1994


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Support for higher education in the 1992–1993 Louisiana Legislature

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The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1994
SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
IN THE 1992-1993 LOUISIANA LEGISLATURE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The School of Vocational Education

by

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August 1994
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ABSTRACT

The public higher education system in Louisiana is facing a variety of problems. The Louisiana Legislature plays a vital role in the determination of policy regarding higher education in the state. Legislators have the responsibility of addressing current and emerging issues and finding solutions to problems.

The purpose of the study was to determine the voting record of members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature on issues facing higher education so as to infer legislative support for higher education. This purpose was accomplished by studying roll call votes on bills considered important to higher education in relation to personal characteristics of legislators. Data were collected on personal characteristics for all members of the 1992 legislature, including replacements. A panel of experts rated selected roll call bills voted on during the 1992-1993 regular and special sessions to determine the mean score for each bill. The mean score of each bill was applied to the appropriate yea or nay vote in determining a support for higher education score for each legislator.

A model was developed for the senate that explained 33.1% of the variance in support for higher education. Seven variables in the stepwise regression model included legislative experience, business occupation, black race, number of bills
introduced, education committee membership, legal occupation, and legislative committee leadership.

A model developed for the house explained 21.4% of the variance in support for higher education. Five variables entered the stepwise regression model, including male gender, other occupation, democrat party affiliation, white race, legislative experience.

The findings of the study indicated that there were more differences than similarities between the senate and the house research models in support for higher education. Legislative experience, race, and occupations, three variables common to both models, influence support for higher education differently in the two chambers. It is recommended that further study of the legislature include survey techniques to explore the influence of other factors contributing to the unexplained variance of legislative support for higher education.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Louisiana Legislature

The Louisiana Legislature is the state's lawmaking body which establishes public policy by approving or rejecting bills and resolutions. Legislators serve people and the area from which they are elected, and establish statewide policies which affect the operations of state and local governments, as well as the actions of individuals, business and labor. The legislature also oversees actions of the executive branch to assure laws and legislative intent are implemented (PAR, 1992).

The Louisiana Legislature consists of two houses: the Senate and the House. Membership, as established by the state constitution, consists of 39 members in the Senate, and 105 members in the House, for a total membership of 144. Each member represents his/her district and is elected for a term of four years.

The constitution provides that the legislature is a continuous body during the term for which members are elected. However, bills and resolutions can be passed only when the legislature is in formal session: regular or special. Proposals not passed during the session at which they are introduced do not carry over to
a subsequent session. Bills and resolutions are passed only when the legislature is in regular or special session. In odd numbered years, the Constitution prohibits the legislature from considering proposals to levy a new tax or increase an existing one. Special sessions can be called by the governor or the legislature, but may not exceed 30 days (PAR, 1992).

Most of the legislative work is done by standing committees in meetings held during the regular session. Senate and House rules indicate the jurisdiction of each standing committee. Committee hearings are open to the public when proposed legislation is being considered.

The House has 16 standing committees; the Senate has 17. Members of the House and Senate are appointed to committees by the presiding officer of their house. Legislators may serve on no more than three standing committees. Bills dealing with issues on higher education may be referred to Senate finance, revenue and fiscal, or education committees; or House appropriations or education committees (PAR, 1992).

**Governance of Higher Education**

The higher education system in Louisiana consists of 30 colleges and/or universities. Public higher education encompasses 16 state-supported universities and four state-supported community colleges coordinated and managed by three
governing boards and a Board of Regents. In addition, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has authority over the vocational-technical schools and two community colleges in the state (LA State Constitution, Section VIII, p. 78).

The Louisiana State Constitution establishes guidelines for appropriations for the state governing boards and for higher education. In Sections 11 and 12, the legislature is given responsibility for appropriating funds for "operating and administrative expenses" of state boards. Under these articles, appropriations can be made only to managing boards as prescribed by law (LA State Constitution, Section VIII, p. 82).

The Board of Regents is the overall planning and coordinating body for the state's public higher education system. The three remaining boards have supervision and management responsibility for the colleges and/or universities that fall under their auspices (LA State Constitution, Section VIII, p. 82). The Board of Regents was created by the 1974 Constitution and amended in 1980. It presently consists of 15 members appointed by the governor and approved by the senate for overlapping terms of six years. A student member, selected from the council of student body presidents-elect, serves a one-year term. The Board of Regents has responsibilities which are enjoined in the state's constitution:

(1) To revise or eliminate an existing degree program, department of instruction, division, or similar subdivision.
(2) To approve, disapprove, or modify a proposed degree program, department of instruction, division, or similar subdivision.
(3) To study the need for and feasibility of any new institution of post-secondary education, including branches of institutions and conversion of two-year institutions to institutions offering longer courses of study. If the creation of a new institution, the addition of another management board, or the transfer of an existing institution from one board to another is proposed, the Board of Regents shall report its written findings and recommendations to the legislature within one year. Only after the report has been filed, or after one year if no report is filed, may the legislature take affirmative action on such a proposal and then only by law enacted by two-thirds of the elected members of each house.
(4) To formulate and make timely revisions of a master plan for higher education. As a minimum, the plan shall include a formula for equitable distribution of funds to the institutions of higher education.
(5) To require that every higher education board submit to it, at a time it specifies, an annual budget proposal for operational needs and for capital needs of each institution under the control of each board. (LA State Constitution, Section VIII, p. 78)

Three managing boards function to administer programs of the universities and colleges which fall under their jurisdiction. These include the Board of Supervisors for Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, the Board of Supervisors for Southern University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, and the Board of Trustees for State Colleges and Universities. Members are appointed by the governor with the approval of the Senate. Members serve overlapping terms of six years. In addition, one student is
Figure 1. Structure of Higher Education in Louisiana
appointed to each board for a term of one year (Louisiana Dept of Education, 1992). The structure of the governing boards and institutions of public higher education falling under their purview are indicated in Figure 1.

**Louisiana Universities and Community Colleges**

**LSU System.** The Louisiana State University System, established in 1860, is governed by the LSU Board of Supervisors.

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College at Baton Rouge began in 1860 as Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and Military Academy in Pineville. The University of New Orleans was founded in 1958 as a means of extending undergraduate facilities of LSU to the greater New Orleans Metropolitan Area. The school graduated its first class in June of 1962 (Calhoun, 1992). LSU in Shreveport, founded in 1965, offers both graduate and undergraduate programs (Barron's, 1992).

LSU in Alexandria and LSU in Eunice are two-year community colleges offering lower division curricula (Calhoun, 1992).

**Southern University System.** The Southern University System was established in 1975. It is governed by the Southern University Board of Supervisors. The primary goal of the system is teaching.
Southern University and A & M College at Baton Rouge, founded in 1880, is a public, land-grant institution. Southern University in New Orleans was established in 1956 as an extension of the Baton Rouge campus for commuting students (Barron's, 1992). Southern University in Shreveport was begun in 1967; it is a two-year college (Barron's, 1992).

**Board of Trustees Schools.** There are eight four-year universities and one community college governed by the Board of Trustees.

Northwestern State University, founded in 1884, is the oldest of Louisiana's colleges. The school began as a two-year Normal School to train teachers. Louisiana Tech University, founded in 1894, was long known as Louisiana Polytechnic Institute. Both schools were elevated to university status in 1970 by legislative action (Calhoun, 1992).

The University of Southwestern in Lafayette, established in 1898 as an industrial institute, began college instruction in 1916. Grambling State University was founded in 1901 as a black, liberal arts institution (Calhoun, 1992).

Northeast Louisiana University began as Ouachita Parish Junior College in 1928, and was renamed in 1934 to Northeast Center of LSU. It was made a separate four-year college in 1950. McNeese State University founded in Lake Charles in 1939, began as a junior college and operated for a time as a branch of
LSU. Southeastern Louisiana University was founded in 1925, in Hammond. The 1970 legislative action also recognized these three schools as universities. Nicholls State University, established in 1948, serves the area of Thibodaux (Barron's, 1992). Delgado Community College in New Orleans began teaching students in 1970 (Calhoun, 1992).

