



uhcl the signal

APRIL 7, 2014

**THEN AND NOW, PAGE 4**

Retiring professors Nick de Vries and John Gorman look back on their 40 years at UHCL.



VOLUME XLII, NUMBER 5

READY OR NOT



COLDEN SNOW: THE SIGNAL

HERE THEY COME

Freshmen and sophomores arrive on campus this fall

TIFFANY SEXTON
THE SIGNAL

"In the fall of 2014, UHCL will be making the biggest change in the university's history since they opened its doors," UHCL President William Staples said.

Beginning fall of 2014, UHCL will become a four-year university admitting freshmen and sophomore students.

The university opened in 1974. To date, UHCL has accepted students completing the last two years of their bachelor degrees and

graduate degree-seeking students. In 2011, the university received legislative authority to downward expand the campus to include freshmen and sophomores.

For the past four years, UHCL administrators, faculty and staff have been working to put into place the "four-year initiative" in order to be ready for the incoming freshmen and sophomore students.

Some of the steps taken to prepare include: getting the University of Houston System Board of Regents to approve new admission

standards, hiring new faculty, updating the curriculum and increasing student services.

"Aug. 1, 2013, UHCL started taking applications, and as of last week we have received slightly over 1,800 applications," Staples said. "Although that sounds like a big number, people need to realize there are three important numbers to consider: how many people apply, how many people we accept, and how many students will actually enroll."

SEE FRESHMEN, PAGE 6

First-year experience: building a learning community

The following article is a preview from the New Student Orientation Issue that will hit the stands this summer

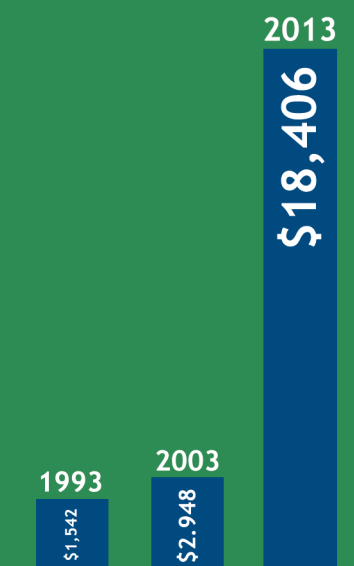
BAISHA KREUZER
THE SIGNAL

The transition to a university can be a little overwhelming. Back in high school, seeing familiar faces in class was the norm; but in college, students can start every semester without recognizing a single person in their classes.

As part of the UHCL core curriculum, freshmen will be required to take a course to assist in the development of college-level skills and competencies. Not only will this class help students directly apply the skills they learn to their studies, but it will also help connect you with your peer classmates.

SEE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE, PAGE 6

Tuition Costs Increases: Deregulated vs. Regulated Tuition

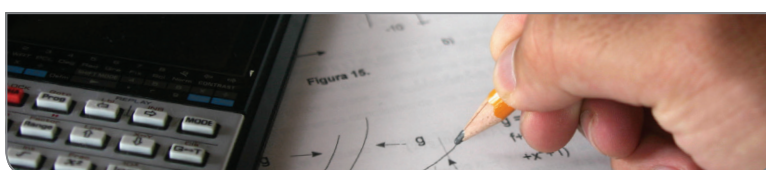


Texas Legislators deregulated tuition in 2003 to offset decreased state funding.

Sources: Southern Region Educational Board and UHCL Fact Book

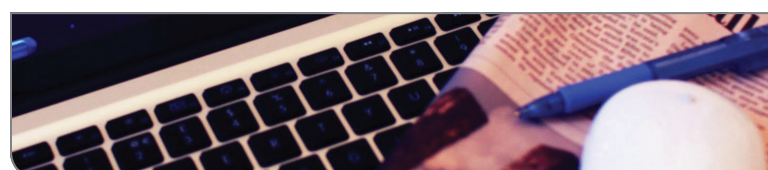
online this issue

Scan the QR Code below to access The Signal online.



THE MATH CENTER, PAGE 8

Explore the all-new Math Center in SSCB and how it plans to solve the problems of math anxiety.



FROM PRINT TO DIGITAL, PAGE 2

The Signal staff sends off our last regular print edition with a letter from the editor and a blog discussing our transition to the Web.



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Lamenting the loss of the printed page

JAUMARRO CUFFEE
THE SIGNAL

Once again, the times are changing. It's not a simple change of seasons. A whole age is disintegrating into digital.

Once upon a time there was storytelling. There still is storytelling, but by the 15th century those stories, fables and battles were captured in print.

Those printed stories were bound in books, which began to inhabit amazing places called libraries and bookstores. We could not only borrow these books, we could buy them and fill our bookshelves with their amazing yarns.

This may not be the historical version, by way of Gutenberg's invention of the printing press, but it gets us to my day and age — an age of printed books.

Books come in all shapes and sizes. There are board books as big as your 6-year-old nephew and chapbooks small enough to fit inside your fanny pack.



