



The Data and the Discontent - Personal and Professional Impacts of State Budget Cuts to Higher Education in Louisiana

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Executive Summary

- A decade of budget cuts to higher education has created an environment that makes faculty pessimistic about the future of higher education in the state.
- Most Louisiana faculty are actively looking to leave the state or higher education entirely, including faculty responsible for meeting essential state health care, infrastructure, and industry needs.
- The “brain drain” that is occurring will have significant long-term economic and essential-service impacts. Additional cuts will increase the rate of faculty attrition.

Introduction

Louisiana is approaching its tenth year of crisis in public funding of higher education, and appears to be poised for additional cuts to programs that many depend on for tuition assistance and institutional support. In 2003, higher education funding was relatively stable – income tax provisions generated recurring and reliable revenue streams for funding state institutions of higher learning (The Advocate, 2016a). However, budget priorities changed significantly in 2008. Then-Governor “Bobby” Jindal emphasized reducing government, including higher education, in order to lower taxes. Oil prices also fell precipitously in 2008, which reduced state revenues from oil and gas leases. Consequently, the state has faced budget shortfalls in the hundreds of millions of dollars each year, and has employed a variety of mechanisms to balance the books, including highly controversial measures like using one-time monies or savings for recurring expenses. The repercussions of these budgetary decisions are still being felt today (Deslatte, 2017; Dreher, 2015; Russell, 2016; The Advocate, 2016b; Wong, 2015). These impacts were tolerated as an unfortunate but necessary part of the budget reconciliation process – “belt tightening” has been a recurring theme of legislative sessions and interactions with higher education faculty.

The Louisiana Constitution establishes a variety of protections in its spending; certain industries are given protections from budget cuts, both in terms of taxable income as well as rebates. Two industries that enjoy little to no protection are health care and education. While voters supported additional protections for health care in the 2015 election, they have routinely rejected measures that would have given public institutions more freedom in setting their own fees and tuition, leaving public institutions at the mercy of the state legislature.

As a result of all of this, the Louisiana higher education system is in slow and continued decline. The pattern that has emerged since 2008 is one of recurring cuts with minimal support for other revenue sources, yielding a profound disproportion in the funding model. In 2008, the funding model was 70/30 in favor of state appropriations over tuition. Each year has seen this proportion shift, and as of 2017, it has been reversed, so state institutions of higher learning are now majority-funded by students and their families. Recent funding crises have reduced state spending on student scholarships (the TOPS program), requiring students and their families to cover even more of the costs of a college education. The result has been a reduction in enrollment, with a corresponding reduction in the resource pool available for faculty salaries, campus construction, and other projects.

Thus far, most Louisiana colleges have been weathering the storm, and some more easily than others. Faculty at most colleges report salary and hiring freezes – they are being asked to teach larger classes and more sections, they are not seeing raises in response to cost of living increases (making their salaries functionally lower than they were a decade ago), and a vast majority are earning significantly less than the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) for a person with their qualifications. Faculty generally suffer from a perception problem – when faculty talk about increased workloads, it can fall on deaf ears, as many in the public perceive education as an “easy” profession as lecturing occupies 12-15 hours per week and faculty have “summers off.” It is not uncommon, however, for instructors and professors to have 60+ hour work weeks once research, publication, grading, advising, mentoring, and departmental/university service are factored in, with expectations for year-long productivity, including summer teaching, field work, research and publication, and university service (June, 2011).

Salary freezes contribute significantly to faculty worries – freezes directly impact payment levels into retirement programs. Salaries that do not reflect inflation or cost-of-living adjustments amount to functional pay cuts, as faculty are simultaneously being asked to contribute more for their health care and their purchasing power is reduced. Additionally, retirement contributions are frozen at current levels, meaning significantly reduced retirement income after decades of inflation. By staying in the state and state retirement systems, faculty are essentially gambling with their futures.

In light of the above pressures, many faculty have left the state to pursue positions at other universities or in other fields, but this “brain drain” has never been quantified. Faculty across the state have informally shared personal anecdotes, but no effort had been made to get a more comprehensive and representative picture of the actual personal and professional impacts on faculty. This report covers the development, administration, and results of the first statewide survey assessing the personal and professional impacts on faculty in Louisiana.

Background

The path to the survey began with a pilot study conducted at McNeese State University in the Fall of 2016 at the behest of the Faculty Senate. McNeese was planning a Town Hall Forum on Higher Education for the Spring 2017 semester, and believed it would be important to have data to discuss with local and state leadership (the pilot questions and results are presented in Table 1). The pilot study results confirmed existing suspicions that faculty were largely disappointed in state policies and worried about their futures. The qualitative elements disclosed significant fears about the stability of the programs and positions, family strife resulting from low and stagnant salaries, and other personal and professional concerns. These data were presented and discussed at a subsequent meeting of the Association of Louisiana Faculty Senates (ALFS), in which the body endorsed moving forward with a larger-scale survey offering a more comprehensive picture of faculty across the state as the results echoed experiences in several other institutions.

Methods

Representatives in ALFS, in conjunction with the Louisiana State University Faculty Senate, developed a broader survey to be administered anonymously at institutions subscribing to the ALFS e-mail distribution list (which represents two- and four-year institutions across the state). The survey questions are presented in Table 2.

The survey instrument used a combination of question types, including forced-choice Likert scales, rank order preferences, and free response questions to collect qualitative and quantitative data. In addition to questions about personal and professional impacts, faculty were asked to disclose information to clarify academic rank, professional responsibilities, as well as factors that would make them willing to remain in Louisiana. The survey was hosted by Survey Monkey, and ran from January 24-31, 2017.

Results

In the week that the survey was available, 575 faculty responded (see *Limitations* below). The initial results are presented in Tables 3a-3ac. Sample open responses are presented in Appendix 1.

Quantitative

The quantitative data demonstrate that a clear majority of faculty are not native to Louisiana (non-native (other state) 56.8%; n=325/572; non-native (international) 13.5%; n=77/572; total 70.2%; n=402/572) and came here for employment (85.5%; n=360/421). Two-thirds are waiting at least 10 years to retire (67.6%; n=386/571), and are active mentors (70.5%; n=369/523), advisers (64.6%; n=338/523), and researchers (70.9%; n=371/523). Vast majorities teach skills and courses required by professional accrediting organizations (83.1%; n=459/552) or are essential to state public needs like job training, health care, primary/secondary education, infrastructure development, etc. (84.5%; n=464/549). The vast majority are underpaid relative to the SREB average (salary is 75-89% of the comparable SREB average 51.3%

(n=272/530); salary is <75% of the comparable SREB average 28.1% (n=149/530); total 79.4% (n=421/530), and the majority have no secondary income (75.7%; n=428/565)).

