $4,000,975.00 in April, 1956, all earmarked for special projects. Among the items requested were a new library, classroom building, administration building, infirmary, special services building, girls' dormitory, married students' apartments, men's gymnasium, and a new laboratory school. Other special projects were also specified.

In September of 1956, male students were housed in a new $650,000.00 dormitory. Between September of 1957 and fall of 1958, several more dormitories were completed. A men's dormitory, a women's dormitory, and a remodeled men's dormitory were opened. The State Board of Education accepted the dormitories as completed, December 19, 1958. At the same meeting, the board accepted the names of the individuals to whom the new housing facilities would be dedicated. The men's dormitory completed in 1956 at a

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38 Minutes, State Board of Education, April 28, 1956, pp. 190-192.
cost of $650,000.00 was named Holloway-Smith Hall. Mr. H. H. Holloway was a long-time member of the State Board of Education from the Sixth Congressional District. Dr. Glenn Smith had also been a member of the board from the Sixth District and a friend of Southeastern.

The other $670,000.00 men's dormitory was named Carter-Harris. The two gentlemen honored were Thomas H. Harris, long time State Superintendent of Public Education and Will C. Carter, former member of the Southeastern Executive Board and supporter of the college.

The renovated residence hall formerly called Barracks "I" was renamed McKneely Hall, in honor of Tom McKneely, state representative from Tangipahoa Parish and promoter of Southeastern. The McKneely Hall renovation cost an estimated $115,000.00.

The new girls' dormitory was not officially named at the December, 1958, board meeting.39

The shortage of housing facilities for married students was somewhat relieved in September, 1959, when the college opened a new apartment complex, Wardline Apartments, which consisted of sixty apartments. The $400,000.00 complex was financed by a loan arranged through the Federal

Southeastern's building program swung into high gear during the summer of 1960. Bids for construction of an administration building, a classroom building and a building to house the agriculture department were received in July. The cost of the administration building was set at $309,400.00; the other two structures cost $625,400.00. Bids were accepted in August, and construction began almost immediately. Plans for a $35,000.00 Home Management House were also finalized.

The question of a Home Management House had caused some controversy earlier in 1960. At a State Board of Education meeting held June 25, 1960, President Dyson requested permission to demolish the Home Management House in use at that time and construct a new one. The building to be demolished was the Leake Home which had been the only substantial building on the campus in 1925. The state board approved the demolition of the old home, but suggested that consideration be given to the construction of a new president's home and the conversion of the present home


into a Home Management House for the Department of Home Economics. Dyson objected, pointing out that the president's home which was constructed in 1938 for $35,000.00 could not be duplicated for less than $65,000.00. In addition, he suggested that if a new Home Management House could be built, it could be planned with specific needs in mind. Dyson's recommendation was accepted. 43

In October, 1961, the Home Economics House was accepted as complete. At the same time the State Board of Education accepted President Dyson's recommendations in the matter of naming streets on the Southeastern campus. College streets were to be named after states and trees, the procedure followed by the City of Hammond. The following streets were named: Virginia Avenue, Georgia Drive, Tennessee Avenue, Sycamore Street, Texas Avenue, Western Avenue, Oak Street, West Dakota Avenue, Magnolia Street, Pine Street, Spruce Street, Hazel Street, General Pershing Street, and Azalea Drive. 44

Also in October the new classroom building and the agriculture building were accepted as complete. Improvements on the existing cafeteria building to cost $150,000.00

44 Minutes, State Board of Education, October 21, 1961, p. 11.
New buildings were formally named in the fall of 1962. The classroom building was named White Hall in honor of H. H. White of Alexandria. White had been a member and president of the State Board of Education for many years. The men's dormitory which was occupied in September of 1962 was named Tucker Hall to honor Ben A. Tucker, dean and member of the Southeastern faculty for many years. The women's dormitory occupied in the fall of 1959 memorialized Peter Hammond and the City of Hammond. Livingston Hall, a girls' dormitory occupied in September of 1962, was named after American statesman Robert R. Livingston and the Parish of Livingston. The agriculture building was named Wilson Hall, honoring Harry D. Wilson who was State Secretary of Agriculture for many years.46

A new $800,000.00 library was opened for service in the spring of 1963. The library kept the name, Linus A. Sims Memorial Library. The new building was a one-story air-conditioned structure with a one hundred eighty-five thousand volume capacity. The structure contained no permanent partitions in the stacks and reading areas.

