



GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY

THE PRESIDENTIAL INVESTITURE OF

DR. MARTIN LEMELLE, JR.

SEPTEMBER 6, 2024

9:00 A.M.

FREDRICK C. HOBDY ASSEMBLY CENTER

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GRAMBLING
STATE
UNIVERSITY



LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

To the Grambling State University Community,

I am delighted to join you on this momentous day to celebrate the leadership and commitment of President Martin Lemelle, Jr., as he is officially installed as Grambling's 11th president. We stand today honoring our past and looking to our future, as we celebrate all that has been achieved and the bright promise of tomorrow.

This historic institution plays an integral role in our state's success as we strive to develop talent to ensure that Louisiana and all her people will prosper. As a campus community, you are committed to the students you serve. You are dedicated to academic excellence. You remain that beloved place for my parents and thousands of other proud alums: the place "Where Everybody is Somebody."

For your new president, today is the culmination of a lifetime of work and tremendous blessings. Dr. Lemelle takes the mantle of leadership determined to raise Grambling to new heights and energized by the opportunities on the horizon.

He understands that for our state to reach our goal of doubling the number of postsecondary credentials awarded annually by the year 2030, we must successfully educate the students we have and open doors for future Tigers whose lives can be transformed as a result of their Grambling degrees and the nurturing and support received on this campus.

As a third-generation Grambling alumnus, President Lemelle has seen firsthand that education can change lives, lift families, and strengthen communities. This is both his lived experience and a guiding force through which he will lead this institution. He is committed to expanding opportunities, collaborating with an eye toward progress and effectively sharing the Grambling story to ensure success for years to come.

Today I am proud to welcome home our head Tiger, Dr. Martin Lemelle.

To the Grambling community, alumni, and friends, congratulations on your new leader, and thank you for your unwavering and heartfelt support of this institution.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed

Commissioner of Higher Education

LETTER FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM

Dear Grambling Family,

It is an honor to welcome Grambling State University's 11th President, Dr. Martin Lemelle, Jr. This Investiture marks a time of reflection and renewal as the leadership of this historic institution transitions into the hands of someone who has both grown with and been shaped by GSU. His deep connection to the university, paired with broad experiences across the nation and beyond, makes him uniquely suited to guide Grambling into its next chapter.

Dr. Lemelle's growth as a leader is rooted in a profound understanding of this institution's mission and values. His recent leadership and operational experience, combined with his steadfast commitment to Grambling, position him to lead with strength and insight. His ability to balance tradition with innovation ensures that Grambling remains a source of empowerment for students, faculty, and the community.

HBCUs like Grambling play a vital role in shaping communities and transforming lives. Dr. Lemelle's leadership honors that legacy, carrying forward the unique spirit that HBCUs bring to education. His experiences at Grambling and beyond equip him to sustain this tradition—uplifting, inspiring, and preparing students while reinforcing the powerful connection between campus and community.

In my role within the System, I look forward to supporting Dr. Lemelle as he builds on Grambling's proud legacy. Together we will continue to champion the success of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the broader community. Welcome home, President Lemelle. You embody the enduring spirit of the place "Where Everybody is Somebody," and under your guidance, Grambling's future shines brightly with promise and purpose. Congratulations, Dr. Lemelle—I know you will serve Dear Ole Grambling into its greatest years yet.

Sincerely,

Rick Gallot

President and CEO of the University of Louisiana System

LETTER FROM THURGOOD MARSHALL COLLEGE FUND

Dear Dr. Lemelle,

Congratulations are in order as Grambling State University formally installs you as the 11th president of this historic institution. It's such an honor to witness your ascent from a Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) scholar participating in Leadership Institute to leading one of our nation's great public HBCUs. Your commitment to academic excellence and education are commendable and noteworthy.

As demonstrated by the great work you've already done as president in a short time, it's clear Grambling State is in excellent hands. Your history with the institution as executive vice-president and chief operating officer will help guide your leadership to help it rise to a higher level. Your alumni status will ensure you go above and beyond to care for your alma mater.

As one of TMCF's member schools, we will continue to support and advocate for Grambling State and its students. The legacy and future of the institution and its students are of utmost importance to us. We support you and look forward to continued success during your tenure as president. We know you will embody the motto that everybody is somebody at Grambling State.

Sincerely,

Harry L. Williams

President & CEO Thurgood Marshall College Fund

Philosophy Statement

Grambling State University endeavors to achieve excellence in higher education through teaching, research and service governed by the principles of academic freedom. The University believes that education is the cornerstone of an enlightened, creative and productive society. It strives to be true to its motto: “Grambling State University is the place where everybody is somebody.”