**Issues in Higher Education**

Louisiana's higher education system is facing a variety of problems. These are not unique in that many states across the nation are facing similar problems. Zemsky and Stine (1989) reported that three major issues are affecting higher education systems across the nation. These include costs, the quality of teaching and learning, and making higher education genuinely inclusive (Zemsky & Stine, 1989). Declining support for higher education has also been attributed to increased competition for state dollars and poor economic conditions. Additionally, higher education seems to be the most complex and least understood state agency (Liesz, 1989).

Budget requests made by most state college and university systems for 1992 reflect increases just to maintain existing levels of operation. Appropriating sufficient funds for higher education and ensuring quality are continuing challenges
for most state legislatures, as legislators are faced with the difficult task of making decisions (Blumenstyk & Cage, 1992).

The 1992 Louisiana State Legislature has been faced with many questions and concerns regarding higher education in the state. When funds are limited, issues seem to become more critical. Major issues over the last few years concern funding, duties and structure of governing boards, desegregation, the quality of education, and public attitude. It has been suggested that a master plan is needed in light of the state's financial crisis, the desegregation lawsuit pending against the state, and an apparent perception among taxpayers that the higher education system is wasteful and self-serving (Dyer, January 7, 1993, 17). The Louisiana Legislature has the responsibility of addressing these and other emerging issues and finding solutions to the problems arising from these.

Funding for state colleges and universities is a major issue. Much of the problem stems from the present funding plan. In the state's budget, 72% of the funds are dedicated to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), highway fund, debt management and the court system. The remaining 28% of the state budget is discretionary. This is the portion of the state budget from which higher education receives its funding (Dyer, June 3, 1993, 16). Proposals to
remove the constitutional protection of dedicated funds have met with serious opposition (Macaluso, April 18, 1993, 24).

In all but the first three years of the term of Governor Buddy Roemer (1988-1990), higher education received budget cuts (Dyer, February 3, 1993, 1). The 1992 mid-year budget cut of $45 million was unexpected and caused problems for college and university administrators, higher education board members and legislators (Dyer, January 16, 1993, 4). The Louisiana State Legislature was forced to meet in special session in March 1993 to allocate working budgets from limited funds for the state education system. At the end of the 1993 legislative session, higher education experienced an approximately $20 million budget cut (Dyer, June 3, 1993, 16).

One of the duties of the Board of Regents is to formulate a master plan for the public higher education schools of the state. This plan, submitted to the legislature, is designed to guide and direct the future of higher education. The current master plan has received criticism. This criticism centers around the charge that the master plan lacks specific details to make meaningful, long-term decisions about the future of higher education in Louisiana (Dyer, April 22, 1993, 1). The present structure and delegation of authority by the four boards of higher education is in question. It has been proposed that the state constitution should
be amended to change the duties and responsibilities of these boards, and/or to consolidate these boards into one "super board," a move that could save money and meet with the desegregation order proposed by Judge Charles Swartz (Redman, December 24, 1992, 1).

The issues of "geographic access of colleges and universities," and the offering of programs for "the good of citizens" become pronounced when only a few students graduate from programs that receive budget appropriations. The current role of each college and university in the state is considered by many to be poorly defined. In addition, questions concerning the effectiveness of the higher education system naturally arise when it is noted that only about 25% of those students who enroll in Louisiana public college/university systems actually obtain a degree (Dyer, April 6, 1992, 1). The questions of "open admissions" and "remedial instruction" suggest that Louisiana could establish a true community college system, with standards and roles different from those of the state's four year universities (Hasten, Oct 3, 1993, 1). Suggestions have been offered to increase resident and non-resident tuition to the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) average, and to reduce administrative expenses on campuses that are above the SREB average. There is a need for a higher education funding formula and the money to pay for it. It has been suggested that legislators should
view higher education as an "industry" in which the state is willing to invest (Dyer, April 9, 1992, 8).

Statement of the Problem

Legislators play a vital role in the determination of educational policy in the state. Most of the issues facing higher education are ultimately the responsibility of the legislature, since propositions for change may require legislation and changes to the state constitution. Certainly, issues involved in funding are the responsibility of the legislature as it makes decisions on allocating resources to higher education. For the past two years, legislators have been called upon to vote on numerous bills which affect the future of higher education in the state.

Bills of great importance and/or controversy often are voted on through a roll call vote (Matthews & Stimson, 1975). A study of roll call votes on particular higher education issues can offer insight into the voting patterns of the legislators, and/or help explain or predict legislative support for higher education. This, in turn, may prove useful for university staff and governing board members in securing support for higher education.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the voting record of members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature on issues facing higher education so as to infer legislative support for higher education. This purpose was accomplished by studying roll call votes on bills considered important to higher education in relation to personal characteristics of legislators.

Objectives of the Study

This study involved the following specific objectives:

1. To determine personal characteristics of members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature including race, gender, education, age, occupation, legislative experience, party affiliation, education committee membership, legislative committee leadership, and number of bills introduced.

2. To determine the relative importance to higher education of selected bills which went to a roll call vote in the 1992 Louisiana Legislature.

3. To determine the support for higher education based on the voting record on roll call vote bills of members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature.

4. To develop a model explaining a significant portion of the variance in support for higher education by the 1992 Louisiana Legislature as measured by roll call votes and personal characteristics.
Assumptions

Two major assumptions were made in the study.

1. Legislators cast votes for a variety of reasons, utilizing numerous influences.
2. Theories explaining voting patterns of legislators on a national level are applicable to the voting patterns of legislators on the state level.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to a survey of roll call votes and a study of the personal characteristics of members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature. Other variables which might affect support for higher education, namely constituency, special interest groups, values, and attitudes, are not included in the evaluation of legislators' support for higher education in this study.

Definition of Terms

The following terms, as defined, were used in the study.

Higher Education System. The higher education (post-secondary) infrastructure of public colleges and universities and their governing boards.

The Louisiana Legislature. The general assembly of the state that approves or rejects bills and resolutions and formulates the basic policies which govern the operation of state and local governments, as well as actions of individuals,
businesses and labor. The lawmaking body designed to serve the people and areas from which legislators are elected.

The House of Representatives. One hundred five members elected by the citizenry to represent single-member districts in Louisiana for a period of four years.

The Senate. Thirty-nine members elected to serve single-member districts throughout Louisiana for a four-year term.

Roll Call Vote. A vote taken on the floor of the House or Senate where each member's name is called and a vote is recorded. A roll call vote will indicate "yea" or "nay" or "not voting." "Not voting" includes names of legislators absent and/or present but abstaining from voting.

Voting Record. The roll call vote, recorded on a specific bill as "yea" or "nay" or "not voting," published in the House and Senate Journal which substantiates the position taken by each member of the legislature.

Support for Higher Education. A measure derived from applying the mean score of rated roll call vote bills, as determined by the panel of experts, to the appropriate yea or nay vote cast by members of the senate and house of the 1992-1993 Louisiana Legislature.
Legislative Committee Leadership. Legislators providing leadership by serving as chair for one of the 17 standing committees of the senate, 16 standing committees of the house.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Legislative Voting Theory

Theories proposed on decision-making and voting patterns by members of the legislature range from simple to highly complex mathematical models. It is generally agreed that decisions are never made in a vacuum; but that legislators are inundated by a myriad of pressures on voting decisions. Decisions are made most often "from a blend of prejudice, reason, and practicality" (Clausen, 1973, p. viii). Clausen has identified four factors by which he feels policy decisions are made by members of the U. S. Congress. The first of these is the legislator's enduring personal policy views. Even though elected by a group for the purpose of representing it, elected officials are not value-free. Each person brings his/her own set of values and purposes for seeking office. This means that legislators arrive in office with pre-conceived notions regarding not only current issues, but their role as a legislator, as well (Clausen, 1973).

The "perceptions of constituency interests and views" is a second factor affecting policy decisions. It is interesting to note that Clausen uses the word perceptions in referring to constituency interest. This again supports his first condition that legislators harbor their own attitudes and values which can affect
what they perceive. Relations with some type of special interest group is a third factor. The fourth factor, party loyalty, helps to shape decisions on matters of policy formulated by the legislator. Clausen views these factors as "stable and unchanging" (Clausen, 1973, p. vii). Based on this view, Clausen states that from an understanding of factors shaping policy decisions of a standing U.S. Congress, one can predict with a fair degree of accuracy its general policy stance for the future. Decisions reached by members of the legislature are based upon varying degrees of reliable information, sometimes the product of political necessity, and at other times, the result of unencumbered judgement. "Whatever the blend of these decision elements, an understanding of congressional decision-making does not depend upon a complex theory of decision behavior" (Clausen, 1973, p. viii).

