

# THE SIGNAL

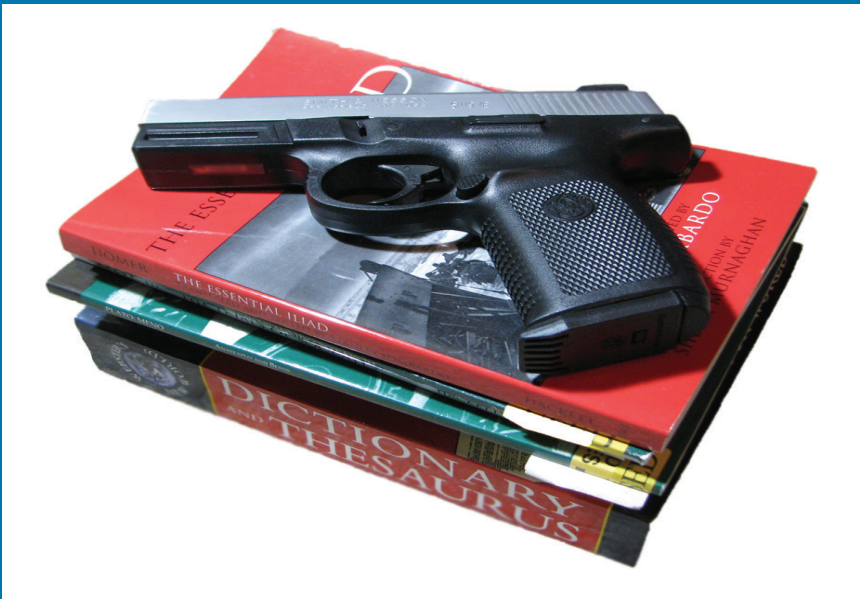
VOLUME XLI, NUMBER 1

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FEBRUARY 11, 2013

## Call of Duty 5: Campus Edition

### GUNS ON CAMPUS



**Jason Seidel**  
The Signal

A fight broke out last month at Houston's Lone Star College after two students had a disagreement. Shots rang out, leaving three people injured. While details are still emerging, one thing is clear: students are not allowed to carry concealed guns on campus ... for the time being.

The Texas Legislature is currently trying to pass S.B. No. 182 that would allow students of higher education to carry concealed handguns on campus grounds – not just in student's vehicle, which is already permitted, but on their person, into class, with other students. The only requirement is that the student will need to have a concealed handgun license, more commonly known as a CHL.

"Texas Penal Code Statute 46.03 prevents firearms and other weap-

ons from our campus for the safety of our students, faculty and staff," said William Staples, president of UHCL. "This law was created to allow students a safe space to learn and employees to work, and we believe UHCL provides this, not only because of the law but because of the police force we have on campus."

However, if passed, S.B. No. 182 would override Penal Code Statue 46.03.

"Subject to the requirements in S.B. 182 and current CHL law, the bill would create an exception to the offense of carrying a weapon in a prohibited place," said Senator Larry Taylor, one of the authors of S.B. No. 182.

The bill is being met with mixed reaction across the campus.

"As long as they're

[students] licensed to carry, I don't see a problem with it," said Melanie Gregory, assistant manager of the UHCL bookstore.

"I think it's a bad idea," said Michael Smith, assistant administrator for UHCL. "There is more possibility of accidents like accidental discharge."

Nearly half of the states have already passed similar legislation.

"No evidence of increased violence exists in the 23 other states that allow for CHLs to carry on campus," Taylor said "Allowing trained students and faculty to protect themselves should deter shooting incidents."

There have been four mass shootings on college campuses since the 1960s: Oikos University shooting occurred April 2, 2012; Northern Illinois University in

SEE CALL OF DUTY, PAGE 6

## Houston named a major hub for human sex trafficking

**Ashley Honc**  
The Signal

At age 10, Maria's family was promised a job, education and better life for their daughter in Houston. Little did they know that it was the beginning of a dangerous scam lasting more than eight years.

Maria was constantly watched, sexually exploited, threatened, beaten and endlessly in debt to her owner. Maria and her family's experience are far from sporadic; traffickers prey upon millions of people in the U.S. alone.