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46 Minutes, State Board of Education, August 8, 1962, p. 16.
Movable shelves were used as section dividers.

Books were moved from the old to the new library by hundreds of students, staff members, and faculty members in long lines over a twelve hour period. Classification problems were kept to a minimum because movers carried only a few books at a time and placed each book where it belonged under the supervision of librarians.\(^47\)

East and West Stadium dormitories and the old campus apartments, converted temporary World War II barracks used as apartments for married students, were removed from the State Housing system in 1964. East and West Stadiums were converted into offices. Campus Apartments were demolished.\(^48\)

Plans for the biggest single building effort ever attempted by the college got underway in 1964. Non-academic construction totaling $6,500,000.00 was projected. This construction was to include two residence halls, one for men and one for women students, a student union building, expansion of the existing cafeteria and an infirmary. Academic construction and remodeling underway at the time that these plans were released was a new $300,000.00

\(^47\)Alumni News Briefs, Southeastern Louisiana College Alumni Association, VII, No. 7 (July, 1963, p. 11.

\(^48\)Minutes, State Board of Education, April 17, 1964, p. 5.
industrial technology building and the remodeling of the old library building into classrooms and faculty offices. Work was about to begin on a $500,000.00 biological science annex which was to be located directly south of existing science facilities. 49

The state board accepted as complete in 1966 a $2,348,000 men's residence hall. This dormitory, the largest under the supervision of the State Board of Education was to house eight hundred men students. Also accepted were a $1,103,604.00 girls' dormitory, accommodating four hundred women students, and an $858,000.00 student union building. 50 Completed soon after this was a health center costing $173,800.00 and an addition to the cafeteria which cost $947,000.00. Also completed was the remodeling of the old student union building which became the college bookstore.

The physical growth of Southeastern Louisiana College was phenomenal during the 1952-1967 period. In an interview in 1970, former President Dyson was questioned about this growth. He attributed the growth first, to a


normal period of tranquility and second, to a steadily increasing general interest in college education. \textsuperscript{51} Dyson's modesty was impressive. However, the records showed a third contributing factor in this growth, a persistent but ethical drive by the Dyson administration to get funds for the college.

\textsuperscript{51}Statement by Dr. Luther Haley Dyson, Amite, Louisiana, personal interview, August 21, 1970.
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Linus Arthur Sims, the second son of the Reverend Levi Coppedge Sims and Mary E. Bussey Sims, was born on a farm at Crossville, Alabama, September 22, 1882. From the age of six to the time of his father's death when he was sixteen, Linus attended a number of rural schools in north Alabama. He left home soon after his father's death and worked in Birmingham, Texas, and Missouri. Finally, in 1907, he went to Vanderbilt to study theology. Later that same year Sims began preaching in north Louisiana. The following year he was sent by his bishop to preach in New Orleans. He preached in New Orleans until 1916.

At twenty-nine in 1911, Sims embarked on a new career—teaching. After two years of training, interrupted by financial problems, Linus Sims was graduated from Centenary College in Shreveport, Louisiana.

Linus Sims taught in the public schools of Louisiana for thirteen years. He taught in Gonzales, Cheneyville, Fonchatoula, and Bogalusa. He moved to Hammond as principal of Hammond High School during his forty-first year. In 1925 he was appointed president of Hammond Junior College, an institution which he first envisioned and helped to found. Sims received the Master of Arts degree from Louisiana State
University in 1929.

Nine years after he assumed the presidency of Hammond Junior College, which by 1933 had become Southeastern Louisiana College, Linus Arthur Sims was removed from his position. He was given a position at Northwestern State College. Four years later he was removed from that position. He then taught at the high school level for two years in order to earn retirement pay.