STAFF COLUMN

More and more 6-year-olds have electronic toys and tablets that can read them a story, make farm sounds and provide them a doodling surface. But that tablet will never double as a fort.

Nowadays, the pages of chapbooks can be viewed on the phone in your back pocket. But those pages won't have the lingering scent of Aunt Val's White Shoulder perfume.

As the age of electronics progresses, we see the dawning of an

age of e-books.

Who needs to horde hard-copies when you can summon endless pages of Austen, Dickens and Dumas, satisfy your insatiable thirst for Steinbeck, Stoker and Shakespeare, and then go on to read volumes of Grisham, Geisel and Fitzgerald on a single e-reader?

Who needs books filling up shelves and collecting dust when your entire library can fit on your tablet or the-ever present Cloud and clean up with a miniscule microfiber cloth?

Who needs books when you have the power of the amazing e-book?

We do... or at least I do.

The only thing between the pages of an e-book is a click, a tap or a swipe. There are no pressed flowers from your first formal dance. There are no overseas letters from your best bud who enlisted in the Navy. There are no notes scribbled next to Grandma

Charlotte's favorite passages. You may find an image of those flowers on Instagram or the letter archived in your email, but grandma's scribble may only be in the pages of her favorite book she used to read. Those things, the non-digital real ones, can be pressed, preserved and passed on in the pages of a book.

Power, even the power of e-books, corrupts. In the wake of e-books, chain and neighborhood bookstores have been laid to rest. To survive, others have graphed e-books into their inventory as a bridge to span the digital divide.

However, when the power supply is corrupted, or interrupted, by the devastation of a hurricane blowing in from the Gulf, the lights go out and the glow of e-books may eventually fade to black. Printed books can continue to illuminate by flashlight, candlelight, daylight or even flaming crayon, which burns about 15 minutes.

The age of e-books is not a completely dark age. E-books provide many with a variety of reading material they may not be able to afford or acquire in printed volumes. E-books allow people who are without transportation or otherwise homebound to pluck a collection of poetry off the Internet as easily as they can pull it off their bookshelf. E-textbooks offer a measure of financial relief to UHCL students and others trying to stretch their academic dollars.

Times are changing. E-books are edging out the printed page. Streaming music and movies are making museum pieces of CDs and DVDs. Newspapers are going from newsprint to no print. Even The Signal is going mostly digital after the next issue.

Times are changing. The printed book is not extinct, but it is one letter short of an e-book.

The freshmen are coming...so what?

JESSICA ALCOCER
THE SIGNAL

It seems like everyone at UHCL has something to say about the freshmen coming next fall.

What will we do about parking? What does this mean for school dynamics? Exactly how many freshmen will be on campus?

Has everyone forgotten when they were freshmen — oh that's right, we just popped up at UHCL as juniors and seniors, right?

With the arrival of a new group of students there is definitely some underlying concern about sharing this campus with a younger demographic. I had only attended four-year colleges before transferring to UHCL. Maybe I don't find the idea of freshmen joining us disconcerting because I'm used to it, or maybe it really isn't going to be the end of UHCL as we know it.

The type of atmosphere that comes with being a four-year college is exciting. Every stage of our college career takes place right in front of us on one campus. We will be surrounded by freshmen, some of whom will be finding their way through campus on a skateboard.

The sophomores, who are trying to finish their basics, will be forced to decide what they actually want to do with the rest of their lives by declaring a major. Then, we'll continue to have juniors, who have all the momentum in the world to finish school. Finally, there's still the tired



STAFF COLUMN

seniors, who are just trying to get through the last of their classes no matter what — they just want their degree.

Maybe the reason some people have ill feelings toward the lowest class on the totem pole is just that. They are reminded of themselves at that age and time in their lives, and how they never want to go back to when they didn't have a clue where to go or how to fit in at school.

Now these people have worked their way through the first stages of college life to achieve the higher ranking known as "upperclassman." But don't freshmen have to exist to make an upperclassman feel a sense of authority?

What about the good things that may come along with being a four-year university? Sports would be a nice addition to UHCL. We already have Hunter the Hawk, so why not give him something to root for, like a football field maybe? Campus life is the kind of thing you can't force;

it just happens. Maybe with the new additions we will see UHCL change for the better.

Personally, I would have liked for UHCL to have been a four-year university when I graduated from high school. It's closer to home, it would have been a lot cheaper and I would have probably stayed here throughout my whole college career instead of hopping around to three different schools.

I felt a sense of the college atmosphere at my previous schools, but because I left, I don't really feel like I can call them mine. I think most of us would have liked the opportunity to attend UHCL our entire college career and truly immerse ourselves in it.

Maybe that is what the future holds for the new freshmen. We should all hope that they make UHCL their home instead of being afraid of the changes they bring. Besides, in 20 years we won't be here, and not many will remember UHCL existing only as an upper-level university. The communities of UHCL and Clear Lake should welcome these freshmen with open arms, as this starts a new chapter for our school.

