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NATCHITOCHEs -- Louisiana adult learners who are looking to complete their college degree in as little time as possible will have a new option this fall.

The Continuum for All Louisiana Learners (CALL) will begin in August at Bossier Parish Community College and Northwestern State University. Adult learners will be able to work toward an Associate of Applied Science in Business Administration or Computer Information Systems with a concentration in Software Applications at BPCC. A Bachelor of General Studies with a concentration in Professional Studies will be available at NSU.

Each degree program is available entirely online and will be “fast track,” offering more flexible options for adults who are balancing school, work, and family. The programs are designed to allow students to complete a degree in a shorter period of time. Most fast-track courses will be offered in four-week and eight-week sessions, with multiple sessions offered during each fall, spring and summer semester. Louisiana adults who attended college but were not able to complete their degree are encouraged to learn more about CALL by logging onto www.yourCALLla.org.

Another unique component of the program is the ability to earn credit through a prior learning assessment, the process of earning credit for college level learning acquired through work, training, volunteering or personal experiences. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) opportunities include:

- Nationally standardized exams
- Challenge and/or skills exams for specified courses
- Non-academic instruction evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE)
- Portfolio assessment of college-level learning acquired through work, training, volunteering, or personal experiences

CALL is a joint initiative of the Louisiana Board of Regents, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the Consortium for Education, Research and Technology of North Louisiana (CERT) aimed at making it easier for Louisiana adults with some college credits but no college degree, to enroll at a Louisiana public college or university and earn a degree or other college credential. CALL will initially be piloted in the northern third of the state, a region with significant adult educational needs which hamper its ability to develop and sustain economic growth.

The goal of CALL is to expand adult participation in postsecondary education by:

1. better understanding the needs of adult learners in Louisiana
2. establishing innovative programming to respond to those needs
3. aggressively promoting adult learning services and programming
4. creating convenient pathways to postsecondary certificates and degrees.

The CALL initiative is part of the Board of Regents' "Education...Go for More!" Campaign, being implemented in conjunction with the SREB's Adult Learning Campaign. The campaign is supported by a grant from Lumina Foundation for Education.