The data also indicate that most are leaving or looking to leave their institution (71.9%; n=383/532), most are leaving or looking to leave Louisiana (65.2%; n=348/533), and most believe that their positions would not be filled if they left (55.2%; n=303/548). Most believe that their positions are not secure (61.3%; n=338/551). Half would leave higher education in Louisiana if offered a higher paying job in another profession (49.1%; n=264/538), most would leave higher education in Louisiana if offered a similar paying job in another profession (62.4%; n=331/530), and most would leave higher education in Louisiana if offered a lower paying job with the chance of raises (61.2%; n=319/521). The majority would leave for a lower paying educational position in another state if there were opportunities for raises (51.8%; n=276/532). The majority have postponed making large investments in LA because of cuts to higher education (63.9%; n=346/541), have changed their retirement plans (59.5%; n=321/539), and the vast majority are worried about their future (85.3%; n=462/541). The vast majority feel their salary is inadequate to meet their retirement needs (79.1%; n=429/542). The vast majority are not optimistic about the future of higher education in Louisiana (83.8%; n=452/539).

Several trends emerge when conditional data are examined (i.e., the responses of particular populations). The majority of people who teach courses/skills that are necessary for professional program accreditation are leaving or looking to leave Louisiana (60.1%; n=276/459), and do not believe that they would be replaced if they left (51.6%; n=237/459). Additionally, the majority of people teaching courses related to essential public needs are leaving or looking to leave Louisiana (60.5%; n=281/464) and do not believe that they would be replaced if they left (53.2%; n=247/464). In terms of academic program strength, most of those bringing in significant amounts of grant money (\$100K+) are leaving or looking to leave Louisiana (70.2%; n=123/175), most who engage in high-volume publication are leaving or looking to leave (77.9%; n=132/171), and a majority of those who mentor students are leaving or looking to leave Louisiana (65.4%; n=242/370).

Faculty responses indicate some potential paths towards retainment, including raising salaries to the national average (92.5%; n=496/536), raising salaries to the SREB average (90.1%; n=481/534), giving higher education budgetary priority (89.7%; n=479/534), and completely covering faculty health benefits (87.2%; n=464/532).

Qualitative

There were a number of recurring trends in the responses, dealing with issues like compensation relative to other states/industries, concerns about retirement, increasing workloads, and no incentives to engage in professional development or improve performance.

Compensation relative to other states/industries

The strongest recurring theme in the qualitative data was the lack of raises to meet increases in cost-of-living and health care expenses. Respondents repeatedly expressed anger, frustration, and disbelief that salaries were not adjusted to reflect inflation and other recurring external factors, yielding a net loss in real salary purchasing power. Some faculty noted that when raises did happen, they still did not match inflation. Many faculty noted that their level of compensation did not meet the SREB average, which yielded little to no incentive to remain within Louisiana. Additionally, respondents noted opportunities to earn higher salaries in the industries they were teaching (or outside employment), which provided further disincentive to remaining within higher education.

Worries about retirement

A consistent theme was concern about state programs like TRSL, ORP, and the lack of participation in Social Security. Many respondents noted that they were worried about their ability to retire at all, and several reported anger that the Louisiana retirement system was not adequately explained during the hiring process. Many respondents expressed concerns that their retirement packages represented net

losses relative to other programs, as well as concerns that participation in programs like TRSL effectively prevented them from being able to leave the state.

Increasing workloads

Many respondents were concerned about increased workloads via increased class sizes and teaching sections to make up for lost faculty, as well as taking on both administrative and teaching roles to cover administrative gaps. Many were covering so many classes and administrative roles that they found it difficult or impossible to engage in professional development activities like research, publication, and networking. Many were covering these classes without additional compensation in order to make sure that majors were able to graduate. Many felt that state government either was not aware of or did not care about these additions to their workload, and that state government didn't understand what faculty members do for their students, universities, and communities.

No performance incentives

A recurring theme was frustration that there was no longer any connection between effort and compensation. Several explicitly drew parallels between the likelihood of any business retaining employees when effort was not rewarded. Some respondents who indicated that they were still active and productive were doing so to make themselves more attractive applicants for positions in other states.

Miscellaneous

Finally, a handful of participants expressed concerns about the survey design, with suggestions exploring other factors impacting faculty morale, alternative question phrasing, institution-specific grievances, and statements clarifying the reasoning behind certain responses (e.g., marriage to a spouse with a significantly higher income, book chapter publication versus peer-reviewed journal articles, etc.).

Discussion

The responses paint a picture of a statewide faculty body that feels that the environment in Louisiana is hostile to higher education. Over the past decade, faculty have been forced to take on responsibilities well above and beyond their original contracts with little to no compensation (and in many cases, decreased compensation as stagnant salaries fail to match ordinary inflation). Increased course loads and class sizes have directly impacted opportunities for research and professional development (essential not only to keep faculty current on industry or disciplinary trends, but also to ensure that students are kept abreast of the most recent material and research). Salary disparities, benefit reductions, and retirement concerns are pushing faculty to other states and hampering efforts to retain and recruit the talent needed to meet Louisiana's long-term needs. Given the instrumental value of faculty, a loss of one faculty member represents the loss of potentially hundreds of student contact hours in the course of an academic year, which directly impacts student skills training in both discipline/trade specific as well as generalized skill sets (e.g., critical thinking, effective communication, etc.). If even a few hundred faculty leave the state, they take with them tens of thousands of student contact hours. The net effect is a dilution of the quality of statewide student education (Carter, 2012; Jenkins & Belfield, 2014) and reduced opportunities for students and lower four-year graduation rates as budget cuts yield program and faculty cuts (Fenton, Gardner, & Singh, 2001; Lum, 2010), making students less competitive than those from states with more investment in higher education.