The first freshman class at UHCL is a milestone marker for the school. The new students will have their first experiences at college right here in front of us. They represent the evolution of UHCL and are not only symbolizing expansion, but making history.

uhcl the signal

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CORRECTION

In the March 24 issue of The Signal, the article titled "Psychology program nationally recognized" incorrectly identified the HSH School Psychology graduate program as the School of Psychology program.



THE OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
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past, present

Professors recall campus' 40-year history

KRIS STIVERS
THE SIGNAL

The university is expanding to include freshmen and sophomore students with its four-year initiative, but in order to understand where the university is going, it's important to know where it's been.

Founded in 1974, the University of Houston-Clear Lake has undergone many changes during the last 40 years.

"We were founded to be interdisciplinary," said John Gorman, professor of literature. "We wanted to let ideas and techniques from the more restrictive traditional majors flow back and forth and enrich the academic and personal lives of all involved."

Gorman recounted the first year when there were just slightly more than 1,000 students enrolled and there was no organized student life.

"Everything had to be invented from scratch, which was interesting," Gorman said. "It was all very homemade. The spirit was good. The spirit of pioneering inventiveness is always fun, because people's spirits are always high."

A year later Nick de Vries, professor of fine arts, joined the UHCL faculty and, along with fellow fine arts professor Sandria Hu, cofounded the university's art program. It was a very different art program from the one students know today.

"In 1975 our first classes in studio art were offered," de Vries said. "Two of us were hired to teach courses in traditional two- and three-dimensional art. I taught all courses in 3-D work (ceramics and sculpture) and Professor Hu taught all courses in 2-D work (drawing, painting and printmaking)."

The art department has since expanded from three full-time faculty members to eight full-time and eight adjunct faculty members, and it wasn't just the faculty that increased.

"[Initially] all of our classes were in the Arbor Building, where we used the atrium as an art display area," de Vries said. "From all classes meeting in the same large studio, we slowly took over other spaces as our enrollment increased."

Today we have one of the finest facilities in the country."

While many academic programs started small and flourished, some have come and gone over time.

"We used to have theatre and dance," Gorman said. "They were cancelled for financial reasons — some would say 'alleged' financial reasons. It was a big loss. We've also discontinued a program in future studies in which imaginative and valuable things were done."

Throughout the years, there have been numerous events with notable speakers including Danny Glover, Barbara Bush, Olympia Dukakis and Dana Carvey. Gorman recalled the first guest speaker to visit the university.

"One of the business professors had known a man who was in the movies, Buster Crabbe, who, if I'm remembering right had [played] 'Tarzan' at one point," Gorman said. "He was brought in to speak on campus, and that was our first outside speaker."

The university's first literary event also took place that year, following the death of famed poet Anne Sexton.

"[Former Professor of Literature] Gretchen Mieszkowski, [Former Professor of Psychology] Nanette Bruckner, and I organized a memorial reading for her in the Arbor building, which is where all the classes were held at the time," Gorman said. "That went well. Anne Sexton [was] a terrific poet. Just to spice things up I read one of her poems called 'In Praise of My Uterus.'"

With the underclassmen joining the university this fall, it will be interesting to see what popular trends catch on

amongst the student body. Neither Gorman nor de Vries could recall any trends that stood out over the years.

"Our students, from the very start, had an average age in their 30s," Gorman said. "Older people are less given to trends — no disco then, no twerking now. But many of those who planned the university were surprised by the strong interest in feminism, also there from the start. I think if a residential culture develops here, you'll begin seeing more things like that. You need a self-defining undergraduate life to develop traditions."

De Vries added that although trends had not been noticeably different over the years, one thing did have a major impact on the university — technology.

"The computer had a significant impact on the way students were learning," de Vries said. "It had particularly impacted the areas of Web and graphic design."

Gorman believes that the four-year initiative could be an opportunity to bring the university's founding principles to fruition.

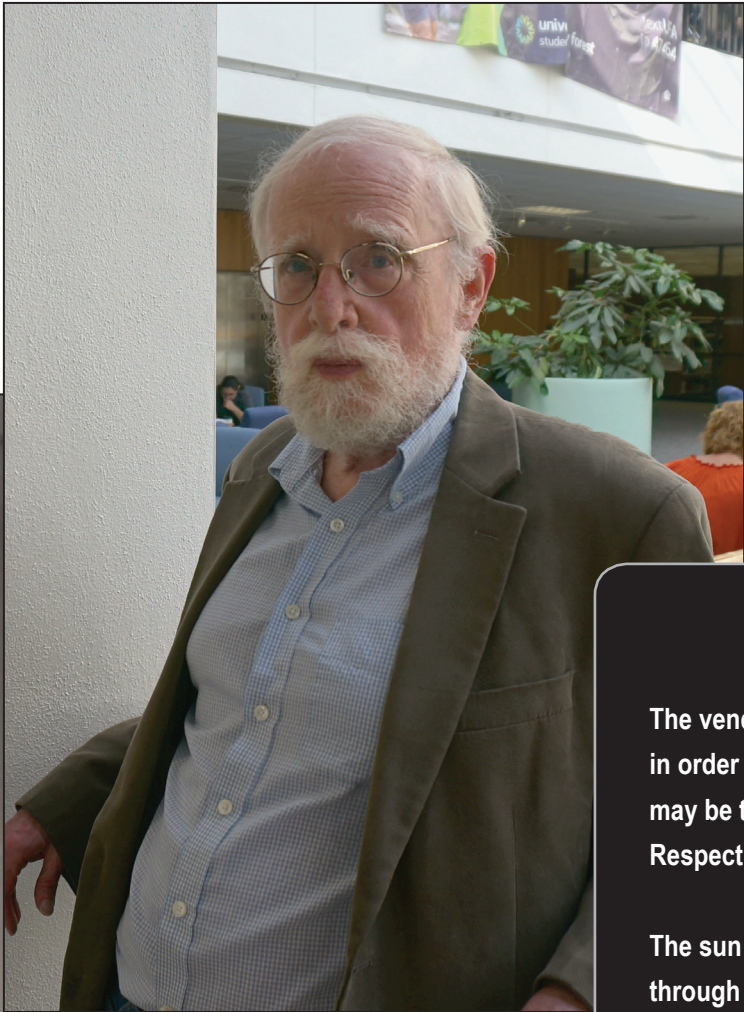
"The thing that held interdisciplinary formats at bay was not having freshmen and sophomores," Gorman said. All along we've recruited professors with the interests we had pursued ourselves—so maybe the interdisciplinary idea will flourish again in the four-year UHCL."

When asked what they would say to their past selves if the opportunity presented itself, Gorman and de Vries shared similar sentiments.

"I would tell him that I'm sure glad he changed his occupation to becoming an art educator," de Vries said. "UHCL has been a great place to work, if you want to call it work. I have loved coming to work everyday and working with and for some of the best people I have ever known. I have always received great support."

Gorman noted that he and his past self are still very close.

"Actually my former self and I are still in touch," Gorman said. "UHCL turned out to be an excellent place to foster the values I brought to it in 1974. The responsiveness and accomplishments of the students have been a delight."



John Gorman, past and present.

The poem "Directives" was published in John Gorman's book "The Oxford of the Floodplain" as a tribute to UHCL's 20th anniversary.

"Directives"
By: John Gorman

The vending machines are here
in order that your quarters
may be turned into apples.
Respect the mystery of this thing.

The sun streaming in
through the glass roof of the atrium
must be cooled by the State of Texas.

My day
is so busy
that's why I need a parking slot of my own.
Designated A space.

Please use the mails responsibly.
Here we all stand
on one another's shoulders and on those
of the past.

The concessionaire (p
responsibly)
assures me that the co
will work without spilla
—printed plainly on th
are followed out.

I'm back and forth all t
If I don't seem to use t
(which has been provi
it's not that I don't like
or ... the exposure ...

The lavatory soap disp
exist for the preventio
and the spread of dise
If they are not always f
proceed down the line
each of the others in t
If none works
DON'T TOUCH ANYTH

and FUTURE

Two UHCL ‘founding fathers’ retire after combined 79 years of teaching

KELSEY CIABATTONI
THE SIGNAL

With progress comes change, and as UHCL gears up to make many new transformations next semester, it must also adjust to the retirement of two professors who have been with the university since its early years.

Considered by many to be two of UHCL’s “founding fathers,” Nick de Vries, professor of art, and John Gorman, professor of literature, will retire this May after almost 40 years of teaching on campus.

“It’s strange to think of this campus not having those two here, especially in such a great time of change on campus,” said Samuel Gladden, associate dean of the School of Human Sciences and

Humanities.

De Vries began teaching at UHCL in 1975 and is credited with creating the art program along with Professor of Art Sandria Hu. De Vries wanted to establish his place on campus by building up a solid art program that placed a strong emphasis on exhibiting students’ art work, as well as by bringing outside artists onto the campus so that students could be exposed to other ways of working.

“It’s very important for students to see and understand other artists’ nature of work,” de Vries said. “Bringing in other artists and exhibitions to the university allowed me to show my students and the university a wider experience than they otherwise might not have had.”

De Vries earned a Bachelor of Arts in biology at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, in 1966. He took a couple of art courses his senior year, and as he said, “the rest is history.” He went back to school after a stint in the United States Army in Stuttgart, Germany, as a medical service officer and earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University of Houston in 1970 and a Master of Fine Arts with a specialty in ceramic sculpture at the University of Oklahoma-Norman in 1971.

Renowned for his work in raku, lead-glazed Japanese earthenwares, de Vries is currently creating an art piece that will be permanently installed in the courtyard area near the new art studio in the Arbor Building. He has also had more than 20 solo

Poets” at the Austin International Poetry Festival in 2012.

Gorman, who served as the keynote speaker at the 2013 December commencement ceremony, earned his Bachelor of Art’s at the University of Notre Dame in 1966, his Master of Arts in 1967 and his Ph.D. in 1975, both from the University of Virginia. He is the founder of the student-published literary magazines Bayousphere and Marrow and has also been a faculty adviser for many student organizations.

“John Gorman is a beloved teacher and a beloved colleague and very well respected by people at every level on campus,” Gladden said. “He really reaches people whenever he addresses them, whether it’s personally, one-on-one or a large group like at the commencement ceremony, he really reaches people because he understands the human condition and he speaks eloquently of it and to it.”



Nick de Vries, past and present.

exhibitions and participated in more than 50 group exhibitions throughout his tenure. Moreover, the process is underway to create a scholarship endowment fund in his name after alumni and community members pressed for its creation.

“I am very excited to see that his legacy will remain here permanently in a very visible form,” Gladden said. “He is a tireless promoter of his colleagues and of his students, and many, many people have benefitted from his wisdom and his talent.”

In addition to his successes as an artist, de Vries has also been widely recognized for his teaching capabilities, winning the university’s outstanding teacher

award four times. Similarly, he was a two-time winner of the UHCL nomination for the Minnie Stevens Piper Teaching Award in 2001 and 2004 and was recognized as faculty Adviser of the Year in 2002 for his efforts with the Art Association.

De Vries credits his service to his students as the biggest achievement of his time spent at UHCL and stated that it is what he will miss the most about retirement.

“I always tried to look out for my students and determine their strengths and weaknesses and what they wanted to get out of the program,” he said. “I’m always very concerned of what happens to them after they leave the program. I always tell them, ‘You have to go after something that you really enjoy.’”

Gorman, who began teaching at UHCL when classes began in 1974, is known as the university’s unofficial poet laureate, often composing poems for special events and occasions held at UHCL. His poetry has been published in numerous journals throughout the U.S. and Canada and is collected in four chapbooks including, “The Oxford of Floodplain,” which was produced to celebrate UHCL’s 20th anniversary. He was named one of three “State

Reflecting back on his time spent at UHCL, Gorman says he is most proud of the university itself.

“It’s been an immense privilege to help form an institution from its beginning,” Gorman said. “I’m glad we’ve built a place with so much solid competence and such a confident, outgoing spirit. We were all recruited because we thought teaching was of the first importance and because we wanted the fields of academic discipline to enrich one another.”

Gorman also has been acknowledged for his service in teaching by being awarded the UHCL Outstanding Professor Award in October 2013 and the President’s Distinguished Teaching Award in 1989, and he was a two-time nominee for the Minnie Stevens Piper Teaching Award.

Gorman says he will miss the companionship of the university community most of all when he retires.

“The faculty is full of very bright, very interesting men and women; the students have been a source of constant delight,” Gorman said. “We’ve all come together in pursuit of the worthiest of purposes. These three decades have been charged with joy.”

Although these professors will not be physically present on campus after this semester, their contributions and influences will remain in the wake of their legacies.

“Among many lasting contributions is Professor de Vries’ involvement with our arts program including the UHCL Art Gallery, our Bachelor of Fine Arts program and our engagement with the broader community in the arts,” said President William Staples. “Professor Gorman’s contributions to the development of the Bayousphere as well as his recognition as the poet laureate of UHCL are most noteworthy. The professors’ impact on our students, alumni and university will be a lasting legacy for each of them and for which we are very grateful.”

The sense of culture that these two professors brought to the university will also remain long after they are gone Gladden added.

“They’ve helped create a wonderful culture that is our campus and that will be here for many, many years,” he said. “We owe these men our deepest gratitude for building a campus culture that not only makes a place for the arts but places the arts at the center of that culture.”

atives”
Gorman

Please use these services

coffee machines

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front of each unit—

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the food

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full,

trying

urn.

ING.

The doors of the washrooms
are so constructed that you can
easily open them with your foot.

Don’t smoke near the schefflera.
These plants are large and expensive
and have been purchased out of
one-time funding.

Here everything has been done for you.
Space provided Access to services.
The climate control is such that Russian
engineers have asked for a full tour.
(This will be in April—
there will be meetings beforehand.)

These systems are both costly and delicate.
One mistake and we strangle in our efflux.

Please walk circumspectly
among my machines.

FRESHMEN: continued from page 1

As of April 1, 2014, there have been a total of 580 freshmen and sophomore students accepted into UHCL for fall 2014, said Bridgette Daniels, executive secretary to the associate vice president of enrollment management.

It remains to be seen how many of the accepted students will actually enroll.

