

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

The consumer knows quality and when he/she is getting what they pay for. This is true in the purchase of big ticket items such as automobiles or less expensive commodities such as food and clothing. The individual seeking to advance up the professional ladder is willing to devote time and resources to attain the desired objective. Shortcuts pointing to quicker and less expensive routes to success are viewed with skepticism.

This attitude regarding professional educational programs was revealed in the results of a survey conducted by the school of its most recent graduates and students looking forward to graduating in 2018. The survey was directed by the new Strategic Planning Committee established by the Executive Committee.

Specifically, the survey group was asked “would you favor (1) shortening the annual session to say, 8-9 days instead of the present 12 days, and (2) would you like to have the opportunity to skip an annual session if you meet certain academic qualifications?”

By a large majority the survey respondents indicated that the present format is much preferred to the shorter session and the value of three annual sessions far exceeds a two-year program.

Many respondents commented on the value of personal professional relationships developed through the three year program which would not likely be forged through shorter contact periods. And, a shorter week would necessarily mean that less material would be presented by the faculty. Several respondents commented that the increasing complexity of the industry demands that participants have a higher level of knowledge.

The decision was made by the Executive Committee to monitor closely the professional education needs of the banking industry and to modify the program as needed to remain on the cutting edge of industry needs.



Executive VP and Director

## NEW ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

Course development and faculty selection and retention are crucial to the success of any educational institution. Bankers attending the school have high expectations that they will receive the benefit of knowledge shared by faculty members who are experts in their respective areas.

The formidable task of assuring that bankers at the school receive quality education delivered by a dedicated faculty has been assigned to Dr. Michael Highfield, Professor of Finance at Mississippi State University. For several years Mike has been the course co-coordinator of the first year course dealing with financial markets. His ability to teach a rather complicated subject matter earns him consistently very positive evaluations from his students.

As Senior Academic Consultant, Mike is responsible for course and case development, faculty selection and retention, academic relations with other banking schools, and design and development of special programs such as conferences and seminars where deemed desirable. The school is indeed fortunate to have Mike in this new position.



*Michael Highfield*  
Senior Academic Consultant  
Graduate School of Banking at LSU

## NEW COURSES, CASES, AND FACULTY 2018

To meet the challenges presented to management by the rapidly changing banking environment, the school must add new courses, cases, and faculty for every session. The 2018 session will feature two new cases, three new case leaders, and a new elective course for junior and senior students.

The new elective course will address Risk Management and Cybersecurity. It will be taught by Chad Tagtow, the Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer at Citizens Bank and Trust in Lake Wales, Florida; someone who deals with these issues on a daily basis.

The important, but difficult to teach topic of Business Ethics will be handled in a first year case offered in the second week of the session taught by Danny Payne, Executive Banking Specialist at Blackguard, Inc in Austin, Texas. The case will focus on the importance of the bank manager implementing policies to assuring that individuals reporting to him/her are aware of relationships with customers that could raise ethical problems.

The second year case dealing with Problem Loans and Workouts will be taught by an experienced senior bank officer who has extensive experience in the classroom, Tommy Darnell, Executive Vice President at SouthTrust Bank in Mississippi (ret).

## ECONOMIC OUTLOOK CONFERENCE

For the fifth consecutive year the school is participating in the Economic Outlook Conference sponsored by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. The 2018 conference will be held at the bank's home office in Atlanta on February 22nd.

The President of the school, Mark Holladay, Executive Vice President and Chief Risk Officer at Synovus Bank will moderate a panel dealing with CRA, Concentration, and stress testing. Participating in the panel will be Jody Hudgins, President-Elect of the school and Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Credit Officer, First Florida Integrity Bank, and Alan Mims, Executive Vice President, Reliant Bank, Nashville, and David Bryan, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. Following their presentations, the panel will answer questions from those attending. The conference is always fully subscribed so if you plan to attend please register by clicking the following link <https://www.frbconferences.org/atlanta/18banking>.