There are additional economic impacts to consider. Across the nation, higher education has a well-established impact on state economies, with significant returns on investment in areas as diverse as job creation, generation of tax revenue, and technological development, among others (Aghion, Boustan, Hoxby, & Vandenbussche, 2012; Allgrunn, 2010; Anton & Behling, 2006; College Success Arizona, 2015; EMSI, 2015; EMSI, 2016; EMSI, 2017; Humphreys, 2016). It is clear that significant reductions in funding for higher education do not save money in the long-run – states ultimately lose more money than they gain, as each dollar spent in subsidizing education has a multiplier effect, returning significantly more money for the state (Berger & Fisher, 2013) and directly benefiting local economies (Abel & Deitz, 2012; Florida, 2016; Rothwell, 2015; Steinacker, 2005). It would seem, then, that attempting to save revenue

by cutting higher education funding is ultimately self-defeating in both the short- and long-term picture (Oliff, Palacios, Johnson, & Leachman, 2013). It may seem to “balance the books,” but it is clear that not all costs and returns are in the ledger.

Repeated cuts to higher education over the past decade have created a toxic environment for higher education and its faculty, who feel undervalued and overworked, and have been asked to repeatedly bear the burden of economic management policies that seem to be locked into short-term crisis management, rather than long-term health. Additional cuts are not a solution, nor can a legislature cut its way to quality. “Brain drain” is real and accelerating, and the Louisiana legislature ignores or minimizes it at its peril. Cutting the resources needed to train the next generations of doctors, nurses, engineers, mechanics, and entrepreneurs does not meet the state’s short or long-term health, economic, or infrastructure needs.

The faculty responses yield a potential path forward – many faculty indicate that they would be more willing to stay if salaries were increased, retirement were more secure, and if they felt that there was some link between level of effort and compensation. Given the disparity between Louisiana salaries and the SREB (and national) averages, this is “low-hanging fruit” – if faculty felt that they were valued, their efforts mattered, and that the state appeared to be interested in retaining them and providing for their retirement, they would be more willing to stay. Cutting budgets (and consequently salaries and benefits) has the opposite effect – it increases uncertainty and dissatisfaction, which in turn drives flight to other industries, states, and professions.

Limitations

There are significant concerns about the size of the response population, as 575 respondents represents slightly under 10% of all faculty in the state. However, several educational institutions were not included on the distribution list or did not provide responses by the date the initial survey closed, and as such, the 575 who did respond should be analyzed in light of the total faculty population of represented institutions, which exceeds a 10% response rate.

There are two further lines of analysis that follow. First, given the statewide impacts of cuts to higher education, it is unlikely that an academic institution affected by these cuts which did not take part in the survey would experience significantly different pressures or attrition rates. Informal conversations with representatives from non-responding institutions have identified comparable experiences and frustrations, lending support to the idea that these institutions are more like than unlike, and as a result, we would expect the results to be representative of them, too. Second, even if the 575 respondents are the only faculty experiencing negative impacts, the instrumental value they represent will yield profound statewide losses, given that most faculty who are looking to leave teach courses required for professional accreditation and believe that they would not be replaced due to institutional hiring freezes. This represents a major challenge to the viability and competitiveness of many programs in the state university systems.

Future Research

The current study clarifies the extent of personal and professional impacts of state budget cuts on faculty. Future research is planned to explore projected impacts of faculty attrition in light of the results presented above, with emphasis on projected five, ten, and twenty year impacts. Given the instrumental value of higher education in industries across the state, it will be important to quantify how faculty losses impact future generations of Louisianans.

Conclusions

The data present a very pessimistic picture about the long-term health and well-being of higher education in the state as well as the industries and public needs dependent on it. Faculty leaving the state may result in programs and colleges losing accreditation, as on-going budget crises prevent hiring replacements with comparable skill sets (due to low salaries, low levels of state support, attitudes towards higher education in the state legislature, institutional politics, and other identified factors). Faculty that remain run the risk of becoming disengaged with their students and institutions as they pursue outside

employment and projects to make ends meet and plan for retirement, and incoming faculty view Louisiana institutions merely as springboards to better positions in other states, minimizing investment in local students and communities. These data arguably go beyond mere discontent, but represent a canary in a coal mine, an early signal about coming crises in other industries and social needs. The state must fundamentally reevaluate its attitude towards higher education. “Doing less with less” isn’t a tenable mantra and its impact isn’t limited to higher education – it will reflect our inability to meet a broad spectrum of Louisiana’s needs, both for current and future generations.

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Table 1. McNeese Pilot Study Data

	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Neutral	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree	Data
Professional Impacts						
1. State reductions in higher education funding have led me to explore leaving (or I am leaving) McNeese State University.	43.8%	25.7%	18.1%	4.8%	7.6%	n=105 av.=3.93 md=4 dev.=1.23
2. State reductions in higher education funding have led me to explore leaving (or I am leaving) Louisiana for other opportunities in higher education.	41.2%	20.6%	19.6%	5.9%	12.7%	n=102 av.=3.72 md=4 dev.=1.39
3. State reductions in higher education funding have lead me to explore leaving (or I am leaving) higher education as a profession (e.g., for other professions or retirement).	27.6%	25.7%	22.9%	6.7%	17.1%	n=105 av.=3.4 md=4 dev.=1.4
4. State reductions in higher education funding have led me to believe that my position is no longer secure.	42.5%	21.7%	21.7%	7.5%	6.6%	n=106 av.=3.86 md=4 dev.=1.24
5. If I were to leave, my position would not be filled due to state reductions in higher education funding.	35.0%	29.0%	20.0%	8.0%	8.0%	n=100 av.=3.75 md=4 dev.=1.24
Personal Impacts						
6. State reductions in higher education funding have led me to postpone investing in a home.	38.7%	13.3%	18.7%	10.7%	18.7%	n=75 av.=3.43 md=4 dev.=1.54
7. State reductions in higher education funding have led me to postpone starting a family/having more children.	15.8%	15.8%	29.8%	12.3%	26.3%	n=57 av.=2.82 md=3 dev.=1.4
8. State reductions in higher education funding have led me to postpone making other large investments in Louisiana (e.g., owning property or other long-term commitments in the local or state community).	43.4%	21.2%	23.2%	5.1%	7.1%	n=99 av.=3.89 md=4 dev.=1.23
9. State reductions in higher education funding have led me to change my retirement plans (e.g., leaving the state retirement funds like TRSL, delaying retirement, etc.).	38.1%	16.5%	18.6%	8.2%	18.6%	n=97 av.=3.47 md=4 dev.=1.52
10. State reductions in higher education funding have me worried about other areas of my future (e.g., other long-term plans, sense of stability, ability to remain within the state, my economic status, etc.).	66.7%	21.9%	8.6%	1.0%	1.9%	n=105 av.=3.93 md=4 dev.=1.23