"Twenty-one million people in the United States are in bondage for human trafficking. Roughly 16.5 million people are in labor

SEE HUMAN, PAGE 6

## Class Schedules Changing in Fall 2013

**Traci Wall**  
The Signal

A new class rotation schedule grid has been created by UHCL's enrollment management division. It will go into effect fall 2013 in an effort to accommodate freshman and sophomore students expected to enroll in fall 2014.

Currently, UHCL primarily offers classes that meet one day a week for three hours. Schedule grids will change to include two- and three-days-a-week classes that will meet in one-and-a-half-hour and one-hour time blocks. Two- and three-days-a-week classes used for lower-level courses will be offered during the day, predominately in the morning.

"There is a lot of misunderstanding about what is going on," said Yvette Bendeck, associate vice president of enrollment management.

Bendeck says that right now, schedule grid rules are not

enforced for 43 classes. With the addition of freshmen and sophomore courses, classes will need to make the necessary changes to starting and ending times to be in-line with the new grid.

"We are enforcing starting times so that students are not blocked from taking other classes because class times overlap," Bendeck said.

While the three-hour class times during the morning will still be an option in fall 2013, it can be expected that these will eventually disappear, Bendeck said.

Currently, 22 classes are scheduled during the day at UHCL. By changing class schedules, UHCL is able to meet the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) expectations of classroom utilization as well as the criteria for space utilization, said Carl Stockton, senior vice president

SEE CLASS, PAGE 6

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
EDUC 3045 4:00 pm - 6:50 pm		MATH 2050 4:00 pm - 6:50 pm		
HUMN 3050 7:00 pm - 9:50 pm		SOCI 3232 7:00 pm - 9:50 pm		

EXAMPLE OF CURRENT CLASS SCHEDULE FOR FULL-TIME STUDENT

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
EDUC 3045 9:00 am-9:50 am		EDUC 3045 9:00 am-9:50 am		EDUC 3045 9:00 am-9:50 am
	HUMN 3050 8:00 am-9:20 am		HUMN 3050 8:00 am-9:20 am	
SOCI 3232 1:00 pm-1:50 pm		SOCI 3232 1:00 pm-1:50 pm		SOCI 3232 1:00 pm-1:50 pm
	MATH 2050 9:30 am-10:50 am		MATH 2050 9:30 am-10:50 am	

EXAMPLE OF PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE FOR FULL-TIME STUDENT

GRAPHICS BY SHAWN DOMINGUES:THE SIGNAL

ONLINE  
this issue

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BLOG:  
Gun Control is  
Out of Control



BLOG:  
UHCL Adds New  
Class Rotations



# Will Texas law makers pull the trigger?

*Legislature may gun down your peace of mind, prepare to be blown away*

You are sitting in class and hear gun shots. You grab your new 9 mm pistol from your backpack and enter the hallway.

You see a shooter firing continuously down an adjacent hallway. You fire your pistol and the shooter falls to the ground. You run to take the gun from the shooter’s hand before he can cause any more carnage.

As you arrive at his lifeless body you see a figure in that adjacent hallway. The figure is wearing camouflage gear. He is armed with an assault rifle and holstered handguns.

Realizing you may have just murdered an innocent student you turn to run away and are confronted by a faculty member. The faculty member sees you with two guns in your hand. You see a white puff of smoke from the gun. Your surroundings become dark and silent.

The Texas Legislature in Austin is considering S.B. No. 182 and H.B. No 706 that will allow concealed weapons in the classroom at schools of higher learning, including the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

Will these laws, if enacted, keep students, faculty and staff safe? The above scenario is fictitious, but the recent shooting at Lone Star College was real. That shooting was the result of a disagreement between two students.

There is no special clothing

## EDITORIAL

worn by those who have a Concealed Handgun License. There is no way to tell at a glance if the person carrying has proper state approved training.

News reports on television demonstrate chaos on campuses hours after a shooting. Chaos and fear must surely be at its height during the event. It takes a quick wit and controlled emotions to reason and decide if the person holding a gun is an active shooter or an innocent bystander trying to protect him or herself.

Police officers and military personnel are trained and tested continually, yet they still make mistakes. The issue is not the gun but the user.

Additionally, accidental discharge concerns students and faculty. Most handguns are constructed with safety switches and trigger guards. The discharge of a handgun accidentally dropped is rare. Nevertheless, there are models that use switches at the trigger.