After retiring from the public school system, Linus Sims returned to Hammond, Louisiana, took a civil service examination and was appointed postmaster at the Hammond post office. He served as Hammond Postmaster until he retired from federal service in 1949. Less than a year after he retired, Sims died.
YVES LEON FONTENOT
PRESIDENT, 1933-1937

Y. L. Fontenot was born at Beaver, Louisiana, June 1, 1883. His father was O. L. Fontenot; his mother was Armilda McGehee Fontenot.

Fontenot received his elementary training at Beaver. He received part of his secondary training at Opelousas High School and part at State Normal in Nachitoches, Louisiana. He received his high school diploma in 1909. Fontenot earned his Bachelor's degree at Louisiana State University in 1925. His Master of Arts degree, also conferred by Louisiana State University, was received in 1927.

Yves Leon Fontenot began teaching in 1901. He taught at Beaver, Jennings, Lake Charles, Pollock, St. Martinsville, Ville Platte, and Covington. He also served a four-year term in the Louisiana Legislature. Prior to his coming to Southeastern he was Superintendent of Evangeline Parish Schools. Fontenot was appointed president of Southeastern Louisiana College in 1933. In 1937 he was succeeded at Southeastern by Dr. Joseph Leon Clark. Upon leaving Southeastern, Fontenot accepted the superintendency of the State School for the Blind in Baton Rouge.
JOSEPH LEON CLARK
PRESIDENT, 1937-1944

Joseph Leon Clark was born October 14, 1896 at Walters, Catahoula Parish, Louisiana. He was the son of John Randolph and Mary Ellen Cooper Clark. After being graduated from the public schools of Catahoula Parish, Clark took the teachers' examination and taught two years before entering college. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Louisiana College in 1924, the Master's degree and Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of North Carolina in 1927 and 1931, respectively.

Dr. Clark was principal of Norwood High School during the 1924-1925 school year. He was principal of Manifest High School during 1925-1926, principal of Urania High School and Olla Standard High School in 1927-1928. In 1931, Clark accepted a position as Director of Teacher Training at Southeastern Louisiana College. He served in that capacity until 1931. He accepted a position as a professor in the social science department at Louisiana State University in 1936. He was appointed president of Southeastern Louisiana College in 1937 and served until 1944. Clark returned to Louisiana State University after his departure from Southeastern in 1944.
George William Bond was born at Summers, Arkansas, April 6, 1891. He was the son of William E., and Martha Simpson Bond. George Bond received a certificate of Licentiate of Instruction from the University of Arkansas in 1916. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from the same institution in 1920. A Master of Arts degree from the University of Chicago was earned in 1923. A Doctor of Education degree was conferred on Bond by Columbia University in 1938.

Dr. Bond was Superintendent of Schools of Cane Hill, Arkansas in 1917-1918. During the period from 1920 to 1922 he was Superintendent of Schools at Bauxite, Arkansas. This position was followed by the principalship of the senior high school at Texarkana, Arkansas from 1923-1924. In 1924 Bond accepted a professorship at Louisiana Polytechnic Institute. He became Dean of the College of Education at Tech in 1926. He was appointed president of Louisiana Tech in 1928. He served until 1936. Dr. Bond came to Southeastern as Dean of the College in 1938. In 1944 he was appointed acting president of Southeastern Louisiana College. He replaced Dr. Joseph Leon
Clark. Bond served as acting president of Southeastern during part of the years 1944-1945. He then served as Dean of the School of Education at Louisiana Tech from 1945 to 1956. Bond left Tech in 1956 and went to Harding College in Searcy, Arkansas, as a professor of education. He stayed at Harding until retirement in 1964.
Gladney Jack Tinsley was born June 19, 1896, at Haynesville, Claiborne Parish, Louisiana. After being graduated from Haynesville High School, he enrolled at Louisiana State University and received a Bachelor of Science degree in 1925 and a Master of Science degree in 1927. The Doctor of Education degree was earned at Stanford University in 1931.

Dr. Tinsley was a teacher and principal of several schools in north Louisiana during the early years of his career between 1914 and 1931. Among these were teacher at Haynes School in Shongaloo, principal of Mineral Wells School in Haynesville, principal at Summerfield School and principal at Rosenthal Grammar School.