Mission Statement

Grambling State University is a comprehensive, historically-black, public institution that offers a broad spectrum of undergraduate and graduate programs of study. Through its undergraduate major courses of study, which are under girded by a traditional liberal arts program, and through its graduate school, which has a decidedly professional focus, the University embraces its founding principle of educational opportunity. With a commitment to the education of minorities in American society, the University seeks to reflect in all of its programs the diversity present in the world. The university advances the study and preservation of African American history, art and culture.

Grambling State University is a community of learners who strive for excellence in their pursuit of knowledge and who seek to contribute to their respective major academic disciplines. The University prepares its graduates to compete and succeed in careers related to its programs of study, to contribute to the advancement of knowledge, and to lead productive lives as informed citizens in a democratic society. The University provides its students a living and learning environment which nurtures their development for leadership in academics, athletics, campus governance, and in their future pursuits.

The University affords each student the opportunity to pursue any program of study provided that the student makes reasonable progress and demonstrates that progress in standard ways. Grambling fosters, in its students, a commitment to service and to the improvement in the quality of life for all persons. The University expects that all persons who matriculate and who are employed at Grambling will reflect through their study and work that the University is indeed a place where all persons are valued, “where everybody is somebody.”

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY

Grambling State University opened on November 1, 1901, as the Colored Industrial and Agricultural School. It was founded by the North Louisiana Colored Agriculture Relief Association, organized in 1896 by a group of African-American farmers who wanted to organize and operate a school for African-Americans in their region of the state.

In response to the Association's request for assistance, Tuskegee Institute's Booker T. Washington sent Charles P. Adams to help the group organize an industrial school. Adams became its founding president.

In 1905, the school moved to its present location and was renamed the North Louisiana Agricultural and Industrial School. By 1928, after becoming a state junior college and being renamed the Louisiana Negro Normal and Industrial Institute, the school began to award two-year professional certificates and diplomas.

In 1936, the curriculum emphasis shifted to rural teacher education; students were able to receive professional teaching certificates after completing a third academic year.

The first baccalaureate degree was awarded in 1944, in elementary education. In 1946, the school became Grambling College, named after P.G. Grambling, the Caucasian sawmill owner who had donated the parcel of land where the school was constructed. In addition to elementary educators, Grambling prepared secondary teachers and added curricula in sciences, liberal arts, and business, transforming the college from a single purpose institution of teacher education into a multipurpose college. In 1949, the college earned its first accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

In 1974, the addition of graduate programs in early childhood and elementary education gave the school a new status and a new name – Grambling State University. The university expanded and prospered between 1977 and 2000. Several new academic programs were incorporated and new facilities were added to the 384-acre campus, including a business and computer science building, school of nursing, student services building, stadium, stadium support facility and an intramural sports center.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 1901 Founded by Charles P. Adams who became the first President; the Institution was first known as The Colored Industrial and Agricultural School and was supported by private donations
- 1912 Became a Quasi-Public School
- 1918 Name changed to Lincoln Parish Training School under the direction of Lincoln Parish School Board
- 1928 Became a state junior college; name changed to Louisiana Negro Normal and Industrial Institute
- 1939 A three-year professional certificate was awarded
- 1940 A four-year degree program was inaugurated
- 1944 First Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education was granted
- 1946 Name changed to Grambling College of Louisiana
- 1953 Received initial accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
- 1958 Liberal Arts Program was inaugurated; obtained full membership in SACS
- 1974 Name changed to Grambling State University; Graduate School was inaugurated
- 1997 Eddie Robinson, Sr. earned the title of “Winningest Collegiate Football Coach” with 324 victories in 1985, ended his career with 408 wins
- 2000 Ranked first among the nation’s colleges and universities in awarding four-year degrees in computer science to African American students
- 2003 Achieved 100% accreditation of the State’s mandatory degree programs
- 2010 Eddie G. Robinson Museum officially opened on GSU campus & Accreditations by Southern Association Colleges and Schools reaffirmed
- 2011 Achieved 100% accredited programs eligible for accreditation
- 2012 Obtained GSU West Campus Annex through Legislative Act 236, granting 157 acres and 47 buildings