Clausen supports two major themes regarding congressmen and their decision-making behavior. The first theme contends that the methods used in formulating decisions are "...methods commonly employed by most persons faced with choices of products, people and programs of action" (Clausen, 1973, p. 4). Second, Clausen suggests that the policy positions of congressmen are reasonably representative of the positions of the people who participate in political life (Clausen, 1973, p. 4). These themes suggest that congressmen "make their decisions, in part, by using a limited set of policy content categories to which
legislative proposals are assigned." Legislative decisions then are made from such common forms as the "party line" handed down by party leaders, ideological positions, concepts of the domains of government responsibility, economy of the government, and other considerations abounding in the political culture that are shared by legislators and lay people. While numerous factors in the political arena play a role in decision-making by the legislator, "...the outcome of the decision process is heavily influenced by the general policy positions of the participants" (Clausen, 1973, p. 9).

Roll Call Voting

Based upon his study of the U. S. Congress, Clausen contends that policy positions established for individual congressmen on the basis of roll-call votes are representative of policy positions taken in other aspects of their legislative activity. He suggests that an examination of the records of congressional voting offers an understanding of politics at work (Clausen, 1973). In building his policy dimension theory, Clausen contends that the policy position taken by an individual, acting as a representative, consists of more than his personal attitudes. It is also based on his responsibility to his constituency, his party, his president, and cherished interests (Clausen, 1973).
Matthews and Stimson (1975) argue that the study of roll call voting is an effective method for determining policies. In studying the U.S. House of Representatives, the writers noted that roll calls tend to occur on relatively controversial matters or on matters in which at least one-fifth of the members wish to be recorded. "If one accepts the view...that the ultimate purpose of legislative research is to explain the policy outputs of legislative bodies..., then the most sensible strategy for research would be to focus on the outputs of legislatures" (Matthews & Stimson, 1975, p. 11). Accordingly, the strategy is to focus on the final stages of the decision, and then to search for "causes" in the chain of events preceding the vote (Matthews & Stimson, 1975). It is the contention of the authors, supported by past research on roll call voting, that congressmen attempt to vote rationally. There are many decisions to be made across a wide span of subjects, where issues are complex. The representative must cast a vote in "a reasonably rational way or face the possibility of failing to achieve his/her personal and political objectives" (Matthews & Stimson, 1975, p. 25).

Matthews and Stimson present a description of methods which they feel legislators use to make decisions. Three factors influencing decision content were discussed. These include "voting the district," personal precedent and incrementalism, and ideological decision-making. While each offers an
opportunity to assist the representatives in making decisions, none presents a concise picture of the process. Matthews and Stimson contend that legislators seek to develop specialization while in office. This helps in the process of making decisions. However, since one cannot be an expert on every subject, "cues" can be taken for making decisions on issues where expertise is lacking. Accordingly, cue-taking strategy of roll call voting makes it possible for the congressman both to vote in a reasonably rational fashion and to do so on the basis of exceedingly little information. Outside the area of his own policy specialization, the member need only decide which cue-giver or cue-givers to follow on what sorts of issues. Matthews and Stimson go on to explain.

When a member is confronted with the necessity of casting a roll-call vote on a complex issue about which he knows very little, he searches for cues provided by trusted colleagues who--because of their formal position in the legislature or policy specialization--have more information than he does and with whom he would probably agree if he had the time and information to make an independent decision. Cue-givers need not be individuals. When overwhelming majorities of groups that the member respects and trusts--the whole House, the members of his party or state delegation, for example--vote the same way, the member is likely to accept their collective judgement as his own. (Matthews & Stimson, 1975, p. 45)

Economists Kau and Rubin (1982) studied the U. S. Congress in an attempt to explain the role of politics in the regulation of the economy. In order to
determine the forces behind the passage of particular laws, the writers sought "... to determine why representatives vote for or against certain bills" (Kau & Rubin, 1982, p. 3). Three "agents" were identified as important to the roll call voting model proposed by Kau and Rubin. These include representatives, who actually vote on particular bills; constituents, who vote for or against the representatives based on positions taken by representatives on issues; and contributors, who support representatives based on the way the representative will vote on issues of interest to the contributors (Kau & Rubin, 1982).

The writers proposed two hypotheses to explain the passage of regulatory legislation. "Laws are passed to benefit various special interest groups, or laws are passed because of ideological reasons" (Kau & Rubin, 1982, p. 31). For purposes of their study, Kau and Rubin adopted Down's (1957) definition of ideology: "a verbal image of the good society and the chief means of constructing such a society" (Kau & Rubin, 1982, p. 21). In the study of roll call voting by members of Congress on regulatory legislation, the writers, unable to explain the role of special interest groups, concluded that "ideology appears to be the explanation for much of the new legislation" (Kau & Rubin, 1982, p. 121).

In all cases the ideological variable is by far the strongest and most significant variable in explaining congressional voting, even after numerous attempts to adjust statistically for economic interests of constituents and campaign contributors. (Kau & Rubin, 1982, p.122)
The various dimensions associated with cue-taking in the U.S. House of Representatives was studied by Sullivan, Shaw, McAvoy and Barnum (1993). The study investigated individuals and groups as sources of information and guidance which members of congress may utilize in their decision making on public policy issues. Survey data were collected from personal interviews with 99 members of Congress in the fall of 1987. The researchers sought to determine if patterns of perception that emerge, depending upon the content of policy area, were different between democratic and republican representatives. Eleven sources were divided into four types: expert, party, constituency, and executive. Policy was classified by one of five types: foreign policy, defense policy, social welfare, agriculture, and economic management. Using MANOVA, the researchers found that democrats and republicans respond differently to cues. Democrats tended to respond to different cue-givers on different types of policy issues. Expert cue-givers were used more for defense policies, but less for foreign policy and economic issues. Constituency cues were utilized more on social welfare issues. Republicans tended to care less from where the cues were coming. The researchers concluded that the members of the two parties tend "...to look to different cue-givers depending on the issue" (Sullivan, Shaw, McAvoy, & Barnum, 1993, p. 991). Democrats seemed more likely to perceive differences in cue-givers within a policy area rather than
across policy areas. Republicans exhibited fairly uniform responses to particular cue-givers, but responded differently to cues across policy areas (Sullivan, Shaw, McAvoy, & Barnum, 1993).

**Legislative Decisions in Higher Education**

Studies have been conducted to ascertain views of state legislators with regard to higher education including studies of issues, influences, and sources of information used by legislators in decision-making; and in some cases, comparisons with key higher education officials. Information has been gathered through interviews, questionnaires distributed by hand and mail, and roll call vote studies.

Keese (1990) studied the decision-making process used by Tennessee legislators in formulating educational policy. Personal interviews were conducted with 34 members of education committees and/or chamber leaders of the 96th Tennessee General Assembly. Decision orientation of each member of the study was defined in terms of selected factors. Relationships between decision orientation and characteristics of position, party, experience, age, and region were analyzed. Responses from the legislators indicated that fellow legislators and educational lobbyists were the most influential sources of information. The governor and representatives of higher education seemed to exert the least amount
of decision-making influence on legislators surveyed. It was further noted that legislators see themselves as working with fellow legislators through negotiations and the study of issues, rather than reacting to demands from those outside the legislature. The responses from those surveyed indicated that they rely on personal values, philosophy, expectations, and experience when establishing policy (Keese, 1990).

A study of the 1977 Florida Legislature and selected state education officials by Scott (1977) offered some insight on the sources of information exerting the most influence on general attitudes and feelings toward higher education. Based on the literature and studies, Scott developed an instrument with a Likert-type scale regarding 25 possible sources of information used in decision-making by legislators. These sources included, among others, mass media (radio, television, newspaper); college/university publications; civic and student groups; aides and colleagues; personal factors; and political leadership or the governor. Using a mail questionnaire, data were collected from legislators and state education officials for comparison purposes. Scott found legislators’ perceptions and attitudes on higher education to be independent of their feelings about other areas of education (elementary and secondary.) The information sources which appear to exercise the most influence on legislators’ perceptions and attitudes
toward higher education are those which involve the individual legislator in the
degree of personal, face-to-face exchange with expert colleagues, those testifying
at hearings, members of the family, trusted friends, constituents, faculty and
executives. In addition, Scott noted that over the previous 10 years, there had
been an unfavorable trend in the perceptions of and attitudes toward higher
education held by Florida’s legislators (Scott, 1977).