Table 2. State Survey Questions

1. How many years have you worked in higher education in Louisiana?
2. How many total years have you worked in higher education?
3. When are you considering retirement?
4. What is your current academic rank?
5. If your position involves publication, how many publications do you have in refereed journals?
6. If your position involves bringing in grants or endowed professorships, approximately how much have you been awarded?
7. If your position involves academic advising or mentoring, approximately how many students are you responsible for in a given academic year?
8. Do you have secondary income outside your current academic position (e.g., adjunct instruction at another university, working in another profession, etc.)?
9. If yes, approximately how much income does this account for?
10. Which of the following additional responsibilities are currently part of your position? You may select more than one.
11. What is your relationship to Louisiana?
12. If you are a non-native, what brought you to Louisiana?
13. Do you have family in Louisiana?
14. Are you invested in the Teacher's Retirement System of Louisiana?
15. Are the skills and courses you teach necessary elements of an educational program accrediting organization?
16. Are the skills and courses you teach oriented towards professions that meet essential public needs for Louisiana (e.g., job training, health care, primary/secondary education, working with disadvantaged populations, infrastructure development, etc.)?
17. What is the relationship of your salary to the southern regional average?
18. State reductions in higher education funding have led me to explore leaving (or I am leaving)
 - a. my current academic institution.
 - b. Louisiana for other opportunities in higher education.
 - c. higher education as a profession (e.g., for other professions or retirement).
19. State reductions in higher education funding have led me to believe that my position is no longer secure.
20. If I were to leave, my position would not be filled due to state reductions in higher education funding.
21. My salary is commensurate with the national average for faculty of my rank and discipline.
22. I would apply for my current position again.
23. I would encourage others to apply for higher education positions in Louisiana.
24. I would choose to stay in higher education in Louisiana if offered a
 - a. higher-paying position in another profession.
 - b. similarly-paying position in another profession.
 - c. lower-paying position in another profession if it offered me a chance to earn raises.
 - d. higher-paying educational position in another state.
 - e. similarly-paying educational position in another state.
 - f. lower-paying position in another state if it offered me a chance to earn raises.
25. State reductions in higher education funding
 - a. have led me to postpone investing in a home.
 - b. have led me to postpone starting a family/having more children.
 - c. have led me to postpone making other large investments in Louisiana (e.g., owning property or making other long-term commitments in the local or state community).
 - d. have led me to change my retirement plans (e.g., leaving state retirement funds like TRSL, delaying retirement, etc).
 - e. have me worried about other areas of my future (e.g., other long-term plans, sense of stability, ability to remain within the state, my economic status, etc.).
26. My salary is adequate to meet
 - a. the cost of living in my community.
 - b. my health care costs.
 - c. my retirement needs.
27. I am optimistic about the long-term success of higher education in Louisiana.
28. I would be more likely to continue working in higher education in Louisiana
 - a. if faculty salaries were raised to the Southern Regional average for comparable ranks and disciplines.

- b. if faculty salaries were raised to the national average for comparable ranks and disciplines.
 - c. if faculty health benefits were fully covered (offsetting increasing premiums).
 - d. if faculty were given more decision-making capacity in setting educational policy.
 - e. if it were given budgetary priority (e.g., in the event that budget deficits occur, higher education would be funded before cuts to any spending sector were considered).
29. Please rank the following policy options in order from highest priority (1) to lowest priority (6).
- a. Raising salaries to the Southern regional average for my rank and discipline.
 - b. Raising salaries to the national average for my rank and discipline.
 - c. Insuring annual cost-of-living raises.
 - d. Offsetting healthcare costs (increasing employer contributions to health care plans).
 - e. Increasing faculty representation and decision-making capacity in setting state education policy (e.g., greater voting representation in the legislature and governing boards).
 - f. Funding higher education before offering tax cuts/rebates in the budget balancing process.

Table 3a. Survey Responses.**Q1: How many years have you worked in higher education in Louisiana? (years)**

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-5	28.00%	161
6-10	16.17%	93
11-15	17.74%	102
16-20	14.61%	84
21+	23.48%	135
Total		575

Table 3b. Survey Responses.

Q2: How many total years have you worked in higher education? (total years in higher education)

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-5	14.61%	84
6-10	17.74%	102
11-15	15.30%	88
16-20	15.83%	91
21+	36.52%	210
Total		575

Table 3c. Survey Responses.**Q3: When are you considering retirement?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-5 years	16.99%	97
6-10 years	15.41%	88
11-15 years	15.06%	86
16-20 years	15.76%	90
21+ years	36.78%	210
Total		571

Table 3d. Survey Responses.**Q4: What is your current academic rank?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Instructor	19.58%	111
Assistant Professor	25.22%	143
Associate Professor	21.52%	122
Professor	26.81%	152
Other	6.88%	39
Total		567

Table 3e. Survey Responses.

Q5: If your position involves publication, how many publications do you have in refereed journals?

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-5	38.80%	187
6-10	13.07%	63
11-15	9.34%	45
16-20	7.05%	34
21+	31.74%	153
Total		482

Table 3f. Survey Responses.

Q6: If your position involves bringing in grants or endowed professorships, approximately how much have you been awarded?

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-\$10,000	38.95%	164
\$10,001-\$25,000	8.08%	34
\$25,001-\$50,000	4.51%	19
\$50,001-\$100,000	6.89%	29
\$100,001+	41.57%	175
Total		421

Table 3g. Survey Responses.

Q7: If your position involves academic advising or mentoring, approximately how many students are you responsible for in a given academic year?

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-5	33.20%	165
6-10	14.29%	71
11-15	9.05%	45
16-20	8.05%	40
21+	35.41%	176
Total		497

Table 3h. Survey Responses.

Q8: Do you have secondary income outside your current academic position (e.g., adjunct instruction at another university, working in another profession, etc.)?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	24.25%	137
No	75.75%	428
Total		565

Table 3i. Survey Responses.**Q9: If yes, approximately how much income does this account for?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
0-\$10,000	72.29%	180
\$10,001-\$20,000	10.04%	25
\$20,001-\$30,000	5.22%	13
\$30,001-\$40,000	2.01%	5
\$40,001-\$50,000	1.61%	4
\$50,001+	8.84%	22
Total		249

Table 3j. Survey Responses.