- 2013 Welcomed the new GSU mighty fighting tiger statue
- 2014 Wins \$50,000 in student scholarships from Allstate and the Tom Joiner Foundation, “Quotes for Education Program”
- 2015 One of Grambling State University’s endowed professors in the Biology Department received \$54,000 grant to research cancer on toxicogenomics
- 2016 The Governor of Louisiana John Bel Edwards visited Grambling State University
- 2017 Grambling State University’s President Gallot chosen as “2017 HBCU Best Leader”.
- 2018 Grambling State University received approval to offer the first Bachelor of Science Degree in Cybersecurity
- 2019 Grambling State University was approved for First Steps in offering Louisiana’s First Bachelor’s in Cloud Computing
- 2020 Grambling State University received full re-accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for the next ten years.
- 2021 Grambling State University becomes the first HBCU to partner with SkillType.
- 2022 Multi Platinum recording artist “E-40” donates \$100,000 to Grambling State University to benefit the music department, sound recording studio.
- 2023 Grambling State University’s School of Nursing named one of the top 10 Nursing Schools in the United States.

Grambling State University offers its first Ph.D. in Criminology and Justice Administration.

LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

Colored Industrial and Agricultural School
North Louisiana Agricultural and Industrial School
Louisiana Negro Normal and Industrial Institute

Mr. Charles P. Adams (1901–1936)

Grambling College

Mr. Ralph W. E. Jones (1936–1977)

Grambling State University

Dr. Joseph B. Johnson (1977–1991)

Dr. Harold W. Lundy (1991–1994)

Dr. Raymond A. Hicks (1995–1997)

Dr. Leonard L. Haynes III (1997–1998) – Interim

Dr. Steve A. Favors (1998–2001)

Dr. Neari F. Warner (2001–2004) – Interim

Dr. Horace A. Judson (2004–2009)

Dr. Frank G. Pogue (2009–2014)

Dr. Cynthia Warrick (2014–2015) – Interim

Dr. Willie D. Larkin (2015–2016)

Richard J. Gallot, Jr., J.D. (2016–2023)

Dr. Connie Walton (2023) – Interim

Dr. Martin Lemelle, Jr. (2023–Present)



THE PRESIDENTIAL INVESTITURE OF
DR. MARTIN LEMELLE, JR.

Achieving Excellence Through Service

Dr. Connie Walton
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
PRESIDING

PRELUDE

PRELUDE
Dr. Daniel Huey
Assistant Professor of Music

THE PROCESSION

PROCESSIONAL

“March of the Herald’s”

Composed by Harry Sosnick

The University Band

Dr. Nikole Roebuck, Director

*Delegates, Faculty, Platform Guests,
and Eleventh President*

Led by University Marshal

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Dr. Connie Walton

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

The University Marching Band

Lyrics by Francis Scott Key

Arranged by Steve Smith

“Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing”

The University Choir

Dr. Cordara Harper, Director

Lyrics by James Weldon Johnson

Music by J. Rosamond Johnson

INVOCATION

Rev. Dr. Ronald Hinton

INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

Dr. Connie Walton

GREETINGS FROM COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

The Honorable Alvin R. Bradley, Sr.
Mayor, City of Grambling

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed
Louisiana Commissioner of Higher Education

Mr. Sean D. Burns
*Assistant Vice President, Government Relations,
Thurgood Marshall College Fund*

Dr. Charles F. McClelland
Commissioner, Southwestern Athletic Conference

Dr. Janet D. Barnes
Chair, Grambling University Foundation

Dr. Tammy Richardson
President, Grambling University National Alumni Association

GREETINGS FROM CAMPUS REPRESENTATIVES

Dr. Gary Poe
President, Faculty Senate

Ms. Jess'Lyn D. Sanders
Miss Grambling State University

Mr. Morgan L. Patton
President, Student Government Association

Ms. Tiara Freeman
President, Graduate Student Association

MUSICAL SELECTION

The University Choir

Remarks from “The Village”

Dr. Melva K. Wallace

President and CEO, Huston Tillotson University

Mr. and Mrs. Max Ferguson

Friends of the President

Mrs. Dannelle Lemelle Crowe

Family of the President

Miss Paityn Alexander Bibbins

Family of the President

THE INVESTITURE CEREMONY

CHARGE

Richard J. Gallot, Jr., J.D.

President and CEO, University of Louisiana System

PRESENTATION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CHAIN OF OFFICE

Richard J. Gallot, Jr., J.D.

PRESENTATION OF THE PRESIDENTIAL MACE

Dr. Connie Walton

OATH OF OFFICE

Dr. Connie Walton

“How Excellent”

Darilyn Robinson

THE INVESTITURE ADDRESS

Dr. Martin Lemelle, Jr.

