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Carman plans to prioritize increasing student excellence

(Source: [LSU Reveille](#))

The sole in-house candidate for the position of provost and executive vice chancellor made the case Monday for why he should take the job.

LSU College of Science Dean Kevin Carman asserted the necessity of the University's current initiatives for growth and improvement and echoed the need for enhanced student and faculty excellence at the second provost and executive vice chancellor forum.

"I'm not saying anything surprising or profound," Carman said.

Like fellow candidate Bobby Schnabel from Indiana University, Carman highlighted a number of thriving University programs that he said should continue to expand.

Carman affirmed the LSU Vision and Mission under Flagship 2020, highlighting the importance of research, student and faculty excellence and arts emphasis.

He spoke extensively on research, echoing the importance of Louisiana's regional strengths like energy and coastal studies, which Schnabel also focused on.

He said programs like the Center for Computation and Technology that are already thriving should be maintained, and organizations like LSU Press that have struggled in the past need a boost back to prominence.

Relationships with partners like the Pennington Biomedical Research Center and the Health Sciences Centers in New Orleans and Shreveport need further development, Carman said, and working with Tulane University, Louisiana Tech University and other institutions should be encouraged.

Carman said increasing student excellence is a top priority for the future.

"We have high-caliber students, but they're not as successful as they should be," he said.

Although Communication across the Curriculum, the Honors College and other student-focused programs should be promoted, Carman places significant focus on enhancing the student experience in research and helping students become more worldly.

Carman frequently mentioned his confidence in University "boot camps," or programs for incoming freshmen prior to their first semester. He said students who participated in these programs under the College of Science have had more success throughout college.

Like Schnabel, Carman prioritized diversity at the University.

Diversity goes past race, gender or background, he said, and the University needs to attract individuals willing to adapt to Louisiana culture while maintaining their outside experiences.

Carman also prioritized better faculty morale, citing a three-year pay raise drought as a significant problem.

He said as provost he would focus on attracting not only prestigious faculty but also their families. Faculty in the College of Science and other disciplines include spouses who both work in higher education, a willingness to foster a family which necessitates mindset across campus.

He recognized the challenge of building student and faculty success despite dwindling state funding, which he said will probably continue. Finding ways to continue excellence without spending more money or without extra funding will be vital, he said.

"LSU is a different university than it has been in the past because of a lack of funding," Carman said, suggesting the University needs to adapt its "business model" for continued excellence and prominence.

The remaining provost forums will be held March 7 and 9 at 2 p.m. in 143 Coates Hall.

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