“We are thinking by August we will have between 300-400 freshman and sophomore students enrolled,” Staples said.

Police Chief Paul Willingham said he does not believe the incoming freshmen and sophomore students will change the dynamic on campus. He believes once UHCL has thousands of younger students on campus with traditional housing, Greek life, partying etc., there will be a real change in dynamic at the university, but right now the goal is to continue having a low-key, quiet campus.

Student Services established the Office of Orientation and New Student Programs, as part of the “four-year initiative” preparation. In order to make the transition a smooth one for new students, UHCL now requires a mandatory New Student Orientation.

UHCL’s new student

“We are only expanding to accommodate our younger students, and we hope the expansion of our programs will continue to help our older students.”

– TIM RICHARDSON, DIRECTOR OF THE STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER

orientation for freshmen is titled Student Orientation Academic Registration (SOAR). Each SOAR session will host 30-35 students. The first freshmen orientation is scheduled for June 13. Freshmen, sophomore and undergraduate transfer students are not eligible to register for classes until they have attended one mandatory orientation session.

Darlene Biggers, associate vice president for student services, has overseen the necessary changes for Student Services to

be prepared for the freshmen and sophomore students’ arrival.

“The biggest change has been training our faculty and staff members on how to handle [younger] students,” Biggers said.

Biggers points out that because UHCL has never had freshmen and sophomore students at the university before, it is important the university’s faculty and staff knows how to help make the students’ transition from high school to the university a smooth one.

One of the many offices involved with Student Services is the Student Success Center (SSC). The SSC handles tutoring, supplemental instruction, peer mentoring and academic coaching.

“The SSC has expanded each of our programs to accommodate the incoming freshmen and sophomore students,” said Tim Richardson, director of the SSC. “One of the biggest changes to our department is the expansion of tutors and supplemental instruction. We want to include as many tutors and supplemental instructors in our lower-level courses as possible.”

Richardson said the SSC has expanded its programs in such a way that it will not only help make the transition to UHCL a

smooth one, it will continue to accommodate the university’s junior and senior-level students.

“We are absolutely not taking away any of the programs that have been helping our junior- and senior - level students,” Richardson said. “We are only expanding to accommodate our younger students, and we hope the expansion of our programs will continue to help our older students.”

Another office involved with Student Services is the Math Center. In order to prepare for the incoming freshmen and sophomore students, the Math Center has expanded its tutoring for almost every mathematics and statistic course that the university offers, said Allen Cox, director of the Math Center. Online tutoring options will be expanded in the future.

Other major changes to Student Services involve the Office of Student Life. In preparation for becoming a four-year university, the Office of Student Life has created the Hawk Leadership Institute and the Tradition Council. The office also oversees appearances by UHCL’s new mascot, Hunter the Hawk.

“We are also adding more recreational activities by upgrading the basketball court, tennis court,

soccer field and adding a cricket pitch,” Biggers said. “Although we are short on inside space, we are at an all-time high of [84] student organizations on campus.”

Biggers points out that it may seem like everything the university is putting together is to accommodate the incoming freshmen and sophomore students, but she feels as though the changes will benefit all students.

“My assumption is the resources will benefit all students and will build more of a school spirit,” Biggers said. “I hope students will see [the resources are] helping everyone, because we are accepting 300-400 freshmen and sophomores, but we will have 7,000 plus upper-level and graduate degree students.”

Richardson believes UHCL accepting freshmen and sophomore students will be a big cultural change for the university but that it is a necessary change.

“It is an exciting yet challenging time for UHCL, and the credit goes to the faculty, staff and administration,” Staples said. “I have no doubts this is the right thing to do in the expansion of UHCL, and I hope in 10 years people will be saying the same.”

TUITION: continued from page 1

president over finance, and Usha Mathew, associate vice president over finance, in a release statement to The Signal. “All mandatory fees/course fees will continue to be variable and may change annually in the fixed tuition rate plan.”

Students who choose not to be a part of the fixed-rate tuition plan will continue to pay an adaptable rate tuition, which is subject to increase each academic year.

Tuition revenues at the University of Houston System will be used to enhance programs and resources aimed at promoting student success. The University of Houston-Clear Lake plan is to dedicate this revenue toward the growth and retention of faculty and staff. The university also plans to add a new nursing program.

The fixed rates, also known as tuition freezes, are a part of a state government policy that restricts the ability of administrators of colleges and universities to increase tuition fees for students. The hope is that this policy will help to improve the accessibility of secondary education for working-class families and students.

The changes in tuition policy were instigated by Texas Governor Rick Perry, who, while attending the Texas Tribune Festival in September 2012, stated that students who go to state universities should retain the same tuition costs in their senior year as when they entered as freshmen.

“We’ll tell an incoming freshman, ‘This is what the university will charge you for four years,’” Perry stated at the festival.

The cost of college tuition has become increasingly more expensive for students attending state universities in Texas since it was deregulated under Perry’s administration in 2003. When state funding decreased, tuition was deregulated in order to make up for the loss in funding.