Q10: Which of the following additional responsibilities are currently part of your position? You may select more than one.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Academic advising	64.63%	338
Academic counseling	29.64%	155
Mentoring	70.55%	369
Research	70.94%	371
Grant Writing	42.45%	222
Consulting	14.34%	75
Department Head	11.47%	60
Dean	1.34%	7
Other	27.15%	142
Total Respondents: 523		

Table 3k. Survey Responses.**Q11: What is your relationship to Louisiana?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Native	29.90%	171
Non-native (other state)	56.82%	325
Non-native (international)	13.46%	77
Total Respondents: 572		

Table 3l. Survey Responses.**Q12: If you are non-native, what brought you to Louisiana?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Employment offer	85.51%	360
Culture	3.33%	14
Other professional opportunities	14.01%	59
Total Respondents: 421		

Table 3m. Survey Responses.**Q13: Do you have family in Louisiana?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	52.01%	297
No	47.99%	274
Total		571

Table 3n. Survey Responses.**Q14: Are you invested in the Teacher's Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL)?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	47.80%	272
No	52.20%	297
Total		569

Table 3o. Survey Responses.

Q15: Are the skills and courses you teach necessary elements of an educational program accrediting organization?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	83.15%	459
No	16.85%	93
Total		552

Table 3p. Survey Responses.

Q16: Are the skills and courses you teach oriented towards professions that meet essential public needs for Louisiana (e.g., job training, health care, primary/secondary education, working with disadvantaged populations, infrastructure development, etc.)?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	84.52%	464
No	15.48%	85
Total		549

Table 3q. Survey Responses.**Q17: What is the relationship of your salary to the southern regional average?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Significantly More (125+% of the SRA for my rank and discipline)	1.70%	9
More (111-124% of the SRA for my rank and discipline)	1.51%	8
About the same (90-110% of the SRA for my rank and discipline)	17.36%	92
Less (75-89% of the SRA for my rank and discipline)	51.32%	272
Significantly less (<75% of the SRA for my rank and discipline)	28.11%	149
Total		530

Table 3r. Survey Responses.

Q18: State reductions in higher education funding have led me to explore leaving (or I am leaving)...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
my current academic institution.	7.33% 39	14.10% 75	31.20% 166	40.79% 217	6.58% 35	532	3.25
Louisiana for other opportunities in higher education.	10.13% 54	16.89% 90	27.95% 149	37.34% 199	7.69% 41	533	3.16
higher education as a profession (e.g., for other professions or retirement.	26.79% 142	26.60% 141	22.45% 119	17.74% 94	6.42% 34	530	2.50

Table 3s. Survey Responses.

Q19: State reductions in higher education funding have led me to believe that my position is no longer secure.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Disagree	8.17%	45
Disagree	27.95%	154
Agree	36.30%	200
Strongly Agree	25.05%	138
N/A	2.54%	14
Total		551

Table 3t. Survey Responses.

Q20: If I were to leave, my position would not be filled due to state reductions in higher education funding.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Disagree	6.39%	35
Disagree	31.93%	175
Agree	37.04%	203
Strongly Agree	18.25%	100
N/A	6.39%	35
Total		548

Table 3u. Survey Responses.

Q21: My salary is commensurate with the national average for faculty of my rank and discipline.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Disagree	50.74%	276
Disagree	34.38%	187
Agree	11.58%	63
Strongly Agree	1.29%	7
N/A	2.02%	11
Total		544

Table 3v. Survey Responses.**Q22: I would apply for my current position again.**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Disagree	16.91%	92
Disagree	28.31%	154
Agree	39.89%	217
Strongly Agree	10.11%	55
N/A	4.78%	26
Total		544

Table 3w. Survey Responses.**Q23: I would encourage others to apply for higher education positions in Louisiana.**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Disagree	33.45%	184
Disagree	37.64%	207
Agree	22.73%	125
Strongly Agree	3.27%	18
N/A	2.91%	16
Total		550

Table 3x. Survey Responses.**Q24: I would choose to stay in higher education in Louisiana if offered a....**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
higher-paying position in another profession.	18.22% 98	30.86% 166	27.14% 146	15.24% 82	8.55% 46	538	2.65
similarly-paying position in another profession.	22.45% 119	40.00% 212	19.62% 104	9.06% 48	8.87% 47	530	2.42
lower-paying position in another profession if it offered me a chance to earn raises.	24.38% 127	36.85% 192	22.07% 115	7.68% 40	9.02% 47	521	2.40
higher-paying educational position in another state.	18.18% 98	17.07% 92	20.41% 110	37.48% 202	6.86% 37	539	2.98
similarly-paying educational position in another state.	18.18% 96	29.36% 155	24.62% 130	19.13% 101	8.71% 46	528	2.71
lower-paying educational position in another state if it offered me a chance to earn raises.	20.30% 108	31.58% 168	26.69% 142	12.03% 64	9.40% 50	532	2.59

Table 3y. Survey Responses.**Q25: State reductions in higher education funding...**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
have led me to postpone investing in a home.	16.36% 88	35.32% 190	16.91% 91	13.38% 72	18.03% 97	538	2.81
have led me to postpone starting a family/having more children.	16.60% 89	30.22% 162	13.99% 75	10.45% 56	28.73% 154	536	3.04
have led me to postpone making other large investments in Louisiana (e.g., owning property or making other long-term commitments in the local or state community).	10.72% 58	18.48% 100	32.72% 177	31.24% 169	6.84% 37	541	3.05
have led me to change my retirement plans (e.g., leaving state retirement funds like TRSL, delaying retirement, etc.).	8.72% 47	24.12% 130	31.54% 170	28.01% 151	7.61% 41	539	3.02
have me worried about other areas of my future (e.g., other long-term plans, sense of stability, ability to remain within the state, my economic status, etc.).	5.73% 31	6.84% 37	30.87% 167	54.53% 295	2.03% 11	541	3.40

Table 3z. Survey Responses.**Q26: My salary is adequate to meet...**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
the cost of living in my community.	12.50% 68	30.88% 168	47.79% 260	7.90% 43	0.92% 5	544	2.54
my health care costs.	13.15% 71	27.78% 150	49.44% 267	7.59% 41	2.04% 11	540	2.58
my retirement needs.	37.08% 201	42.07% 228	15.13% 82	3.51% 19	2.21% 12	542	1.92

Table 3aa. Survey Responses.**Q27: I am optimistic about the long-term success of higher education in Louisiana.**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Disagree	39.15%	211
Disagree	44.71%	241
Agree	12.43%	67
Strongly Agree	2.78%	15
N/A	0.93%	5
Total		539