Eleventh President of Grambling State University

CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. Connie Walton

THE ALMA MATER

The University Band

BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Ronald Hinton

RECESSIONAL

Dr. Daniel Huey

Assistant Professor of Music

PRESIDENT BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Martin Lemelle, Jr. serves as the 11th President of Grambling State University, bringing a wealth of leadership experience, financial acumen, and a deep-seated commitment to advancing higher education. As a third-generation alumnus of the institution, Dr. Lemelle embodies a family legacy of higher education leadership and a profound dedication to the university's mission.

Prior to assuming the presidency, Dr. Lemelle served as the Executive Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) in Baltimore, Maryland. His tenure at MICA was marked by visionary leadership and strategic financial management, enhancing the operations of the nation's oldest continuously degree-granting college of art and design.

With an extensive background in finance and operations that spans several prestigious organizations, including PricewaterhouseCoopers, IBM, General Electric, Dean Foods, and Industry Retail Group, Dr. Lemelle has adeptly managed budgets collectively valued at approximately \$6.5 billion. His track record highlights his exceptional ability to steward large-scale financial operations and drive organizational success.

Dr. Lemelle played a pivotal role in shaping the future of Grambling State University during his tenure as Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer. His accomplishments include securing the university's most substantial corporate gift to date and significantly improving its fiscal health score by 200%, underscoring his strategic insight and unwavering dedication to the institution's financial stability and growth.

Educationally, Dr. Lemelle holds a B.S. in Accounting, Magna Cum Laude, from Grambling State University, an M.B.A. from The George Washington University, and a Doctorate in Business Administration from SKEMA Business School in Paris, France.

His service extends to numerous memberships, including Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., where he is a recipient of the Byron K. Armstrong Award, and United Way of Central Maryland Board of Directors, where he served as treasurer.

Dr. Lemelle's presidency at Grambling State University is guided by a vision that respects the institution's history and traditions while focusing on co-creating strategic initiatives for the future. His leadership is informed by a comprehensive understanding of higher education challenges and opportunities, driving his commitment to ensuring that Grambling State University remains at the forefront of innovation, academic excellence, and community engagement.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System

Mr. Drew Brown
Mr. Barry Busada
Dr. Jimmy Clarke
Mr. Steve Davison
Mrs. Lola Dunahoe
Dr. Jo'Quishia Lethermon
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Northwestern State University

Dr. William S. Wainwright
Southeastern Louisiana University

Dr. E. Joseph Savoie
*University of Louisiana at
Lafayette*

Dr. Ronald Berry
University of Louisiana at Monroe

Dr. Kathy Johnson
University of New Orleans

Special Thanks

The World Famed Tiger Marching
Band

The GSU Television Center

The University Choir

Inspira Creative

LeToya Foster

Sodexo Magic

Olympus Building Services, Inc.

The University Facilities Staff

Volunteer Ushers

Investiture Planning Committee

Ms. Tisha Arnold

Ms. Christina Chapuis

Ms. Jazmine Cherry

Dr. Cynthia Hester

Mr. Brandon A. Logan

Mrs. Ashlee McClelland

Mr. Adarian D. Williams

Ms. Valencia Williams

THE UNIVERSITY MACE AND PRESIDENTIAL MEDALLION

The University Mace is a special symbolic ceremonial staff of the University that is commonly emboldened with historical facts and significant dates in the life of the University and/or education and learning in general. Its presence denotes that a faculty-sanctioned assembly is in session. The mace is always found at the head of the academic procession.

The medallion worn today by President Martin Lemelle, Jr. was selected for this occasion and is a symbol of his office. It is a bronze medallion which bears on two sides the official seal of the University, which is also the official seal of the state of Louisiana. The medallion is a legacy symbol of the Office and is worn by the President of Grambling State University.

THE ALMA MATER

Ole Grambling, dear Grambling,
We love thee dear, Ole Grambling
We're loyal to thee, our dear ole School,
We'll fight for thee forevermore.
And when life's game is fought and won,
The hills will ring with victory's song.
Ole Grambling, dear Grambling,
We love thee dear, Ole Grambling. Ole Grambling, dear Grambling,
We love thee dear, Ole Grambling
Long may thee stand 'till all the land
Has felt the worth of thy great hand.
And when thy sons to battle go,
The hills will ring from shore to shore.
Ole Grambling, dear Grambling,
We love thee dear, Ole Grambling.

Lift Ev'ry Voice & Sing

James Weldon Johnson (1871 - 1938)

Lift every voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

The Star-Spangled Banner
Francis Scott Key (1779 – 1843)

O Say, can you see
By the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed
At the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars
Through the perilous fight
O'er the ramparts we watched
Were so gallantly, yeah, streaming?
And the rockets' red glare
The bombs bursting in air
Gave proof through the night
That our flag was still there
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave