

<b>Activity Title &amp; Number:</b>	University Honors Program – Activity 14 (Acct # 412140-13001)
<b>Annual Report</b>	October 1, 2005 – September 30, 2006
<b>Activity Director:</b>	Wash A. Jones, Ph.D.
<b>Overview of Activity:</b>	The University Honors Program (also referred to as the University Scholars Program) is designed to benefit all eligible undergraduate students. The Program responds to the national need for more graduate and professional level researchers, practitioners and faculty in all fields. Upon college graduation, honors students will be prepared to pursue study at highly competitive academic institutions and assume leadership roles in their professions and society at large. The Program’s anticipated activities include providing students with opportunities to participate in lectures, seminars, research leading to publication, preparation for graduate and professional schools examinations and colloquia designed to enhance exposure to various disciplines.
Goal 1	To develop a comprehensive University Honors Program designed to enhance students’ undergraduate education and prepare them for success and excellence in graduate and professional schools
Objective 1.1	To provide at least three academic, intellectual, and co-curricular activities for honors students each semester.
<b>Anticipated Results</b>	<p><b>1.1.a Minutes, action items and related documents from meetings with the University Honor Advisory Council and University Honors student officers.</b></p> <p><b>1.1b A list of seminars, colloquia, lecture series, enrichment activities and guest speakers developed and scheduled.</b></p> <p><b>1.1c Implementation of mentorship program between honors students and selected faculty.</b></p> <p><b>1.1d Honor students provided on-campus and off-campus research opportunities.</b></p> <p><b>1.1e Annual forum for students to present overview of their research or creative works (poetry, drama, etc.).</b></p> <p><b>1.1f Workshops offered on effective test-taking strategies for graduate school exams.</b></p> <p><b>1.1g Through enrichment, research, intellectual experiences, honor students will develop skills, expertise, and knowledge that will prepare them for entry and success in graduate or professional schools.</b></p>

## Results Attained:

### Professional Development

- Dr. Gloria Regisford, a faculty member in the Department of Biology, was selected to participate in the Faculty Resource Network Winter Faculty Development Symposium Jan. 9-13, 2006, in Honolulu, Hawaii. She participated in *Network Winter 2006*, Biology 2010: From Sequence to Systematics. The symposium exposed faculty to innovative methods for teaching science. This opportunity was made available through PVAMU's affiliation with the Leadership Alliance for which the USP Director serves as the Campus Coordinator.
- USP conducted and co-sponsored a student professional development workshop on Oct. 11, 2005. Focus of the workshop was "The Power of Effective Communication." Attendance: 30
- USP Director served as guest lecturer at Stephen F. Austin Middle School in Bryan, TX., on Oct 21, 2005. Presentation focused on promoting student excellence to pursue education beyond high school. Participants: 90 students.
- USP participated in the Annual Majors' Fair sponsored by University College Nov. 1, 2005. Distributed approximately 75 fliers to students about USP and honors sections available for spring 2006.
- USP co-sponsored a professional development workshop on Nov. 8, 2005, featuring Dr. Alvin Larke, Jr., Professor of Agricultural Education at TAMU. His topic was "Leadership, Professionalism and Decision Making." Attendance: 15 students
- USP Director conducted a leadership seminar for a Texas Cooperative Extension Leadership Class in San Antonio on Nov. 17. Attendance: 27
- USP served as a clearinghouse to PVAMU students regarding information about graduate entrance exams, particularly the GRE. Continued liaison with the Princeton Review to achieve this goal.
- USP provided monetary support for one scholar (Derrick Nnaji) to participate in the International Scholar Laureate Program in China in summer 2006. This program offered a select group of future technology leaders from colleges and universities around the country an educational opportunity to experience cultural, business and technological aspects of China.
- USP expanded awareness of the U.S. Student Fulbright Program by visiting honors classes to inform students about the opportunities.
- USP co-hosted a campus-wide informational session about the U.S. Student Fulbright Program study abroad opportunities March 27, 2006. Attendance: 13
- USP Director presented a workshop (sponsored by Cooperative Extension Service) on "Embracing Diversity." Presentation focused on enhancing participants' skills in working in a multicultural, ever changing society. Participants: 35
- USP participated in Pantherland Day Feb. 25, 2006. Distributed information regarding the University Scholars Program to

prospective students and their families. Interacted with approximately 75 students.