Table 3ab. Survey Responses.**Q28: I would be more likely to continue working in higher education in Louisiana...**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Total	Weighted Average
if faculty salaries were raised to the Southern Regional average for comparable ranks and disciplines.	1.50% 8	3.93% 21	50.56% 270	39.51% 211	4.49% 24	534	3.42
if faculty salaries were raised to the national average for comparable ranks and disciplines.	1.12% 6	2.05% 11	31.34% 168	61.19% 328	4.29% 23	536	3.65
if faculty health benefits were fully covered (offsetting increasing premiums).	0.94% 5	5.45% 29	40.79% 217	46.43% 247	6.39% 34	532	3.52
if faculty were given more decision-making capacity in setting educational policy.	2.06% 11	10.49% 56	44.01% 235	34.08% 182	9.36% 50	534	3.38
if it were given budgetary priority (e.g., in the event that budget deficits occur, higher education would be funded before cuts to any spending sector were considered).	0.94% 5	3.37% 18	34.08% 182	55.62% 297	5.99% 32	534	3.62

Table 3ac. Survey Responses.

Q29: Please rank the following policy options in order from highest priority (1) to lowest priority (6).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Score
Raising salaries to the Southern regional average for my rank and discipline.	21.33% 106	32.19% 160	15.49% 77	12.68% 63	8.25% 41	10.06% 50	497	4.15
Raising salaries to the national average for my rank and discipline	32.54% 164	17.86% 90	14.29% 72	12.10% 61	11.51% 58	11.71% 59	504	4.13
Insuring annual cost-of-living raises	18.20% 91	26.00% 130	35.20% 176	11.20% 56	6.60% 33	2.80% 14	500	4.30
Offsetting healthcare costs (increasing employer contributions to health care plans)	2.77% 14	7.72% 39	19.41% 98	33.47% 169	19.41% 98	17.23% 87	505	2.89
Increasing faculty representation and decision-making capacity in setting state education policy (e.g., greater voting representation in the legislature and governing boards)	3.55% 18	8.28% 42	7.10% 36	12.82% 65	29.59% 150	38.66% 196	507	2.27
Funding higher education before offering tax cuts/rebates in the budget balancing process	24.28% 127	8.99% 47	9.37% 49	16.83% 88	23.14% 121	17.40% 91	523	3.42

Appendix 1. Sample Qualitative Responses.

The state budget cuts actually lowered my annual salary several years ago, when summer courses were eliminated and we have not have a raises since these budget cuts began. So, I am actually working in a deficit over these past years, which has dwindled my savings and retirement. I cannot work in another job because my workload will not allow it. Even in the summer, I am working on my 9-month semester classes. I teach 7 different courses (12 hours = 4 different courses every semester) in all 3 areas of concentrations and multiple levels (sophomore, junior and senior) in our program. All courses I teach are required courses to complete our program. I believe that if I left or retired today, it would take 3 professors to cover my work load. My department head is actually worried that this might happen.

Tenth year -- no raises, no cost of living increases, zero compensation for annual health care and tax increases. This all the while seeing increases in salaries for administration. Enough said. As a result, many of us are max'd out on credit cards and technically living below or near the poverty line.

The cost of health insurance to faculty has gone up, but not salaries. The cost of coming to work (i.e., parking) has gone up, but not our salaries. Employer contributions to retirement are pathetic. It is costing faculty more and more to come to work. The legislature sees higher education as a burden, not an investment, and this short-sightedness is driving people of intellect away. No educator with options should work in Louisiana.

I am currently non-tenure track faculty. When asked if I would consider a similar position that was tenure track, my response is "Do I want to do extra work so that I can lock myself into a low-paying salary". I feel sorry for my colleagues who are tenure-track in Louisiana, who are working themselves ragged for the privilege of being locked in with a low salary for life. Our salaries are so far below the national average that I see tenure in Louisiana as a sentence rather than a reward.

Due to increased insurance cost and lack of merit for 8 years, I make less now than I did 9 years ago.

I am a new hire but I've heard that we have had exactly 2 raises in the last 9 years. The raises weren't much and I actually earn a salary very similar to those who were here those 9 years. This means as the cost of living raises and normal inflation happens, I will effectively earn less and less even if my overall performance improves with each semester. I feel this is absurd and this has to be one of the only jobs were you don't get reliable raises to offset inflation. I just want to make what is right for my level of education and my work ethic and to receive normal raises like those in other industries or other states.

Morale is the lowest I have seen in the 30+ years I have been in education in Louisiana. I was out of education for about 10 years and came back, but am now considering leaving again. Tired of all the political shenanigans and the smoke and mirror stunts pulled by both politicians and educational leadership.

Louisiana higher education is dying. No one should come to work here.

It has been a struggle to stay in higher education. The cost of living is always rising every year but we haven't received any raises in the past 8 years. As a matter of fact. I received an 18% reduction in pay. Something is wrong with that. I am ashamed of the education system in Louisiana today. It is a joke. More for less. I hope and pray something changes soon.

It is so discouraging to feel that our contributions, and higher education are not truly valued in this state. The best way to get or state out of its economic slump is to invest in the human resources of the state, and instead we cut, cut, cut. Good people are leaving, and those not qualified to get jobs elsewhere are staying. Some departments at our University literally can't afford printer ink. This is a very sad state of affairs and will ultimately ruin or chances of being competitive.

It is deeply disturbing that, year after year, our legislature cuts higher education. Universities play a critical role in promoting economic growth and improving quality of life. This shortsighted policy of continually slashing higher education funding is undermining our great state's future.

I'm waiting for my spouse to get a Higher Education position in another state so I can leave Louisiana. I want to escape a state that seems more interested in generating business outcomes than in developing the minds of the youth. I used to love my job, but I don't love working multiple jobs to cover unfilled positions. There is little reason why an Instructor with a Master of Arts degree is serving as a Department Head for one of the largest departments in Liberal Arts. I took the job for one year to allow the university time to hire a permanent Dept. Head. It has now been 5 years and there is no indication the situation will change unless I quit.

I have recently become single again. I feel I simply cannot afford the property taxes, home insurance, and upkeep in order to purchase another home on my income alone. It is very discouraging that after working at this institution for over 10 years, owning a home is not financially viable. I would also love to foster or adopt a child, but I simply could not afford the additional healthcare costs and childcare that I would need as a single parent. Again, one would hope that after investing a decade in their profession, this is something that would be manageable. But here in Louisiana, it is not. I am convinced that I must relocate to another state in order to see progress in my financial and personal circumstances. It simply is not going to happen in Louisiana.