In 1931, Tinsley joined the staff at Southwestern Louisiana Institute in Lafayette, Louisiana, as Director of Extension. He was appointed head of the Department of Educational Administration at Southwestern in 1941, and served in that capacity until July 1, 1945. Dr. Tinsley assumed the duties of president of Southeastern Louisiana College July 1, 1945. He remained president until his death, the result of a heart attack, December 8, 1951.
Clark L. Barrow was born at Plaquemine, Iberville Parish, Louisiana, June 8, 1894. He was graduated from Plaquemine High School in 1912. In 1923 he received the Bachelor of Arts degree from Louisiana State University. Barrow received a Master's degree from Louisiana State University in 1934, and he also received a Master's degree from Columbia in 1935. He received the Doctor of Education degree from Columbia University in 1939.

Barrow began his teaching career as a teacher in Avoyelles Parish. He then was appointed principal of a small school in Pointe Coupee Parish. This was followed by the principalship of Newellton High School in Tensas Parish. He served as Superintendent of Schools in Tensas Parish from 1921 to 1930. In the State Department of Education between the years 1930-1940, Barrow served as Supervisor of Negro Schools, High School Supervisor, Director of Instruction and Assistant Superintendent. He was Supervisor of Teacher Education and Certification from 1942-1943. Clark Barrow was appointed Superintendent of East Baton Rouge Parish Schools in 1943. He served in this position until coming to Southeastern in 1952. He left Southeastern in 1953 to accept a position as Director
of Higher Education in the State Department of Education.
LUTHER HALEY DYSON
ACTING PRESIDENT, 1951-1952
PRESIDENT, 1953-1967

Luther Haley Dyson was born at Amite, Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana, January 23, 1909. After being graduated from the Amite High School in 1926, he enrolled at Louisiana State University and received the Bachelor of Arts degree from that institution in 1930. In 1937 he was awarded the Master of Arts degree and in 1952 the Doctor of Philosophy degree, both degrees being earned at Louisiana State University.

Dr. Dyson spent the four years, 1930-1934, teaching in the public schools of Tangipahoa Parish. In 1935 he became supervisor of classroom instruction for Tangipahoa Parish and remained in this position for two years. In 1937 he was appointed Director of Teacher Training at Northwestern State College in Natchitoches, Louisiana, and later served as the Head of the Department of Education at the same institution. Dyson assumed the position of Dean of the Division of Education and Dean of the College at Southeastern Louisiana College in 1945. He served in these positions until December 8, 1951, when he became Acting President of Southeastern Louisiana College, succeeding the late Dr. Gladney Jack Tinsley. In 1952 Luther Dyson
again assumed the position of Dean of the College for a period of one year. In 1953 he was appointed president of Southeastern Louisiana College and remained in this position until his retirement in 1968.
VITA

LeRoy Ancelet was born near Scott, Lafayette Parish, Louisiana, March 1, 1925. He received his elementary and secondary training at Scott High School, Scott, Louisiana. In 1950 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in social studies and English from the University of Southwestern Louisiana at Lafayette, Louisiana. He was graduated from Louisiana State University in 1952 with a Master of Education degree, and he is presently a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, also at Louisiana State University.

He began teaching in the public schools of Caldwell Parish, Louisiana, in 1950. In 1955 he accepted a teaching position with the Port Arthur Independent School District, Port Arthur, Texas. He was appointed head of the Department of Social Studies at Thomas Edison School in Port Arthur in 1959. He was a graduate assistant in the Department of Education at Louisiana State University during the academic year 1960-1961. He moved to Southeastern Louisiana College, Hammond, Louisiana, as Assistant Professor of Education in 1961. He was Acting Director of Student Teaching at Southeastern during part of the 1967-1968 academic year. In 1969 he was appointed Director of
Southeastern Laboratory School, the position he now holds.

He is married to the former Bessie Louise (Beth) Credeur, and he is the father of one child, Corinne Anne.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate:  LeRoy Ancelet

Major Field:  Education

Title of Thesis:  A History Of Southeastern Louisiana College

Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

July 16, 1971