- USP Director presented a seminar March 7 to Cooperative Extension personnel titled, “Diversity in Recruitment.” The goal was to enhance Extension’s recruitment efforts and to help achieve a workforce that reflects the demographics of the state of Texas. Attendance: 15
- USP conducted a professional development seminar for students titled, “Professionalism and What Employers Expect” on March 22, 2006. Seminar incorporated invitation to students to “Take the Honors Challenge” and enroll in applicable honors sections. Attendance: 25
- Collaborated with Career and Outreach Services Department (Freddie Roberts) in planning the graduate school fair in October 2006.
- University Scholar Derrick Nnaji represented the University Scholars Program by participating in the Career and Outreach Services’ I.C. Gordon Student Recognition Banquet in September 2006 to highlight his summer trip to China and his internship with Chevron, Inc.

### Research Related Activities

- USP Director served as a judge for the Annual Biology Research Symposium Oct. 28, 2005. Twenty students, including one USP member, participated by displaying their research poster and making an oral presentation regarding the poster.
- Four PVAMU students (one University Scholar) applied for the Summer Research – Early Identification Program (SR-EIP) through the Leadership Alliance. One PVAMU student (Wesley Patterson; Biology/Chemistry major) was selected to participate in the 2006 Summer Research-Early Identification Program at Dartmouth College. Following this experience, the student participated in the 2006 Summer Symposium wherein SR-EIP participants present posters and oral presentations about their research activities.
- USP co-sponsored a research seminar on March 27, 2006, with the Department of Biology titled, “Where are the Minority Scientists? Why Do We Care?” The seminar was designed to increase the number of students interested in pursuing a graduate degree and seeking a career in science. The seminar presenter was Dr. Thomas Landefeld from California State University, Dominguez Hills. Participants: 60.

### Lectures

- USP spearheaded contract negotiations with the American Program Bureau (speakers’ bureau) and co-sponsored “An Evening With Julian Bond” (included a lecture and reception) on March 1, 2006. Attendance: Approximately 200

- USP co-sponsored a lecture by Michael Eric Dyson (included a lecture, reception and book signing) on March 9, 2006. Attendance: Approximately 400

### *Committees/Conferences/Networking Activities*

- USP Director assisted in planning and participated in a Service Learning Workshop for faculty and administrators sponsored Nov. 1, 2006, at PVAMU by the Service Learning Committee.
- USP Director served on the Black History Month Planning Committee and participated in various Black History Month activities on campus.
- Renewed PVAMU's institutional membership with the National Collegiate Honors Council.
- Director participated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual National MANRRS Career Fair and Training Conference in St. Louis in March 2006. Served on the National Executive Committee for this organization.
- USP Director participated in the National Student Exchange Program Site Visit to PVAMU on April 4, 2006. PVAMU seeks to implement this program for its students.
- Participated in the Service Learning Awards Reception for Faculty on April 5, 2006, as a member of the University Service Learning Committee.
- Represented the University Scholars Program as a member of the PVAMU College of Agriculture and Human Sciences' Excellence in Academics Team in working on the College's Strategic Plan to enhance its academic program.
- Director served on the University Scholarship Committee to review applications for University-level scholarships to incoming freshmen and transfer students.
- USP Director served as PVAMU representative for the Gilman International Scholarship (Study Abroad) Program. Served on the Gilman International Scholarship Selection Panel at the Institute of International Education (IIE) in Houston, Texas, on May 17, 2006, to select 25 scholarship recipients and four alternates. Reviewed and ranked 49 application packets for students primarily from Georgia, Virginia and Oklahoma.
- USP Director was special guest on KPVU radio's *Latinos on the Hill Program* targeting the Latino and Spanish-speaking radio audience on Sept. 5, 2006. The program aired on Sept. 9, 2006. Discussion included general information about USP, honors classes, CLEP/AP and study abroad opportunities (Student Fulbright and Gilman Scholarships); goal was to enhance educational opportunities and success for the target audience.
- Visited seven of the honors sections and an International Relations (Political Science) class the week of September 11, 2006, to promote student enrollment in honors sections, discuss CLEP/AP participation and to promote Gilman Scholarship and U.S. Student Fulbright Study Abroad Program participation.