“The intent of fixed-rate tuition is to add predictability to the cost of attendance for families,” said Kelly Polden, assistant director of communications at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. “Texas House Bill 29 indicates a specific tuition rate will be set for the entering student who chooses to participate in a fixed-rate program, and will apply for at least the first 12 consecutive terms after the

student’s initial enrollment.”

In Texas, House Bill 29 was created to help families and students who lacked financial stability to better manage the cost of finishing their education at a university and graduating. The tuition rate will not change as long as students enrolled in this program complete their degree in four years.

Yet this same time table is what the opponents of the tuition freeze address. Those who disagree with the policy point out that many students must work in order to pay for school. While taking 15 credit hours a semester may be doable for some students, juggling a full-time job while maintaining a full-time course load can make things difficult for students who are trying to graduate.

Another issue that opponents of the tuition freezes are quick to point out is that tuition freezes have a history of a higher increase in tuition when the states that practice this policy are going through periods of low funding. When these states experience low funds and public universities are forced to raise tuition again, it is often a significantly higher increase for which the student body is generally unprepared.

Texas is the second state in the nation to offer fixed-rate tuition for students who are attending state colleges and universities. Many states have followed the example and now offer fixed-rate tuition.

“I do know that the University of Texas and other institutions have started implementing fixed-rate tuition,” Polden said.

Perry also called for linking 10 percent of universities’ state funding to the population of student graduates. While speaking about this new policy at Thomas Jefferson High School in northwest Dallas, Perry explained that if colleges and universities are not having as many students graduating, they will receive less funding.

“This will encourage universities to do everything they can to help their students complete their degrees and graduate in a timely fashion,” Perry said.

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE: continued from page 1



COLDEN SNOW: THE SIGNAL

Students gather on the patio outside of the SSCB.

“[The course is] a one-hour credit class that will meet for two hours per week” said Yvette Bendeck, associate vice president of enrollment management.

The first-year experience course will be linked with a core curriculum course that all freshmen are required to take.

“We are using political science and history for these courses,” said Rick Short, dean of Human Sciences and Humanities. “For example, incoming freshmen will enroll in a required introductory political science course. The first-year experience course will be attached to that course, so that these students will automatically sign up for a section of that course as well. They will complete both courses in the same semester.”

The purpose of UHCL’s first-year experience course is to teach students how to apply basic college survival and study skills learned in the course to a core curriculum class, creating a direct transfer of these skills to an actual college course. By drawing a direct connection to a content course, such as political science and history, to the first-year experience course, instructors can coordinate assignments and expectations so that students can actually apply what they learn in class.

“Once [the freshmen] master the skills, they will be able to apply them

to all of their college courses...also students in the first-year experience course will have additional support in that class to help them through any hard spots in the content course,” Short said.

Short also points out that similar courses at other universities traditionally focus on basic survival skills for completing college, such as study skills or using the library or time management.

“The problem with the traditional approach is that often there’s not much direct transfer of these skills to actual college courses,” Short said. “It has been typical that students might learn something like study skills that never get applied to their courses.”

Short believes UHCL’s new and direct approach to the first-year experience will teach students how to properly develop the skills they need to be successful,” Short said.

“The transition from high school to college sometimes is challenging.”

“Expectations for the two levels are very different. The first-year experience provides important support in making the transition – support that is immediately available and applicable in a real content class. Skills developed in the class are all about being successful in school all the way to graduation.”



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On behalf of the past and current SGA Executive Council, directors and advisor, we send our heartfelt thanks to everyone that supported us in 2013-2014! It was a sincere pleasure serving UHCL students. Remember that this is your school. Stay informed. Be involved. Go Hawks!

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New math center now available to students

FRANCISCO VAZQUEZ
THE SIGNAL

There is a room located in the Student Services Building that is said to cure numerous ailments.

From anxiety to tachycardia, and everything in between, students who spend time within the walls of this room are known to leave with a renewed sense of understanding and control toward an obstacle that many have come to know as Math.

For the past three months Allen Cox, director of the Math Center, has worked diligently to make this tutoring facility an approachable and helpful environment for any UHCL student to come and strengthen their mathematical muscles.

“We want students to feel comfortable with coming into our tutoring center,” Cox said. “We don’t want to stress them out more than they already are for perhaps doing poorly in a math course.”

The Math Center, located in SSCB 2.101, now offers tutoring in more than 20 different mathematic sections ranging from College Algebra to Advanced Calculus and is open to all UHCL students who need a little extra help getting a grip on their math course.

Cox joined the UHCL Division of Student Services team in

January. Not only has he been a private math tutor since the age of 17, he has experience teaching a number of mathematic courses at universities such as Kent State and Michigan State. Cox earned both his M.A. in mathematics and B.S. in mathematics at Kent State University.