Holsenbeck and Tiffany (1982) designed a study similar to Scott’s 1977
survey of the Florida Legislature to determine attitudes and influences of the
Alabama Legislature. Using a Likert-type scale, the researchers surveyed three
groups of respondents: former legislators (1979-1982), all current members of the
legislature, and a purposive sample of 80 Alabama educators. They found that all
three groups agreed that the strongest, single factor influencing their attitudes
toward higher education was "...their innate opinion created over a lifetime of
experience" (Holsenbeck & Tiffany, 1982, p. 11). The second most influential
factor was a "trusted friend other than a fellow legislator" (Holsenbeck, 1982, p.
11). The researchers also stated that data seemed to imply that the governor
exerted more influence on educators than on legislators. In general, the survey
indicated that the current members of the Alabama Legislature had a healthy and
supportive attitude toward higher education (Holsenbeck & Tiffany, 1982).
Root (1983) investigated perceptions of state legislators and legislative liaisons in two states selected from each of the 10 federal regions regarding sources of information. Perceptions of reliability and influence of 43 information sources were studied. Questionnaires were mailed to members of the house and senate education committees and legislative liaisons from public institutions. Using a rating system, respondents were asked to note frequency of use, perceived reliability and perceived ability of influence of information sources. In addition, respondents were asked to agree or disagree with 11 general statements about information sources and higher education.

Root reported that legislators ranked committee hearings, communication from constituents and other politically based sources of information higher than all other sources. Legislative liaisons were less responsive to institutional communication efforts than were legislators. In addition, legislators "clearly" preferred that information be provided during the regular session, while legislative liaisons believed that the most useful information was provided before the session began. It was noted that the marked state and regional differences found were not clustered around regional patterns. Based on these findings, Root concluded that the use of information sources by legislators should be examined closely on a state by state basis (Root, 1983).
A study of factors influencing higher education appropriations was conducted by Liesz (1989). This study examined factors that influence decision makers as they formulate their higher education funding recommendations. Using questionnaires and personal interviews, perceptions regarding funding for higher education were analyzed for legislative fiscal analysts, executive department fiscal analysts, coordinating board staff, and key legislators in Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Liesz found that two factors were perceived as influential: availability of revenue and credibility of the higher education system. Key legislators were the only group which identified enrollment figures as meaningful for interpreting allocation differences, and also cited legislative intent compliance as an influential factor relative to allocation of appropriations (Liesz, 1989).

Monroe and Garand (1991) studied the U.S. Senate in an effort to create a model of roll call voting. The purpose of the study was develop and test a model on a cloture motion for family legislation (the Parental and Medical Leave Act of 1988: S.2488). Using LOGIT analysis, the researchers were able to accurately predict approximately 93% of senate votes. They noted that policy liberalism was the strongest factor determining Senate votes on the legislation under investigation. The degree of policy liberalism assigned to the senator was
significant and proved to be the best indicator of support for the legislation, followed by party identification. The contextual demand variables having indirect effect on the votes included mass partisanship, mass ideology, and whether the state had adopted a parental leave law (Monroe & Garand, 1991).

The Cooperative Extension Service is an integral part of the higher education system of land grant colleges and universities. Like colleges and universities, the Cooperative Extension Service in many states, depends upon its legislature for funding. Knowing how the organization is viewed by state legislators has been the focus of several studies.

Miller (1988) sought to determine the perceptions of the South Carolina Legislature with regard to the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service. Miller identified four areas where perception was to be determined: purpose and objectives, participation and involvement, basic program areas, and clientele of the Extension Service. He attempted to associate this perception with selected factors: role in the legislature, years of legislative experience, political party affiliation, place of residence, character of district, age, and occupation. Miller collected data from 65% of the 1985 South Carolina Legislature. Each of the factors was associated significantly with at least one or more aspects of perception. Miller found that party affiliation, place of residence, and character of the district exerted
the greatest influence on how the legislators perceived the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service (Miller, 1988).

Curtis (1978) conducted a study similar to Miller (1988) to determine Alabama legislators' perception of the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service (ACES). Alabama legislators indicated that they were more familiar with agriculture and 4-H programs than they were with home economics and CRD programs. The analysis of characteristics indicated that there were only two factors that showed significant differences in the perception of ACES. Senators and agriculture-related committee members had a higher perception of ACES than representatives and non-agricultural committee members (Curtis, 1978).

A study of the attitudes and perceptions of the 1977 Louisiana Legislature concerning the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service was conducted by Walker (1977). Using questionnaires distributed to legislators during a regular session, Walker found that rural legislators were more aware of and involved with Extension agents and programs than urban legislators. Legislators with farm-related occupations and committee assignments were more familiar with Extension, but were not any more likely to influence participation in Extension programs than other legislators. Extension's 4-H and youth development programs were perceived by 81% of those surveyed as being "very important" (Walker, 1977, p.
Walker concluded that rapport established by Extension personnel with rural legislators was strong and viable (Walker, 1977).

**Summary**

The foundation for the political theories cited in this study was built upon psychological and sociological theories concerning the individual as he functions in a group. Howard (1971) says that political sociology focuses on the interrelationships between political tendencies, parties, movements, and social classes (Howard, 1971). He contends that the act of voting is influenced by the underlying social structure, and that it is possible to make judgements about what a vote means. This is done by cataloging the people and identifying and classifying the social collectives and groups of the political unit (Howard, 1971).

The theoretical framework for this study was conceptualized from the review of literature relating to legislative decision-making and voting behavior. The framework, presented in Figure 2, focuses on the process by which voting decisions are reached by the legislature.

The framework depicts how the decisions reached by the group are the outcome of multiple sources of influences; namely information sources, political necessity, cue-taking, and personal factors. Personal characteristics, values, attitudes and ideologies are strong factors influencing the individual legislator.
Figure 2. Theoretical Framework
Similarly, perceptions regarding constituency, special interest groups, party, and leadership play a major role in the decision making process. These sources may act independently or in combination depending upon specific situations. Roll call voting has been offered as a valid survey tool in qualifying legislative influences.

The research model utilized in the study was conceptualized from selected components of the theoretical framework, as shown in Figure 3. Essentially, the model focuses on the voting record of the legislature in relation to higher education issues as a means of inferring legislative support for higher education. The evidence used is the roll call votes of legislators on selected higher education bills. Relationships between personal characteristics of legislators and their voting record are included in the model in an attempt to explain legislative support for higher education.
Figure 3. Research Model
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine the voting record of members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature on issues facing higher education so as to infer legislative support for higher education. This purpose was accomplished by studying roll call votes on bills considered important to higher education in relation to personal characteristics of legislators.

Population

The population for the study included all members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature. The legislature consisted of 39 legislators from the senate and 105 legislators from the house for a total representation of 144 seats. In addition, seven replacements for incumbents in 1993, three in the senate and four in the house, were included in the study.

Data Collection

Personal data were collected on each legislator in office for 1992 - 1993. These data, obtained from information submitted by legislators to the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana (PAR), included the following:

1. Race, identified as nominal data
2. Gender, classified as nominal data
3. Occupation, grouped under nominal classifications of agriculture, legal, education, business, or other, which included occupations such as legislator, student, physician, dentist, and political consultant.

4. Education, classified as ordinal data, included high school, attended college, college graduate, or advanced degree

5. Political party affiliation, classified as nominal data into democrat, republican, or independent

6. Age, recorded as continuous data calculated to the nearest year

7. Legislative experience, recorded as continuous data. Newly elected legislators were considered to have two (2) years experience; replacement representatives for 1993 were considered to have one (1) year experience

8. Membership on the education committee, treated as nominal data

9. Legislative Committee Leadership in house or senate, coded as nominal data

10. Number of bills introduced regarding higher education, coded as continuous data.

Data were collected on all bills where roll call votes were taken on legislation affecting higher education during the 1992 and 1993 regular legislative sessions, as well as the 1993 special session. Using the index from the Legislative Calendar (1992, 1993, 1993 special) of the house and senate for each of the three
sessions, all bills relative to higher education were first identified by number under the sub-heading "colleges and universities." The calendars identified bills by number and provided specific information regarding the process of the bill under passage, including the date on which the bill was voted. Using this information, the bill was located in the appropriate *Senate Legislative Journal* or *House Legislative Journal* (1992, 1993, 1993 special) according to date and page number. The journals provided the roll call vote taken on each bill, citing yea, nay, or absence by each legislator.