- Recorded interview September 15, 2006, for PVAMU Volleyball half-time show to be aired on the Radio Network. Discussion included general information about USP, honors classes, CLEP/AP and study abroad opportunities (Student Fulbright and Gilman Scholarships); goal was to provide greater exposure for USP programs and to enhance educational opportunities and success for the target audience. Radio interview conducted by announcer Charles Porter.

### Miscellaneous Activities

- USP facilitated the visit of students to PVAMU from Stephen F. Austin Middle School in Bryan, TX., on Oct. 7, 2005. The purpose of the visit was to expose students to opportunities available in higher education. Participants: 86 students and chaperons
- Four University Scholars students graduated December 10, 2005: Mercy Dickson (Biology); Dee Misty Helm (Interdisciplinary Studies); Elsy Pacheco (Electrical Engineering Technology); Cynthia Rodriguez (Electrical Engineering Technology). Graduates received an honors stole from USP in recognition of their achievement. Students' immediate plans: Dickson – employment in research; Helm – teacher (Fort Bend ISD); Pacheco – graduate school (PVAMU); Rodriguez – employment
- Scholar Derrick Nnaji was named PVAMU's Outstanding Sophomore in Computer Science February 24, 2006, during National Engineer's Week. Nnaji received recognition from his college dean, department head, faculty and others in the College of Engineering.
- Seventeen scholars were nominated to the U.S. Achievement Academy's Collegiate All-American Scholar Program by the USP Director. The program gives students eligibility to compete for national scholarships. Three scholars responded to the May 8, 2006, deadline for returning the nomination form.
- USP submitted a proposal for Student Allocation Fees for 2006-2007 in the amount of \$8500. Proposal was not funded.
- In spring 2006, the USP Director acquired duties as CLEP and AP Coordinator for PVAMU. Processed CLEP and AP transcripts and assisted students in attaining appropriate University credit for CLEP and AP exams. From July 2006 to September 2006, thirteen students received 113 semester credit hours for CLEP or AP exams.
- Initiated correspondence and follow up with respective academic departments to update CLEP/AP policies at PVAMU and to update the undergraduate catalog.
- One PVAMU student applied for the Gilman Study Abroad Scholarship (first year of PVAMU's participation) and one student applied for the U.S. Student Fulbright Program (second year of PVAMU's participation).

Objective 1.2

To facilitate the implementation of at least 9 hours of honors courses by fall 2005

## Anticipated Results

**1.2a Work with University Honors Advisory Council, Deans' Council and the Provost to identify honors courses to be offered beginning fall 2005**

**1.2b Enrollment in honors courses will provide students with enhanced skills in critical thinking (application, synthesis, etc.) that may not be acquired through non-honors courses. Having these skills will better prepare students for graduate school.**

## Results Attained

### Honors Coursework

- Director served as liaison between academic departments, the Provost's Office and the Registrar's Office regarding approval and implementation of honors sections. USP attained approval in October 2005 to offer ENGL 1123 and ENGL 1133 as honors sections in the spring 2006 semester. These sections were added to the list of course offerings. Scheduled honors course offerings for spring 2006 totaled 33 semester credit hours (11 honors sections):
  - ECON 2123-005
  - ENGL 1123-005
  - ENGL 1133-005
  - FINA 2103-003
  - HIST 1313-004
  - HIST 1323-006
  - MATH 1124-001
  - MISY 1013-011
  - POSC 1113-006
  - POSC 1123-008
  - PSYC 1113-007
- Gathered evaluative, written feedback from the five instructors who taught an honors section in fall 2005 regarding their perceived effectiveness of the honors section. Received very positive feedback from all instructors in terms of their teaching in an environment of academic excellence wherein enhanced student readiness and performance and elevated level of class discussions existed. Faculty indicated high levels of excitement in teaching honors students compared to teaching students in non-honors classes. Faculty confirmed the need to set specific GPA standards (minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA) as a prerequisite for student enrollment in honors sections.
- USP conducted a mass mailing (approximately 150 letters) to freshmen attaining at least a 3.5 cumulative GPA in fall 2005 in an effort to enhance student enrollment in honors sections offered in spring 2006. Additionally, sent GPA information on all freshmen attaining at least a 3.0 cumulative for fall 2005 to University College advisors to request assistance in contacting students regarding honors course registration.
- As of the end of the late registration period for spring 2006, five of the 11 honors sections originally scheduled for the spring 2006

