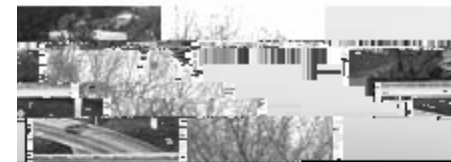
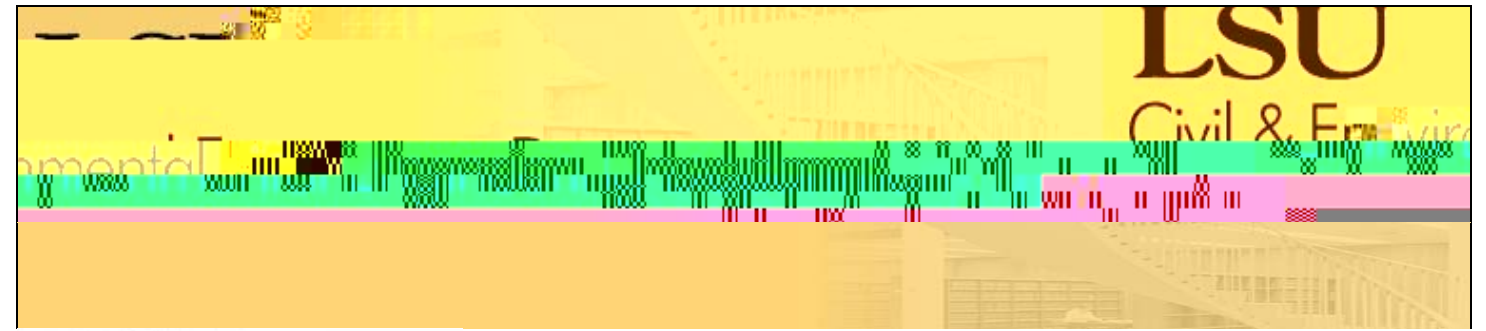

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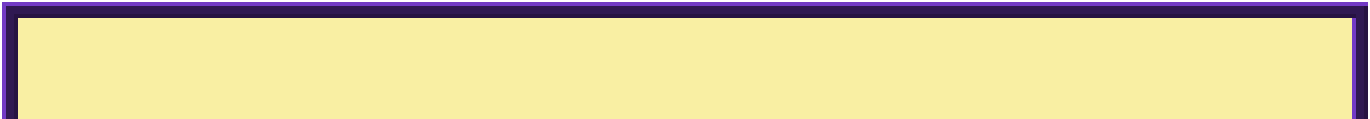
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Coastal Engineering Graduate Program

Observations on Failure of Levee System in New Orleans

Background

Katrina, a category 4/5 hurricane, hit three States (Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama) on August 29, 2005. Massive damage in the coastal areas of all the three States has been reported in the media. The impact of the hurricane itself was not so catastrophic on the city of New Orleans, but the flooding caused by the breaches in the levee system was so overwhelming that it rendered the city inhabitable and the entire city had to be evacuated. Fig. 1(a) shows the location of major breaches and Fig 1 (b) shows water overflowing over a part of levee.



Fig. 1: Failure of levee system: (a) Location of breaches (b) Overflow over a breached part

Initial efforts of controlling and repairing the breach in the levee system could not be successful, which added to the disaster impact. The levee system was repaired using th