My teaching profession is slowly transforming into a job - I will always put my students first, but it is very difficult when we are continually asked to do more with less. I have used personal funds to improve instruction in my classroom for many years, and this fact translates to a decrease in my salary and my overall outlook.

I do not make enough money to cover monthly bills and I live extremely modestly. (I do not eat out regularly or otherwise spend unnecessary money on a regular basis). I present at several national conferences per year, but the cost of traveling is not fully covered and that also makes it harder to maintain engagement in my fields.

We all work very very hard for our students even though we are making less money than we should be making. Most of us will continue working hard to make our students as successful as they can be. But there is only so much we can do when we are exhausted, overworked, time-strapped, and anxious about our jobs.

Accepting my position on faculty in LA is probably one of my biggest mistakes in life. My retirement will be financially impossible and will now have to work at least part-time for the balance of my life. Major reasons for this is not paying into Social Security for the past 13 years (though vested, there is a large penalty for not contributing). The institutional contribution to my retirement low due to the system redirecting those dollars toward sustaining the Teacher's Retirement System. The amount contributed into my Optional Retirement plan is illegally low given the State's misguided choice not to allow employees to pay into Social Security. Some of my reasons for wanting to leave my position There are no adequate raises for cost of living or an equitable salary. There is zero faculty governance in my School and little in my Institution. Dean level administration controls all aspects of my Department's planning, priorities, duties, and budget. We are extremely shorthanded on faculty and Departmental administrative help. The teaching technology in our primary Departmental classroom is about 10 years behind and there is actual administrative opposition to all requests for technical and/or other classroom upgrades. Set percents in time allocations has no basis in reality given faculty are so overworked that the actual percent total would be well over 100%. There are no advantages or rewards (professionally or personally). Financially, my position within the LSU System has been disastrous. My reason for staying in my position is for the students. Overall, I see no reason for any optimism per the state of higher education in Louisiana.

Retirement. More important to me than any increase in salary, or healthcare cost offsetting, etc. is retirement funding. Most of us (at least in the LSU system) are on an Optional Retirement Plan (ORP). ORPs are designed as supplements to Social Security. But we do not pay into Social Security. So we effectively get a partial retirement plan. Moreover, the level of contribution by the state into ORP plans is an embarrassment. Retirement for the majority of faculty in LA is wholly inadequate to put it nicely. This is just one indication among many that LA does not care about its higher ed faculty, let alone value them. If I had it do over again, I never would have applied for my position here. Most of the time I feel exploited, depressed, disrespected, or outraged. I often feel these all at once. Until LA starts genuinely supporting and valuing higher ed, including faculty, it will continue to rank near the bottom of every important quality of life metric.

I am a highly contributive member of my school's faculty and hold international recognition in my field. The recent and paltry "merit" raises were awarded in my college as an equity raise to increase the salaries of the lower paid ranks. I never received a raise larger than 1% because I have been told that I'm already compensated "well

enough." This is beyond demoralizing and I have been less and less engaged with the work of my college. I haven't been compensated "well enough" to combat the rising benefits costs, the rising cost of college tuition for my children, and other inflationary engines in our economy. The anti-intellectual climate in our state (word and deed - i.e. Consistently defunding higher education) makes it extremely difficult to rationalize a decision to stay here and engage with the agenda to improve our state.

The most depressing aspect of working at LSU the past 5-8 years has been the lack of incentives to do well. There have been essentially no rewards for doing better - no raises, no rearrangements of duties, no extra funding for performing above and beyond. And at the same time there are less resources, more students, and more paperwork required to do the same thing as before.

Louisiana suffers from a faculty/student ratio that is too high. It is industrial education with as many as 1,000 students in a class room. While some of the specialized programs are very fine indeed, I would never send a child or advise the child of a friend to attend school in Louisiana.

At most, I plan to stay in Louisiana through 2017-2018. There is a lot of research I am completing and I am becoming more highly demanded in my field. I plan to leave soon, since no raises are in sight.

We, the faculty, constantly discuss lack of salary raises. But considering the rate of inflation, we have been having salary cuts of 1 to 2 percent per year.

I am embarrassed to work for the state of Louisiana now.

I would say I am relatively happy here at LSU and recognize that the grass always seems greener on the other side etc. But the lack of raises for a decade is taking a toll. And so I have been applying for positions elsewhere. The job market in my highly specialized field is still poor, but other states are beginning to rebuild their higher ed systems, mainly at the entry level so far. Maybe I will retire here, but even so LSU will have lost a lot of my productivity. I have diverted much of my energy into a summer real estate business and have thereby doubled my annual income. In years past I would have been happy to work on research publications and grant proposals over the summer, even though I am on a 9-month appointment. But not anymore. Besides that practical need for faculty to divert time away from their careers in order to supplement their incomes, morale is in the basement. What makes a low salary even worse is the inequity of new hires making almost as much as highly accomplished people who have been here for years. Cronyism and corruption just add to that inequity. Besides raises we need to address the salary compression and other forms of inequity that depress morale.

This state is the most belligerent toward professors that I have worked in or heard of. Louisianans will not be able to advance without professors and yet has no respect, appreciation or understanding of what we have to offer. No wonder this state is usually 49 or 50th in the country for so many negative issues and 1st in the country for budget cuts. It's appalling to live here and demoralizing to be where you are not appreciated.

It is interesting to live in a state that doesn't value education. The two areas available to cut during budget crises (health care, education) should be the only two things protected from budget cuts -- how as a people did we ever get this backwards? It is also remarkable how often I hear the line about how universities should be run more like businesses. In fact, there is no business that could run this way and survive. How well would a business do if they paid lower salaries than their competitors, offered poor benefits, didn't give cost of living increases, didn't give raises, cut operating budgets on a regular basis and told the employees to suck it up, and maintained facilities that leaked and regularly broke/collapsed? Come to think of it, maybe the comparison I should be making isn't to a business, but to a coal mine.

Instead of salary raises, we have been receiving salary reductions in the last few years. Our take home amounts have consistently decreased since 2010.

I'm leaving LSU for a private university in VA after a year and a half here. This state is an irreparable mess. I would have taken a pay cut, even, because cost-of-living raises, institutional contribution to retirement, and tuition remission far outweigh my current salary.