The bills selected for study dealt with issues pertinent to the scope of this investigation, and offered a degree of variance in the vote taken. Data were collected on 42 senators and 109 house members for the three sessions in 1992-1993. A total of 13 different bills were selected for study. Eight bills were voted on by the senate and nine bills by the house. Four bills were voted on by both houses.

A panel of three experts was selected to determine the level of importance of each bill in terms of importance for higher education. The panel was asked to rate the bills on a scale of 1 to 99, with 1 showing no importance and 99 showing the greatest importance for higher education. Based on the recommendations of the panel, five bills were eliminated from the study due to ambiguity of the bills
as stated or lack of significance to a higher education issue. As a result of this evaluation by panel members, eight different bills were used to determine legislators' support of higher education. Six of the bills had senate roll call votes, and five had house roll call votes.

Data Analysis

Statistical analysis for this research was done using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The alpha level was set at .05 a' priori. Data were analyzed according to the specific objectives of the study. For objective one, descriptive statistics were used to describe the personal characteristics of members of the senate and house. Frequencies, measures of central tendency and variability were reported. Objective two was accomplished using an expert panel which rated the roll call vote bills as to their relative importance for higher education. The analysis for objective three utilized the mean score on roll call vote bills as determined by members of the panel. The mean score of each bill was applied to the appropriate yea or nay vote. These scores were totaled for each legislator to determine the support for higher education score, recorded as the overall mean score. Frequency distributions were used to describe the variable, legislative support for higher education. For objective four, stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to develop a model that would explain a significant portion of
the variance in support for higher education. The dependent variable was legislative support for higher education and the independent variables were the ten personal characteristics.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of the study was to determine the voting record of members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature on issues facing higher education so as to infer legislative support for higher education. This purpose was accomplished by studying roll call votes on bills considered important to higher education in relation to personal characteristics of legislators. Four objectives directed the study.

Personal Characteristics of Legislators

The first objective was to determine personal characteristics of members of the house and senate. Ten personal characteristics were identified for each legislator: race, gender, occupation, education, political party affiliation, age, legislative experience, education committee membership, legislative committee leadership, and number of bills introduced.

Table 1 shows selected personal characteristics of the members of the house and senate, namely race, gender, occupation, education, and party affiliation. Over three fourths of the legislature was white (76.2%) and less than one fourth black (23.8%). Racial mix of the two chambers was about the same.
Over nine out of ten legislators were male (91.4%). The house had a higher proportion of males than the senate (97.6% to 89.0%).

Legislators were described according to their career or chosen occupation. Business was the most frequently listed occupation in the legislature (40.4%). The proportion of legislators in business in the two chambers was almost identical: 40.5% in the senate and 40.4% in the house. Just under one third of the legislature (31.9%) were in the legal occupation, with a higher proportion in the senate (38.1%) compared with the house (29.4%). Education as an occupation was indicated by 2.4% of members in the senate and 10.1% in the house. Other occupations, indicated by 17.2% of the legislature, included legislator, student, physician, dentist, and political consultant. See Table 1.

Table 1

Selected Personal Characteristics of Members of the 1992-1993 Louisiana Legislature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Legislature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 continues.
Table 1 continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Legislature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>number</td>
<td>percent</td>
<td>number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Att College</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Grad</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv Degree</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 continues.
Table 1 continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Legislature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>number</td>
<td>percent</td>
<td>number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Affil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding educational level, 55% of the members of the legislature held advanced degrees. The house had a higher proportion than the senate (56.9% and 50.0%, respectively.) About one fourth of the legislators (23.2%) had bachelor's degrees.

Democrat was the dominant party affiliation in both houses: 85.7% in the senate and 84.4% in the house. One legislator in the house listed independent as his party affiliation.

The average age of members of the legislature was 48.5 years; the average age in the senate being slightly higher than in the house. Age in the senate ranged from 31 to 79 years and in the house from 28 to 84 years. Table 2 presents information on age of members of the senate and house.
Table 2

Age of Members of the 1992-1993 Louisiana Legislature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (years)</th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Legislature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>31 - 79</td>
<td>28 - 84</td>
<td>28 - 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>n=42</td>
<td>n=109</td>
<td>n=151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legislative experience was recorded as the total number of years served by legislators in the house, the senate, or both chambers. Legislators newly elected in 1992 were identified as having two years experience; those elected in 1993 as having one year experience. Over one third (38.5%) of the house members and over one fourth (28.0%) of the senate members had three years or less of legislative experience. Table 3 shows the legislative experience for senate and house members. The average legislative experience was higher for senate members (11.5 years) than for house members (7.7 years).

Leadership exhibited by members of the legislature was expressed by three variables: education committee membership, legislative committee leadership, and number of bills introduced. The number of legislators serving on the senate and house education committees and the number of house and senate standing committees is established by the state constitution. Eight members in the senate
Table 3

Legislative Experience of Members of the Senate and House, 1992-1993

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislative Experience</th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>House</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>years</td>
<td>number</td>
<td>percent</td>
<td>number</td>
<td>percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 - 21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 - 24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 - 30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>n=42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>n=109</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Years</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Years</td>
<td>1 - 46</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 - 26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

comprise the senate education committee; 17 members of the house serve on the house education committee. Sixteen members of the house and 17 members of the senate served as chair of the different standing committees.
The average number of bills related to higher education introduced by members was 3.6 in the senate and 2.7 in the house is shown in Table 4. Twenty-one members of the house and four members of the senate did not introduce any bills relative to higher education issues.

Table 4

Number of Bills Related to Higher Education Introduced in the Senate and the House, 1992-1993 Legislative Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Bills</th>
<th>Number of Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 - 21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Members</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Number of Bills</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Roll Call Vote Bills

The second objective of the study was to determine the relative importance to higher education of selected bills which went to a roll call vote. The thirteen
higher education related bills which went to a roll call vote were submitted to a panel of three experts for their evaluation. The panel of experts was comprised of two males and one female who had expertise in higher education and experience concerning the legislature. Panel member one was a former vice-chancellor of a state university and current professor emeritus in the School of Vocational Education. Panel member two was vice-president of government relations for Louisiana independent colleges and universities. Panel member three was former vice-president of a state university and former commissioner of the state Board of Regents.

**Bills Excluded from the Study**

The panel members reviewed the thirteen bills. Five of the bills were felt to be ambiguous in wording or intent and/or were not significant to a higher education issue. These five bills were not rated and were eliminated from the study. The five bills included the following.

1. **House Bill 230** was introduced as a reaction to the tuition increases implemented by management boards seeking to recover monies from mid-year budget cuts.
2. House Bill 291 sought to allow financial institutions to add outstanding student loans guaranteed by the federal government as security for deposit of state funds in their financial institutions by state agencies.

3. House Bill 801 singled out College of Education faculty, as opposed to all faculty, for evaluation.

4. House Bill 460 established very specific requirements for postsecondary proprietary schools in Louisiana to award associate degrees.

5. Senate Bill 309 was an attempt by labor to unionize public elementary, secondary and postsecondary teachers.

**Bills Included in the Study**

The panel of three experts rated eight bills which were used in the study. The bills voted on by each legislative body are shown in Table 5. These bills dealt with various aspects of higher education and were considered relevant to the scope of the study. The eight bills rated included the following.

1. The intent of Senate Bill 16 was to place higher education under a guaranteed minimum funding plan similar to the one utilized by elementary and secondary education.

2. Senate Bill 102 was written to address problems experienced by state higher education foundations and alumni organizations with regard to audit by the state.
Table 5

Roll Call Vote Bills Used in the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senate Roll Call</th>
<th>House Roll Call</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senate Bill 1</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate Bill 16</td>
<td>House Bill 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate Bill 896</td>
<td>House Bill 1852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Bill 1582</td>
<td>House Bill 1582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate Bill 102</td>
<td>Senate Bill 102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Bill 182</td>
<td>House Bill 182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. House Bill 1582 was designed to establish accountability for higher education institutions concerning the manner in which idle funds were invested.

