

### Freshman Face Tougher Standards in Fall 2001



FRESHMEN WHO PLAN TO ENROLL AT the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in Fall 2001 must meet more stringent academic standards.

That's when the university will implement its second phase of selective admissions.

Until 1999, first-time freshmen were only required to have a high school diploma. But, in fall 1999, UL Lafayette began requiring first-time freshmen to have a score of 18 out of a possible 36 on the American College Test and a "C" overall grade point average in high school.

The new requirements are a 19 ACT score and a 2.0 GPA. Students who have a 2.3 GPA for their core courses, and who qualify for TOPS scholarships, will be allowed to attend regardless of their ACT score.

"Students registering now are meeting most of the requirements," said Dr. Ray Authement, UL Lafayette president.

One admissions requirement will stay the same: a freshman will not be allowed to attend UL Lafayette if he or she must take both remedial math and remedial English courses. Remedial course work is offered at South Louisiana Community College.

UL Lafayette officials said they are pleased with the results of selective admissions so far. The average ACT score for entering freshmen has risen from 19.6 to 20.6. And, the number of classes of developmental English has decreased by 75 percent; developmental math classes have dropped by 55 percent from Fall 1998 to Fall 2000.

Authement said that selective admissions has made UL Lafayette academically stronger. "We're going to continue to ratchet up as students in the area improve."

A third phase of tougher admission standards has been proposed, but no implementation date has been set.

### University Crest Has New Look For New Century

MARTIN HALL'S FAÇADE GOT AN update in August when a revised university crest was installed.

The emblem incorporates the university's new name and better reflects the diversity of its students.

"The original seal, made of cast concrete, couldn't be removed from Martin Hall without sustaining damage. So, the newly designed crest was placed over it," said Julie Simon-Dronet, director of Public Relations and News Services.

"While it will take some time to change all references to USL on campus to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, replacing the large crest on the front of our main administrative building was a priority. A generous donation by Lafayette Coca-Cola Bottling Company made it possible."

Modification of the crest began in 1995. "We wanted the university's primary symbol to reflect all people who contribute to its success," said Dr. E. Joseph Savoie, who was vice president of Advancement Services then. He is now Commissioner of Higher Education for the Louisiana Board of Regents.

The current design incorporates portions of the Acadian and Creole flags, while maintaining several design elements from the original seal created in 1926 by the school's first president, Edwin L. Stephens. Red, gold and green stripes have been added to represent West African heritage. Those colors are taken from the Mali Republic National flag and the Senegal Republic National flag.

The seal also includes redefined

oak tree leaves. All components are encircled by the university's new name.

### Celebration of "Tosca" Led by Historian at UL Lafayette



FOR DR. SUSAN NICASSIO, A 100TH anniversary celebration of Puccini's opera "Tosca" in Rome this summer was like a dream.

The UL Lafayette associate professor of history recalls sitting in the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle one night listening to enchanting music by Italian composer Giacomo Puccini's grandfather. Recreated for the conference after 200 years, Domenico Puccini's *te deum* celebrated the supposed defeat of the French in their 1800 invasion of Italy—the same events that serve as the basis for "Tosca."

"I honestly thought I was hallucinating," Nicassio recalled later. "I thought, 'This is impossible.'"

But, it wasn't her imagination.

Nicassio was one of four scholars responsible for the three-day international conference that focused on one of Puccini's most famous works. "Tosca" was first performed in January 1900.

Nicassio had suggested a conference to fellow Puccini scholar Deborah Burton of Harvard University. Collaboration with colleagues in Italy culminated in the organization of "Tosca 2000," a gathering of historians, performers and musicologists.

Nicassio fell in love with "Tosca" when she was 13 years old and heard a radio broadcast of the Metropolitan Opera's rendition. When she grew up, she became an opera singer and performed the role of Tosca. She later became an historian.

Nicassio recently wrote *Tosca's Rome: The Play and the Opera in*