semester attained sufficient student enrollment to be maintained for the semester: ENGL 1133-005; HIST 1313-004; MATH 1124-001; POSC 1123-008; PSYC 1113-007.

- As of Feb. 1, 2006 (Official Enrollment Census Day / 12<sup>th</sup> Class Day), 59 students were enrolled across the five honors sections that were maintained for spring 2006.
  - ENGL 1133-005 = 10
  - HIST 1313-004 = 15
  - MATH 1124-001 = 10
  - POSC 1123-008 = 8
  - PSYC 1113-007 = 16
- USP requested to have academic departments coordinate the scheduling of honors sections for fall 2006 to minimize potential time conflicts for students desiring to enroll in multiple honors sections and to schedule honors classes at more ideal times to enhance student interest and enrollment. Additionally, USP requested academic departments to consider identifying additional courses as honors sections.
- As of March 28, 2006, the following honors sections were scheduled for fall 2006 (total of 30 semester credit hours):
  - ENGL 1123-005
  - ENGL 1133-005
  - FINA 2103-003
  - HIST 1313-004
  - HIST 1323-006
  - MATH 1124-001
  - MISY 1013-011
  - POSC 1113-006
  - POSC 1123-008
  - PSYC 1113-007

As of March 2006, the following honors sections were pending per information from the academic departments:

CHEM 1043-001  
CHEM 1033-004  
ECON 2123

- Received approval to offer CHEM 1043-001 and CHEM 1033-004 for fall 2006. Chemistry Department offered CHEM 1033-001 (section number changed from previous number) in fall 2006 but postponed offering CHEM 1043 until spring 2007 due to prediction that sufficient number of students might not be available to enroll in CHEM 1043 in the fall semester since CHEM 1033 is a prerequisite for CHEM 1043.
- USP Director was responsible for screening and authorizing students on SIS for enrollment in honors sections each semester. Monitored honors sections enrollment, troubleshoot problems and solicited enrollment of eligible students through letters, phone calls, emails, academic advisors, etc.
- Conducted written student evaluations in all honors sections (spring 2006) to gain student feedback on the effectiveness of honors

sections and how improvements might be made. Number of evaluations received: 46 of the 59 students enrolled across all sections (78% response). Additionally, conducted informal verbal discussions with students in honors sections to gain feedback and to seek student assistance in promoting interest and enrollment in honors courses. Observed some honors class discussions. Feedback was evaluated and shared with respective faculty members and used to enhance the honors curriculum. Distributed survey results of Student Feedback from honors sections to University administrators and faculty (Provost, all academic deans, four academic department heads with honors sections, honors sections instructors, Executive Director and Associate Executive Director of University College and USP staff.) [See copy of survey results attached]