4. House Bill 150 attempted to establish a procedure for creation of a community college system for the state.

5. Senate Bill 1 was an attempt to place Louisiana public higher education under the management and supervision of a single board.

6. Senate Bill 896 addressed the issue of funding for higher education by the legislature.

7. House Bill 182 proposed tuition free enrollment for active elementary and secondary teachers where space was available at the end of the drop/add period.
8. House Bill 1852 proposed to utilize the annual surplus of the Louisiana Stadium and Exposition District to fund athletic scholarships for minor sports at public universities in the state.

For each of the above bills, Table 6 (senate) and Table 7 (house) show the score of each panel member, the total panel score, and the mean panel score. Each member of the panel rated each of the bills on a scale of 1 to 99, with 1 showing no importance and 99 showing the greatest importance for higher education. Of the eight bills selected, six had been voted on by the senate and five by the house. Three bills were voted on by both houses.

Support for Higher Education Scores

The third objective of the study was to determine the support for higher education based on the voting record on roll call bills of members of the legislature. A support for higher education score was derived by applying the mean score of each roll call bill (as judged by the panel of experts) to the appropriate yea or nay vote cast by each legislator. For example, a yea vote on Senate Bill 16 earned a legislator 99 points, while a nay vote earned no points. Points were totaled in this manner, until a total support for higher education was achieved for each legislator. The frequency of scores in support for higher education for legislators are shown in Table 8 (senate) and Table 9 (house).
### Table 6

**Ratings* of Roll Call Vote Bills in the Senate on Importance for Higher Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill No</th>
<th>Member 1</th>
<th>Member 2</th>
<th>Member 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SB 16</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 102</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1582</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 1</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB 896</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 182</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>449</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ratings reflect perceptions of panel members regarding the importance for higher education of the bill. Rating scale: 1 = no importance; 99 = greatest importance.

### Table 7

**Ratings* of Roll Call Vote Bills in the House on Importance for Higher Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill No</th>
<th>Member 1</th>
<th>Member 2</th>
<th>Member 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SB 102</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1582</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 150</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 182</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB 1852</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>296.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ratings reflect perceptions of panel members regarding the importance for higher education of the bill. Rating scale: 1 = no importance; 99 = greatest importance.
Table 8

Support for Higher Education Scores in the Senate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50 - 125</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>126 - 175</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176 - 225</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>226 - 275</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>276 - 325</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>326 - 375</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>376 - 425</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Score = 251.5

Table 9

Support for Higher Education Scores in the House

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 - 100</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 - 150</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151 - 200</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201 - 250</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251 - 300</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Score = 202
Senate members had a higher mean score than house members (251.5 to 202.0). This can be attributed to the six roll call vote bills on which members of the senate voted compared to the five roll call vote bills on which the members of the house voted. In addition, two of the five roll call vote bills on which members of the house voted had scores of 25 or lower.

**Research Model**

The fourth objective of the study was to develop a research model explaining a significant portion of the variance in support for higher education as measured by roll call votes and personal characteristics. This objective was accomplished using multiple regression analysis with support for higher education as the dependent variable. Personal characteristics were treated as independent variables and entered for stepwise analysis.

Relationships were explored between support for higher education and the personal characteristics. This was accomplished by calculating the correlation coefficient. Davis' (1971) descriptors were used to explain the strength of these relationships.

In stepwise regression, a variation of the forward solution, predictor variables are entered one at a time, beginning with the variable making the greatest contribution to the model. As predictor variables are entered at successive stages
of the model building process, a significance test is conducted to determine the contribution of each of the selected variables. This makes it possible for a predictor variable to be deleted if it has lost its effectiveness as a predictor. The stepwise solution includes variables that increase the explained variance by one percent or more as long as the regression equation remains significant (Hinkle, 1988).

In analyzing the data, the variables party affiliation and occupation were dummy coded to construct "yes" or "no" variables. Variables for party affiliation created were whether or not respondents were democrat, whether or not respondents were republican, and whether or not respondents were from the independent party. The same procedure was utilized for occupation creating separate variables of business, legal, education, agriculture, and other occupation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Davis' Scale</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.70 or higher</td>
<td>Very strong association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.50 to .69</td>
<td>Substantial association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.30 to .49</td>
<td>Moderate association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.10 to .29</td>
<td>Low association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.01 to .09</td>
<td>Negligible association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In analyzing the data, the variables party affiliation and occupation were dummy coded to construct "yes" or "no" variables. Variables for party affiliation created were whether or not respondents were democrat, whether or not respondents were republican, and whether or not respondents were from the independent party. The same procedure was utilized for occupation creating separate variables of business, legal, education, agriculture, and other occupation.
In addition, the variables "male" and "female" and "white" and "black" were coded as "1" and "0," respectively. The positive or negative coefficient (Beta) indicated from where the support for higher education came.

Senate Model

The relationships between the dependent variable (support for higher education) and the ten independent variables (personal characteristics) were explored. Davis' (1971) descriptors of association were used to describe these relationships. These relationships are presented in Table 10.

The relationships between support for higher education and four variables were statistically significant. There was a positive, moderate relationship for legislative experience and legislative committee leadership, implying that legislators who had more legislative experience and were chairing committees were more likely to support higher education than their counterparts. With regard to occupation, the legal occupation had a low, negative relationship, while the business occupation had a low, positive relationship with support for higher education. This suggests that legislators in the legal profession were less likely to support higher education, while legislators in the business profession were more likely to support higher education.
Table 10

Relationships between Support for Higher Education and Selected Personal Characteristics in the Senate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Characteristics</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Experience*</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Leadership</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Occupation</td>
<td>-.28</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Occupation</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level*</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat Party Affil</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Party Affil</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Committee</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Bills Introduced*</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Occupation</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Occupation</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Occupation</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.422</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All correlation coefficients are Point Bi-serial correlations, except those marked with a bullet (•) which are Pearson's Product Moment correlations.

The results of the stepwise regression for the senate model are presented in Table 11. The variable gender was excluded from the analysis since there was only one female in the senate. The results indicated that there were seven predictor variables that could significantly contribute toward the R square value. A
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-ratio</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15050.93</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6258.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>21309.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables in Equation</th>
<th>R Sq Cum</th>
<th>R Sq Chng</th>
<th>F-Value</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Experience</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>5.437</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.3459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Occupation</td>
<td>.182</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>4.334</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>.2493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Race</td>
<td>.221</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>3.594</td>
<td>.175</td>
<td>-.2041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bills Introduced</td>
<td>.259</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>3.241</td>
<td>.174</td>
<td>.1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Committee</td>
<td>.296</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>3.028</td>
<td>.179</td>
<td>.2361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Occupation</td>
<td>.321</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>2.755</td>
<td>.267</td>
<td>-.2254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Leadership</td>
<td>.331</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>2.405</td>
<td>.472</td>
<td>.11501</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables not in Equation</th>
<th>T value</th>
<th>Sig T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>.171</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Occupation</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Occupation</td>
<td>-.666</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Occupation</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat Party Affiliation</td>
<td>-.117</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Party Affiliation</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable = Support for Higher Education  n=42
variable was included in the model if it contributed one percent or more to the explained variance.

Legislative experience was the first variable to enter the model. It explained 12.0% of the variance in support for higher education in the senate. The following six variables contributed an additional 21.1% of the explained variance to the model: business occupation added 6.2%; black race added 3.9%; number of bills introduced added 3.8%; membership on education committee added 3.7%; legal occupation added 2.5%; and legislative committee leadership added 1%. The combined model of seven variables explained 33.1% of the variance in support for higher education in the senate.

House Model

The relationships between the dependent variable (support for higher education) and the ten independent variables (personal characteristics) were explored. These relationships are presented in Table 12. Davis' (1971) descriptors of association were used to describe these relationships. The relationships between support for higher education and seven variables were statistically significant.