Because of his experience teaching and tutoring in different education centers, Cox is excited to mold the Math Center into the most effective and accessible math tutoring facility possible.

An inviting sense of calm and focus can be felt in the room as math tutors engage with students one-on-one at tables and in nearby study rooms. Almost visible is the illumination of light bulbs turning on outside heads of the once confused students who decided to walk through the door.

Cox realizes that to many students, even the thought of math can trigger anxiety and feelings of discouragement.

“A big reason why a lot of students do not finish their degree is because they do not complete their math requirement,” Cox said. “So when I came on in January we opened the Math Center up to tutor any math course that we could; now we offer tutoring for almost every single math course.”

Math major Melissa Rubio is

one of the Math Center’s nine friendly tutors; her energetic and welcoming presence can be felt as she walks into the room. Rubio raves about the satisfaction she feels when she is able to help students realize that they can understand once seemingly impossible math concepts. She said she “absolutely loves it” when students come back to show off their passing math grades after visiting her for tutoring sessions.

“For me math is fun, and teaching it to students in a way where they understand the concepts is very rewarding for me,” Rubio said. “I want every student to know that there is no such thing as a question that is too dumb or too small; if there is something that you don’t understand just stop by, and we will love to explain it to you in a way you can understand.”

The Math Center is currently



FRANCISCO VAZQUEZ: THE SIGNAL

Statistics graduate and Math Center tutor Paramito Banerjee helps Freddie Munoz, math major, prepare for an upcoming exam.

in the process of transferring to a new facility in the Bayou Building that is larger and better equipped to serve the anticipated growth of the UHCL student body. They even have a presence on social media and are looking into online tutoring.

“We want to renovate the Math Center to be a very comprehensive resource for any student taking a mathematics course,” Cox said. “Our goal is to create a more open relationship with the student body so that they feel

comfortable coming in when they genuinely need help.”

The Math Center is open to all UHCL students Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on a drop-in basis. A complete list of math courses that are available for drop-in tutoring can be found on the homepage of the Math Center’s website at www.uhcl.edu/mathcenter.

SGA president candidate for UH Board of Regents



Carla Bradley, graduate digital media studies student and president of the Student Government Association, has been nominated by Renu Khator, chancellor of the University of Houston System, to be considered for the 2014-2015 student regent position with the UH Board of Regents.

“Getting this far into the appointment process has been a privilege,” Bradley said. “When I applied for the position, I just thought that my application would be sitting on someone’s desk collecting dust. I honestly had no idea that I was qualified enough to compete with law and political science students and never thought that I would be even considered for an interview.”

The board is expected to announce the name of the two students chosen to serve as student regents sometime in April.

Who’s Who

Congratulations to the student recipients of the
2014 Who’s Who Awards

Robin Aleman	Jonathan Headberg	David Oliva
Elham Azari	Mallori Henceroth	Samantha Oser
Shvetha Balajee	Karol Hernandez	Harsha Patil
Kimberly Belsley	Sonya Herridge	Resel Pereira
Denise Bergman	Cheron Hillmon	Ashok Punna
Deepali Bodhe	Uyen Hoang	Shraddha Rane
Katherine Boggess	Sarah Hopson	Jessyka Reynoso
Carla Bradley	Christine Houston	Dawn Rodriguez
Candice Brantley	Julie Jackson	Courtney Sanders
Julie Brenengen	Chaitanya Kala	Jennifer Serrano
Katie Bruno	Mary Anne Kane	Deanna Sherrill
Sandra Buso	Kellie Keener	Himaja Siddabatula
Brittany Cardenas	Kenneth Kettler	Radhika Singh
Lindsey Carelock	Loan Le	Kristen Skipper
Gina Carlson	January Luburger	Kimberly Stonestreet
Terri Copeland	Kavitha Madhavarajan	Daniel Sweet
Tiffany Croft Fitzpatrick	Mari Martinez	Randon Taylor
Brandi Deleon	Justin Medellin	Siddartha Thota
Anusha Sai Donavalli	Jeremy Mejia	Lisa Tieu
Sarah Dudley	S. Leticia Messmer	Heather Tolleson
Regina Duffey	Toby Meusburger	Lauren Totten
Coretta Duplessis	Raza Ali Mohammad	Hang Tran
Jenson Erapuram	Jennifer Morrow	Jocelyn Uriostegui
Roxanne Fabiani	Candace Mowrey-Pullin	Sai Rashmika Velugula
Paul Fullmer	David Moya	Shalaka Virkar
Gowtham Gandhimathi	Apoorva Naidu	Quyen Thi Thuy Vo
Julie Garner	Trieu Hai Nguyen	Julie Ann Voss
Deamantina Garza-Garcia	Tram Ngoc Nguyen	Huy Tran Quoc Vu
Shipra Gupta	Binh Chi Nguyen	Sarah Wang
Nancy Gwinn	Natasha Nielsen	Mina Yamane



Julien Arabie
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