- Distributed information (mailed fliers and letters) to advisors, prospective students and current students regarding available honors sections for fall 2006 in an effort to increase potential enrollment in honors sections.
- Conducted comparison of current students' GPA/THEA/ACT/SAT (data provided by Dr. Samuel Sampson) to consider adjusting enrollment criteria for incoming freshmen in honors sections. After analysis, standards were adjusted from 1100 SAT to 1000 SAT, and from 23 ACT to 20 ACT. One objective was to increase the number of incoming freshmen eligible to enroll in an honors section. New standards were effective July 24, 2006.
- SAT / ACT standards for freshmen enrollment eligibility were adjusted from 1100 SAT to 1000 SAT and from 23 ACT to 20 ACT. This action should increase the potential number of incoming freshmen enrolled in honors sections. Data on current students show that the vast majority (92%) of students with the required 3.0 GPA did not have the required 1100 SAT score, and 87% did not have the required 23 ACT score as freshmen. Adjusting the required test scores would allow more freshmen to take honors courses, and the data suggest that these students would be academically successful in an honors class and in terms of achieving/maintaining a minimum 3.0 GPA to enroll in additional honors sections.
  - **Data collected:** SAT / ACT data on all current students who had attained 30 – 90 semester credit hours with  $\geq 3.0$  GPA
  - **When data collected:** July 2006
  - **Evaluation methods used:** Compare students' GPA to SAT/ACT to determine a more justifiable and predictable cutoff point regarding SAT / ACT eligibility
  - **How data analyzed:** Visual observation of various comparisons
  - **Problems encountered:** Not applicable
  - **Plans to address problems/issues:** Not applicable
- As of the 12<sup>th</sup> class day of fall 2006 semester, student enrollment among the nine honors sections maintained for the semester was 75. FINA 2103-003 and MISY 1013-011 were canceled due to lack of student enrollment.
  - CHEM 1033 = 9
  - ENGL 1123 = 7



- ENGL 1133 = 8
- HIST 1313 = 6
- HIST 1323 = 12
- MATH 1124 = 9
- POSC 1113 = 6
- POSC 1123 = 6
- PSYC 1113 = 11
- Reviewed honors section offerings and coordinated with departments to determine specific sections to be offered in spring 2007 and to monitor/ensure that course sections are set up appropriately in SIS.

### Comparison of 2005 Outcomes with 2006 Incomes

The following questions were selected previously to compare program outcomes for 2005 to outcomes for 2006:

- *Did the number of students attending programs designed to enhance their readiness for graduate/professional school increase? Yes; 227 in 2005; 282 in 2006*
- *Did the number of students using graduate/professional school test preparation materials increase? No; 100 in 2005; 60 in 2006*

Comments regarding outcome comparisons:

- The formal GRE Preparation Seminars are the activities which lead to the most students taking advantage of test preparation materials. However, no formal GRE Preparation Seminar was conducted in the 2006 fiscal year due to scheduling conflicts with Princeton Review and USP and due to an increased focus on promoting interest, support and participation in honors classes across campus; Sixty is the estimated number of students who utilized Princeton Review's printed material, accessed on-line test preparation material and/or who utilized the University Scholars Program's available test preparation materials.
- As the concept of honors course work continues to become more publicized and incorporated into the campus academic culture, and as departments become more supportive of and participatory in the honors course work process, the number of students affected positively by honors endeavors continues to increase as evident by the increased number of students enrolling in honors sections and the increased number of honors sections offered/maintained.
- The adjustment of the SAT/ACT scores required for enrollment of incoming freshmen in honors sections had an advantageous effect on increasing potential enrollment in honors sections for fall 2006. We hope this change will continue to promote an increased number of students enrolled in honors sections such that fewer scheduled sections will have to be canceled due to lack of student enrollment.
- Now that PVAMU has begun once again to offer honors sections, the honors curriculum should expand in terms of its comprehensiveness to include a diversity of departments, disciplines and level of coursework (freshman versus upper division levels).
- More students are gaining interest in joining and benefiting from the University Scholars Program. One on-going challenge is to find and sustain feasible incentives for students to join and participate in the program. The availability of the Student Fee Allocation funds for programming in 2004-2005 was instrumental in increasing the number of activities

that USP could sponsor as incentives for students. These particular funds were not available to USP in 2005-2006. The USP needs sustained funding for student programming to continue to offer exciting incentives and opportunities to students.