The male gender showed a positive, moderate relationship with support for higher education indicating that men in the house might be more likely to support higher education than women. Low positive relationships were noted for democrat
Table 12

Relationships between Support for Higher Education and Selected Personal Characteristics in the House

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Characteristics</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Gender</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat Party Affil</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Party Affil</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Experience*</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Race</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Occupation</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Occupation</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Committee</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Party Affil</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Bills Introduced*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Occupation</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Leadership</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Occupation</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Occupation</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.399</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All correlation coefficients are Point Bi-serial correlations, except those marked with a bullet (•) which are Pearson’s Product Moment correlations.

party affiliation, legislative experience, white race, and other occupation. Low, negative relationships were noted for republican party affiliation and legal
occupation, indicating that support for higher education is less likely to come from members of the republican party or members in the legal profession.

The results of the stepwise regression analysis for the house, presented in Table 13, indicated that there were five predictor variables that could significantly contribute one percent or more to the explained variance in support for higher education.

Table 13

**Stepwise Regression Analysis for the House with Support for Higher Education as the Dependent Variable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F-ratio</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28305.71</td>
<td>5.59</td>
<td>.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>5056.39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>23362.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables in Equation</th>
<th>R Sq Cum</th>
<th>R sq chng</th>
<th>F-Value</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Gender</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>10.766</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.3023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Occupation</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>8.778</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.2272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat Party</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>7.467</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.1855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Race</td>
<td>.204</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>6.678</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.1819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Experience</td>
<td>.214</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>5.598</td>
<td>.272</td>
<td>.1041</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 continues.
Table 13 continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables not in Equation</th>
<th>T value</th>
<th>Sig T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>.549</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Party</td>
<td>-.584</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Bills Introduced</td>
<td>.699</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Committee Member</td>
<td>.954</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Occupation</td>
<td>.597</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Occupation</td>
<td>.664</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.275</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Occupation</td>
<td>-.702</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Party</td>
<td>.584</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Leadership</td>
<td>.552</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
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Dependent Variable = Support for Higher Education  n=109

Male gender was the first variable to enter the model. It explained 9.1% of the variance in support for higher education. Other occupation was the second variable to enter the model, adding 5.1%. Democrat party affiliation was the third variable and added another 3.4%. White race entered the model as the fourth variable, contributing 2.8% of the explained variance. Legislative experience explained 1% of the variance. The combined model of five variables explained 21.4% of the variance in support for higher education by members of the house.
Summary

The purpose of the study was to determine the voting record of members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature on issues facing higher education so as to infer legislative support for higher education. This purpose was accomplished by studying roll call votes on bills important to higher education in relation to personal characteristics of legislators.

Four specific objectives were formulated to direct the study.

1. To determine personal characteristics of members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature including race, gender, education, age, occupation, legislative experience, party affiliation, education committee membership, legislative committee leadership, and number of bills introduced.

2. To determine the relative importance to higher education of selected bills which went to a roll call vote in the 1992 Louisiana Legislature.

3. To determine the support for higher education based on the voting record of roll call bills of members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature.
4. To develop a model explaining a significant portion of the variance in support of higher education by the 1992 Louisiana Legislature as measured by roll call votes and personal characteristics.

The population of the study included all members of the 1992 Louisiana Legislature. The legislature consisted of 39 legislators from the senate and 105 members from the house for a total representation of 144 seats. In addition, seven replacements for incumbents in 1993, three in the senate and four in the house, were included in the study.

Data were collected on personal characteristics, obtained from information submitted by legislators to the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana (PAR), for each of the 151 legislators included in the study. Data were collected on all bills where roll call votes were taken on legislation affecting higher education during the 1992 and 1993 regular legislative sessions, as well as the 1993 special session. The bills selected for study dealt with issues relative to the scope of this investigation, and offered a degree of variance in the vote taken. Thirteen bills meeting the criteria for study were evaluated by a panel of three experts. Based on the recommendations of the panel, five bills were excluded from the study. Eight bills were rated by the panel and utilized to determine legislators’ support for higher education. Panel members rated the eight bills on a scale of 1
to 99, with 1 showing no importance, and 99 showing the greatest importance for higher education.

Statistical analysis for this research was done using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The alpha level was set at .05 a’ priori. Data were analyzed according to the specific objectives of the study. For objective one, descriptive statistics were used to describe the personal characteristics of members of the senate and house. Frequencies, measures of central tendency, and/or variability were reported. Objective two was accomplished using an expert panel which rated the bills with roll call votes as to their relative importance to higher education. The analysis for objective three utilized the mean score on selected bills as determined by members of the panel. This score was applied to the appropriate yea or nay vote to determine legislators’ support for higher education, recorded as the overall mean score. Frequency distributions were used to describe the variable, legislative support for higher education. For objective four, multiple regression analysis was used to develop a model that would explain the variability in the voting record of legislators in support for higher education. The dependent variable was the support for higher education and the ten personal characteristics were treated as independent variables and entered for stepwise analysis.
The following is a summary of the major findings of the study.

1. The 1992-93 legislature consisted of 115 (76.2%) white and 36 (23.8%) black legislators. Within the group, 138 (91.4%) were male, and 13 (8.6%) were female.

2. Advanced college degrees were held by 83 members (55.0%) of the legislature; 35 (23.2%) had bachelor’s degrees.

3. Business was listed as the occupation of 61 members (40.4%) of the legislature. Forty-eight (31.9%) listed legal as their occupation. Twenty-six members (17.2%) of the legislature were involved in other occupations, such as legislator, student, physician, dentist, or political consultant.

4. Democrat was the dominant party affiliation. There were 128 (84.8%) democrats, 22 (14.6%) republicans, and one (0.6%) independent party member.

5. The mean age for members of the legislature was 48.5 years. Age in the senate ranged from 31 to 79 years and in the house from 28 to 84 years.

6. Over one third (38.8%) of the house members and over one-fourth (28.0%) of the senate members had three years or less legislative experience. The mean legislative experience was greater for senate members (11.5 years) than for house members (7.7 years).

7. The average number of bills introduced by members of the legislature on higher education issues was 3.6 in the senate and 2.7 in the house. Twenty-one members
of the house and four members of the senate did not introduce any bills relative to higher education issues.

8. Significant relationships existed between support for higher education and selected personal characteristics of members of the senate. Moderate relationships were noted for two of the variables: legislative experience and legislative committee leadership. A low, negative relationship was noted for those listing legal as an occupation. A low, positive relationships was noted for business as an occupation.

9. A model for the senate was developed that explained the variance in support for higher education based upon personal characteristics and the voting record. Seven variables entered the model to explain 33.1% of the variance in support for higher education in the senate. The variables in the order in which they entered the stepwise regression model included legislative experience (12.0%), business occupation (6.2%), black race (3.9%), number of bills introduced (3.8%), membership on the education committee (3.7%), legal occupation (2.5%), and legislative committee leadership (1.0%).

10. Significant relationships existed between support for higher education and selected personal characteristics in the house. A moderate relationship was noted for the male gender. Low, positive relationships were noted for democrat party
affiliation, legislative experience, white race, and other occupation. Low, negative relationships were noted for legal occupation and republican party affiliation.

11. A model for the house was developed that explained the variance in support for higher education based upon personal characteristics and the voting record. Five variables entered the model to explain 21.4% of the variance in support for higher education in the house. The variables in the order in which they entered the model included male gender (9.1%), other occupation (5.1%), democrat party affiliation (3.4%), white race (2.8%), and legislative experience (1.0%).

Conclusions and Implications

1. Legislative support for higher education is reasonably predicted by studying personal characteristics of legislators.

This conclusion is borne out by the finding that 33.1% of the variance in support of higher education in the senate was explained by seven personal characteristic variables, and 21.4% of the variance in support of higher education in the house was explained by five personal characteristic variables. According to Howard (1977), the methodology of political ecology has been developed to explain the factors which may influence voting (Howard, 1977).
2. The use of roll call votes and an expert evaluative panel to determine legislative support for higher education is an appropriate methodology which can supplement the survey technique.