## NEW TRUSTEE

A new trustee joined the Board at the October, 2017 meeting. Representing the state of Arkansas was Les Smith, Loan Manager of Arvest Bank, Fort Smith. As a banker-trustee, Les will represent Arkansas banks on the Board and market the school in his state. He is a 2012 graduate and will serve two years on the board.

Appointed banker trustees serve two-year terms on the board and may be reappointed for a second term. Their principal responsibility is to market the school and its programs in their respective states and to answer questions interested bankers may have regarding the school.

## TECH UPDATE

The school is again participating with the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin in offering a seminar dealing with Technology Management. The program is designed for IT personnel who need knowledge of bank performance and how technology management fits into the business of banking.

The session will be held April 8-13, 2018 at the Fluno Center of Executive Education in Madison, Wisconsin. Tuition is \$3,150 and for additional information visit their webpage [www.gsb.org](http://www.gsb.org).

## BANKSIM COURSE

The simulation course dealing with bank management issues is ranked very highly by the senior class. The simulation program addresses areas of the banking business that students have been studying in their two prior years of the school.

Several years ago, the school partnered with the Colorado Banking School and the Pacific Coast Banking School to assure that the technology of the simulation is current and that the structure of the program mirrors current banking practices.

Faculty from each school meet twice annually to review the operations of the simulation and consider changes that may need to be made to enhance the teaching value of the program.



*The Bank Simulation faculty have a total of 158 years of banking experience, most as CEO.*

## OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

The school frequently receives complimentary reports from students, faculty, trustees, and others relating to the efficient handling of administrative matters and the "smooth" operation of the annual session.

This efficient operation of the school may be attributed to an excellent and experienced staff. Just promoted to the position of Vice President-Administration, Mrs. Corinne Long has served on the school's staff for over 30 years. She is involved in the day-to-day administration of matters, coordinates personnel, supervises the grading of bank study problems, manages the school's home page and app, coordinates the school's marketing effort, and serves as liaison between the school and various department of LSU. Her efficiency and attention to details are major factors in the efficient operation of the school. The school is indeed fortunate to have Corinne on the staff.

## PASS THE WORD

As a graduate of the school, faculty member, or someone who is familiar with the program, you are in a prime position to inform bankers about the school. These are very unsettling times in the industry and young bankers are looking for opportunities to advance their careers and there is no better way to accomplish this goal than through professional education. In selecting routes to more responsibility in their banks, testimony from fellow bankers represents vital information.

## BLOGS

The school has partnered with a local firm to analyze and manage our website [www.gsblsu.org](http://www.gsblsu.org). To improve the value of the page to readers, we added periodic blogs relating to current developments in the industry, as well as new activities involving the school. Topics addressed by the blogs include:

- [Current Banking Issues: Recognizing the Red Flags of Elder Financial Exploitation](#)
- [Current Banking Issues: Synthetic Identity Fraud & How it Happens](#)
- [Interpreting Economic Change: A GSBSLU Favorite Class](#)
- [2017 Winners: GSBSLU Bank Management Simulation](#)
- [GSBSLU Case Work: Addressing the Managerial Challenges of Bank](#)



## CHECK IT OUT

Email addresses for students and graduates are listed on our website, but only if requested. If you would like to have your email address shown in the directory, please send your address to [donw@gsblsu.org](mailto:donw@gsblsu.org) and request that it be listed on our home page.

## The 69th SESSION OF GSBSLU



As a graduate of the School, you are in a unique position to recommend the program to your associates and others. Just call the School's office (1.888.278.0025) and we will contact the prospective students and send appropriate materials. Applicants may also apply online by clicking on **Application**.

The 69th session will be held May 20-June 1, 2018 on the L.S.U. campus, and we are currently accepting applications.

## IN MEMORIAM

The school lost a distinguished faculty member last October with the death of long-time case leader and past president of the school. Clifton Fowler, Rankin County President of Bank of Forest, Mississippi. Through his tenure of the school's faculty, Clifton had a very positive influence on the careers of hundreds of young bankers who participated in his case dealing with problem loans.

He began his banking career in 1971 at the First National Bank, Jackson which is now Trustmark National Bank. He was 69 years of age. He is much missed by the banking school students, faculty, and administration.