- The University Scholars Program has been a leading co-sponsor of “An Evening with...” lectures for the past three years. Based on informal feedback received, the campus community has begun to look forward to at least one lecture in the spring semester featuring a highly renowned speaker/lecturer with whom members of the campus community might not otherwise interact. The featured speakers were Ms. Nikki Giovanni (2004), Dr. Cornel West (2005), and Mr. Julian Bond (2006). Co-sponsors are seeking to contract with a speaker for spring 2007; a preliminary list of potential speakers is being developed.
- The availability of foreign exchange and study abroad programs is an incentive for many students. A goal is to increase the number of program opportunities offered and the number of students participating in such programs. This was the second year that PVAMU participated in the U.S. Student Fulbright Program, and the first year that the University participated in the Gilman International Scholarship Program. Only one student submitted an application for each of the programs. An objective is to increase the number of applicants and selected participants in subsequent years. One proposal is to implement a centralized study abroad program at the University wherein one office coordinates all study abroad activities for students. Currently, study abroad opportunities are not centralized in one office at PVAMU.

### **Impact of Activity 14 on the University**

Through its multitude of academic programs and initiatives, Activity 14 is producing the following impact on the PVAMU campus:

- Broadening exposure of campus and community individuals to intellectually enhancing activities such as lecturers, academic seminars, and academic researchers; USP exposes students to individuals who serve as positive role models in their quest for educational and career excellence.
- Providing an avenue for students to be involved in scholarly discussions about diverse topics.
- Providing students opportunities to gain training and experience in conducting research and presenting research findings that prepare them to be more competitive and successful in graduate and professional schools. The University’s participation in the Leadership Alliance and Faculty Resource Network activities (coordinated through the University Scholars Program) is advantageous to students and faculty in terms of expanding academic and professional development opportunities.
- The Program is seeking to provide an avenue for enhanced student involvement in service learning activities that are a vital part of a well-rounded and educated individual and American citizen. Incorporating service learning into honors courses is a campus goal. One honors section instructor is preparing to incorporate a service learning component into the course curriculum in spring 2007. The USP Director serves on the University’s Service Learning Committee.
- Providing students assistance in preparing for graduate entrance exams to enhance their competitiveness for entry into graduate education. Students indicate that the GRE Preparation sessions are highly useful and beneficial.
- Facilitating the offering of honors sections as part of an honors curriculum that would benefit students by providing more in-depth study of subject matter and enhancing their critical thinking skills to prepare students better for the type of educational experiences they may have in graduate and professional schools and in their careers.

- Addressing the national need for more students of color to pursue graduate education by providing avenues for more students to gain entry into graduate education through career fairs, undergraduate research experiences, visits with graduate school representatives and summer internships.
- Coordinating the CLEP and AP Program for the University. This program offers students the opportunity to acquire advanced placement through exams, thus saving time and money in attaining their college education.

### **Unanticipated Outcomes**

- As the honors curriculum is implemented and expanded, we are confronting various challenges in identifying the most efficient procedures to publicize and provide the courses to students. Issues surrounding the practicality of the Student Information System are being addressed as we implement the honors curriculum. The unexpected or new challenges are addressed as they are discovered, and USP seeks assistance from appropriate University personnel to work around unexpected setbacks. Fall 2005 provided the opportunity to work through many of the anticipated and unanticipated issues connected to offering honors sections. Spring 2006 and Fall 2006 brought different challenges, yet the process appeared to run smoother in terms of implementing honors sections across the University.
- The challenge still exists to get students, in general, interested and motivated to take honors sections and to help them overcome their phobia of honors courses. Some honors sections are not maintained or taught in a particular semester because the minimum required enrollment is not attained. More outreach should be done to high schools to inform students, teachers and counselors about the existence of honors courses at PVAMU and to help our specific prospective students accept the challenge of enrolling in an honors course.
- Funds were unavailable in 2005-2006 to sponsor the annual forum for students to present their research and creative works. Continued efforts will be made to acquire funds to support this important activity for students.
- We seek to increase the number of students applying and accepted for participation in the Leadership Alliance's Summer Research - Early Identification Program (SR-EIP) designed to increase the number of students pursuing graduate education and research careers. Although four students from PVAMU applied in 2006, only one was accepted to participate. Increasing the number of applicants should increase the number of students accepted for participation. Concurrently, we seek to have more faculty members take advantage of professional development opportunities available through the Faculty Resource Network, which ultimately would benefit students as well.