Legislative studies cited in the literature which used roll call votes covered various dimensions including policy positions (Clausen, 1973), policy determination (Matthews & Stimson, 1975), regulatory legislation (Kau & Rubin, 1982), sources of information in public policy decision (Sullivan, Shaw, McAvoy & Barnum, 1993), and identifying a predictive model (Monroe & Garand, 1991). While there were no specific studies relating to higher education, it would appear that surveying roll call votes is a plausible and effective technique in inferring legislative support for higher education. Matthews and Stimson (1975) say that focusing on roll call votes of the legislature is the most sensible strategy to explain the policy outputs of the legislature (Matthews & Stimson, 1975). Clausen (1973) states that an examination of the voting records offers an understanding of politics at work (Clausen, 1973). It would also appear that this technique could be a cost-effective and unbiased option in surveying legislators on different issues.

The conclusion is also supported by the fairly homogeneous ratings given to roll call vote bills by members of the expert panel in terms of the extent to which the bills were important for higher education.
3. There are more differences than similarities between the senate and house research models of support for higher education.

This conclusion is based on the finding that, except for the personal characteristic variables, legislative experience and race, all other statistically significant personal characteristic variables for the senate and the house models were different.

With regard to legislative experience, the greatest amount of variance in the senate model was explained by legislative experience, while the least amount of variance in the house model was due to this variable.

With regard to the variable race, black race explained 3.9% of the variance in the senate in support for higher education, while white race explained 2.8% of the variance in the house in support for higher education.

Two implications can be drawn. First, the membership of the two bodies may view their roles as legislators differently. "The Senate is a very different creature from the House. It's known as a gentleman's chamber." (Maginnis, June/July, 1992). Membership in the house is often, though not always, viewed as a prerequisite to membership in the senate. Legislators in the house, as compared with the senate, are often more closely associated with their constituency because of the smaller number of constituents they represent. For this reason,
members of the senate, with some exceptions, may take a more global view of higher education issues.

The second implication is that other factors, which are not included in the study, may influence support for higher education. Legislative studies presented in the review of literature report that numerous factors influence decision-making, namely fellow legislators and educational lobbyists (Keese, 1990), family members and trusted friends (Scott, 1977), trusted friends outside the legislature (Holsenbeck & Tiffany, 1982), committee hearings, and communications from constituents and other politically based sources (Root, 1983), availability of revenue and credibility of the higher education system (Leisz, 1989), and party affiliation, district, and place of residence (Miller, 1988). In addition, Kau and Rubin (1982) found that ideology, "a verbal image of the good society and the chief means of constructing such a society," is one explanation of why laws are passed (Kau & Rubin, 1983, p. 21).

The limitation of the study in utilizing only personal characteristic variables to explain support for higher education poses questions for further research.

4. Legislative experience seems to influence support for higher education.

This conclusion is supported by the findings regarding this personal characteristic variable. Legislative experience explained the greatest amount of
variance (12.0%) in support for higher education in the senate model and had a moderate, significant correlation coefficient (r=.35). In the house model, this variable explained one percent of the variance in support for higher education, and had a low, significant correlation coefficient (r=.10).

This conclusion is in agreement with another study discussed in the review of literature. Holsenbeck and Tiffany (1982) found in their study that lifetime experience was the strongest, single factor influencing attitudes toward higher education of Alabama legislators (Holsenbeck & Tiffany, 1982).

5. Occupations of legislators seem to influence support for higher education.

This conclusion is borne out by the finding that in the senate model, business occupation explained 6.2% of the variance, and legal occupation explained 2.5% of the variance in support for higher education. A low, significant correlation coefficient (r=.25) was noted for business occupation, while a low, negative significant correlation coefficient (r=-.28) was noted for legal occupation. In the house model, other occupation explained 5.1% of the variance in support for higher education and had a low, significant correlation coefficient (r=.18). Legal occupation in the house also had a low, negative significant correlation coefficient (r=-.19).
None of the legislative studies cited in the review of literature included occupations of legislators and the role that this variable may play in shaping legislative decisions. Clausen (1973) suggests that elected officials are not value free; that each brings his/her own set of values to the office (Clausen, 1973).

An implication of this conclusion is that occupation, in addition to other factors, influences values. Persons engaged in business occupations may view higher education positively for the end product it produces. A strong, higher education system can produce better trained graduates who contribute to the work force of the state. In contrast, it is difficult to understand why legislators in the legal occupation, who have a high level of education, seem less likely to support higher education.

6. Leadership exhibited in the senate seems to influence support for higher education.

This conclusion is based on the variance explained by the variables, education committee membership, legislative committee leadership, and number of bills introduced. These variables combined explain 8.5%, or over one-fourth of the total variance explained in the senate model.

One implication of this conclusion is that members of the senate who serve on the education committee, serve as chair of a standing committee, and/or
introduce bills in support of higher education are viewed as leaders and provide cues for other members of the senate. Matthews & Stimson (1975) found that legislators search for cues provided by trusted colleagues who, because of their position in the legislature or policy specialization, have information (Matthews & Stimson, 1975). In addition, Keese (1990) found fellow legislators to be one of the most influential sources of information (Keese, 1990). Scott (1977) noted that one of the information sources which exerted influence on legislators’ perceptions and attitudes toward higher education were those which involve exchange with expert colleagues (Scott, 1977). Root (1983) noted that legislators highly ranked, among other sources, committee hearings as a source of information (Root, 1983).

7. Gender seems to influence support for higher education in the house.

This conclusion is supported by the finding that the greatest amount of variance in support for higher education in the house model (9.1%), was explained by male gender. Male gender in the house had a moderate, significant correlation coefficient ($r=.30$).

Gender is a variable which was not addressed in other studies. This may be due to the paucity of females serving in legislatures, though the number is increasing. The implication of this conclusion is that males in the house are more likely to support higher education than females.
8. Party affiliation in the house seems to influence support for higher education.

This conclusion is based on the finding that democrat party affiliation in the house explained 3.4% of the variance in support for higher education. In addition, a low, positive significant correlation was noted for democrat party affiliation \((r=.22)\), and a low, negative significant correlation was noted for republican party affiliation \((r= -.19)\).

One implication of the finding is that support for higher education in the house may be aligned according to political party lines. Sullivan et. al. (1993) found that members of the two political parties in U. S. Congress responded to different cues. Democrats tended to respond to constituency cues on social issues, while republicans responded differently to cues across policy areas.

**Recommendations**

1. Future studies of the legislature utilizing roll call votes should be supplemented with survey techniques (interviews or questionnaires) to determine elements of the unexplained variance, including constituency, cue-taking, and decision-making processes utilized in casting a vote in support for higher education. These future studies could also include bills, relative to higher education, proposed during legislative sessions which did not go to a roll call vote.
2. In studying support for higher education in the legislature, the two legislative bodies, the senate and the house, should be evaluated separately.

3. The interaction among personal characteristic variables and the relationship of personal characteristic variables and other influences should be explored with regard to legislative support for higher education.

4. The personal characteristic variable, legislative experience, should be studied further. Past voting records dealing with higher education issues could be reviewed to determine if this variable influenced support for higher education in the legislatures. In addition, future roll call studies conducted regarding higher education issues should include legislative experience to determine to what extent this variable continues to explain variance in support for higher education.

5. Studies should be conducted to explain the apparent lack of support by legislators in the legal profession toward higher education in the state. This information could be useful for university administrators in formulating strategies to gain support from this group. Creating positive attitudes toward higher education could originate in the two state law schools where university administrators work with law school faculty to build positive relationships with students regarding the higher education system in the state.
6. Higher education administrators should engage in public relations activities and develop marketing campaigns to create a positive public attitude regarding higher education in the state. In this way, legislative support could be gained through constituency support for higher education.
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VITA

Sandra Bernard Dugas is a native of Louisiana. She graduated from the University of Southwestern Louisiana in 1973 with honors receiving a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration with a major in Merchandising. She received a Master of Science Degree in Human Ecology from Louisiana State University in 1976.

For more than eight years, she worked as a home economist in Lafayette Parish for the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service. She developed and presented programs for 4-H youth clubs, homemaker organizations, and the general public through radio and television.

She opened her first franchise business in 1985 in Lafayette. She worked successfully for seven years as owner/director of the Sylvan Learning Center where she won national recognition. She opened her second franchise business in 1986, Silk Plants Etc, a retail plant and gift shop.

Sandra resides with her husband, Greg in the rural community of Parks, Louisiana, where she is an active church and community member.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Sandra Bernard Dugas

Major Field: Vocational Education


Approved:

[Signatures]

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signatures]

Date of Examination:

May 19, 1994