This is the most demoralizing environment I have ever worked in. I am wasting my education and experience, working harder than I ever have, and for a fraction of the salary. I'm embarrassed to be working in Louisiana higher education.

I moved here in 2015 to start my postdoctoral career in science. In many ways, the ever increasing cuts in higher education and my stagnant salary which doesn't incorporate the increased cost of living each year has made me regret my decision. I regret coming to Louisiana, even though I liked the research opportunity. I had a job offer in 2015 from Iowa State University that would have paid \$6,000 a year more for the same position with a different research topic. I feel like I made the wrong decision for both my long term career goals and my immediate financial well being by coming to Louisiana. If you convert my salary into hourly pay, I only make \$11.00 an hour more than an opening position at Home Depot. A position that requires only a high school diploma, and I have a doctoral degree, and spent 10 years in school to get it.

I am now attending classes at the same time as I'm working so that I can put my student loans from my graduate degrees in deferment. I can't afford to pay even just the interest on my student loans with my current salary. I am going to have to look for another job, not because I want to, but because I financially have to.

Our faculty salaries are no longer sufficient to raise a family comfortable, and 2nd/3rd incomes are now necessary for most families. Increases in insurance premiums and out-of-pocket expenses have caused my take-home pay to actually DECLINE, though I am working more hours than ever before. It's disheartening.

You get what you pay for. Right now Louisiana is paying for a third-rate system of higher education. There are senior professors (myself included) who are making no more in inflation-adjusted dollars now than they were when they first hired as junior assistant professors. No one with any sense or ability would agree to work for a state with such an abysmal record. In the competition for good faculty, Louisiana must rank at the very bottom.

Most people in my field go to academics instead of industry (higher pay) because they like teaching, research and students. It is demoralizing to not be able to do a job you care about, well with inadequate staffing and resources.

If the legislature does not change course, there will not be recognizable higher education in this state in twenty years. Every young faculty member knows this. Some are trying to leave, some are hoping against hope for a change in funding priorities. I'm in the former camp.

At this point, no incentives would encourage me to stay at LSU. It is time to take a position at another major university as the future here does not look promising.

Constantly lurching from crisis to crisis is very distracting and makes it hard to plan for the future. It lowers morale and makes it difficult to retain and hire qualified people, which in turn puts more stress on those of us who remain.

I have had two conversations in this week alone regarding faculty leaving because they can no longer afford to live here. At minimum we must have a cost of living wages increase, but if the lawmakers actually cared about higher education in the way they profess that they do, then raising our salaries to southern regional average is mandatory. The state is being drained of educators, and the cost to Louisiana in the long term will be far greater than the cost of adjusting our salaries now.

The situation for higher education in Louisiana has worsened steadily since my arrival in the state some 13 years ago. At this rate pessimism begins to take hold. How much lower can we go and still be a valuable entity? What would be our new role if the current one is compromised? Why are we so little valued by our state and communities?

The lack of commitment to Louisiana Higher ed is disturbing. We consistently see how an outdated tax code allows multi-billion dollar companies to pay zero tax, while increasing sales to tax and cutting education. This pattern also includes the biggest cuts of state funding for any state in the union in the last decade, which creates stagnating pay scales, and a virtual guarantee that those who can leave will leave. Third tier schools in other states

are recruiting faculty members unsolicited with pay raises of >35%. Many like Louisiana, but you cannot compete with such stark differences in pay, lack of raises or lack of support for a functioning system of higher ed.

I have worked in higher education in Louisiana for over eight years. The two main issues I have are: the lack of cost of living increases and/or raises, and the yearly anxiety caused by the constant budget cuts. I have only received one tiny raise in nine years and yet it seems I am required to put in more work and energy each year. In addition, every year I have to worry if the budget cuts to higher education will result in my contract not being renewed. If you are not sure from one year to the next whether you will have a job or not, it makes it difficult to invest your time, energy, and emotion in your school, community, and state. The uncertainty also makes it nearly impossible (at least for me) to truly build a home and family here. I would like to stay in Louisiana, but I don't really see a future here with the way things have been and continue to be.

I'm not asking for a huge raise. I honestly didn't go into academia to get rich but a slight cost-of-living increase would go a long way. The way LA cuts education is disgraceful and the second area they cut- healthcare- is also bad because my significant other works in that area. I joke that we're the unluckiest couple in LA but it's basically true. There is constant pressure to do more with less. And yet there is no ability to raise tuition or try to recruit more out-of-state students to offset the costs of running a university. I feel like LA wants to have it's cake (a world-class university) and eat it too (pay professors crap and refuse to hire new people so they all leave). I'm constantly worried about restructuring at the school. There are rumors flying around our college and I can name over a dozen people who are leaving to get away from the constant budget and political issues. Not that long ago I was asked to apply for another university, doing the same job but I would make \$30,000 more a year. That's not a small amount. I don't feel confident that my pension will be safe in the long run. I don't feel like I or my significant other will ever get a raise. I've said that if I go more than 5 years without a raise- I'm moving.

The true costs of ongoing budget cuts are not always directly observed. They have demoralized faculty and staff, shaken students' confidence in the quality of their education, and increased the interest of educated people to look elsewhere for careers. It's the erosion of talent and commitment that will harm the long term economic future of the state.

1. Salaries must be increased. 2. Contributions for retirement must be increased, especially for those outside the state system (TIAA, etc.) 3. Cost of living increases (and merit raises) must be given. I came to LSU after serving at well-known private institutions in Boston. I came because I saw innovation, enthusiasm, and great promise for the future of this institution. That is no longer the case. Years of budget cuts have had an impact on my ability to do my job as best I can. Years of no cost-of-living increases, low contributions to retirement accounts, and low salary are frustrating and demoralizing. In addition, I am one of those who will be affected by the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset provisions of social security. No one ever informed me of these issues when I accepted a job in Louisiana. That is unconscionable. Although I have had many good experiences here and I have valued working with our students, I regret that I accepted a faculty position here. It has been to my detriment, especially financially.

I have full intentions of leaving Louisiana for a higher salary and better benefits by summer. I can't afford to live here anymore. Our wages may stay stagnant, but the cost of living does not. It's really a shame. I thought I would stay here until I retired, but there's no evidence that I am appreciated in my position and I am falling behind in my profession due to lack of resources.

As someone early in my career, I worry about the lifelong detrimental consequences of staying in LA higher ed. The state routinely undervalues education yet laments being at the bottom of various well-being indexes.