Without a holster, these handguns can be discharged while being removed from a pocket or purse. A tube of lipstick or finger accidentally entering the trigger guard could discharge the gun. The holster is an important part of equipment for a weapon, not simply a fashionable accessory.

Surveys suggest violence against students or faculty is a concern. A student could express displeasure over a grade or the breakup with a significant other by using a legally possessed handgun. This could affect the quality of instruction and student relationships on campus.

University students have many stresses. They are confronted with the learning process while required to juggle employment and life off campus.

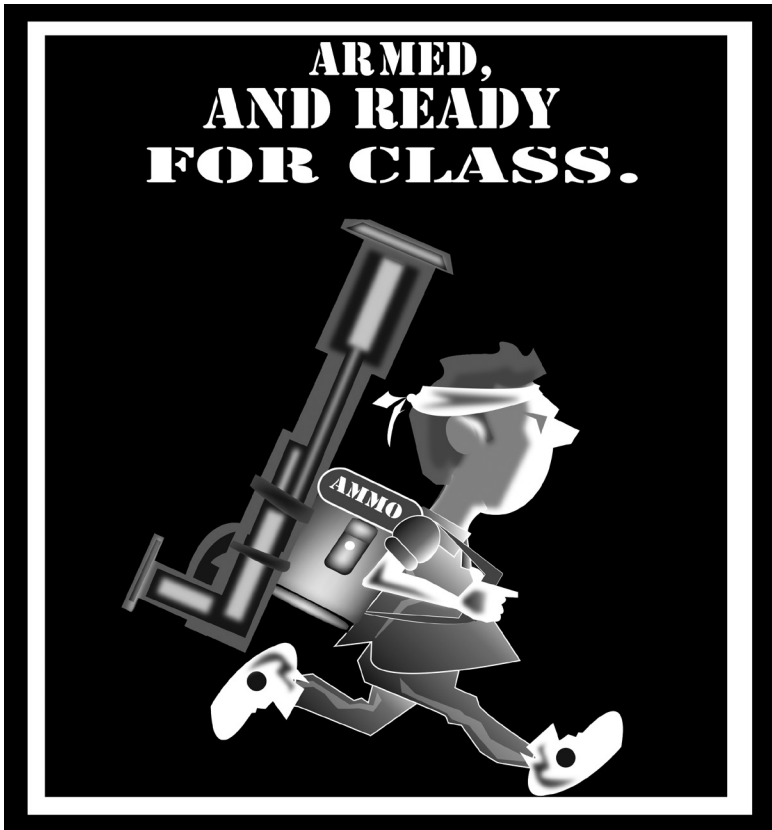
Adding to those concerns, they will have to think about making another student angry, bumping them or insulting them. Each of these acts could cause injury or death by a student acting irrationally and using their handgun.

Moreover, any situation that would cause an unreasonable or emotional response requires a cooling off period to allow the event to be processed mentally. This period would allow the person to reason and avoid regret and possible injury to someone. If a handgun is in the mix of available options, the cooling off period would be eliminated and tragedy could occur.

There is a state law governing the licensing and ownership of a concealed handgun. That law cites the places where handgun possession is restricted. Current license holders suggest that since these restrictions are covered by that law, other restrictions are not

## WANTNEEDO

Kalan Lyra



necessary.

The one point on which everyone does seem to agree is that training and continuing education is essential to the ultimate success of the CHL process.

Regardless of the training and licensing, university buildings and classrooms are not places to carry concealed handguns.

Finally, it is up to you. Texas state websites will give you the information to contact your state

lawmakers. Let them know your feelings concerning these two bills. Their names and more information can be found at <http://www.legis.state.tx.us>.

Your safety and security depend on it.

**GO ONLINE**  
Scan the code to find your legislators' contact information.

## LETTERS Guns on Campus: Do our ‘Representatives’ represent us?

On his first day on the job as the elected representative of our 36<sup>th</sup> district, Congressman Steve Stockman, a UHCL alumnus, introduced legislation to repeal gun free school zones (Houston Chronicle: 1/20/13).

During the 2011 Texas legislative session, our District 129 Texas State Representative, John E. Davis, also a UHCL alumnus, and our District 11 Texas State Senator Larry Taylor co-sponsored House Bill 750 that allowed concealed weapons to be carried on college campuses.

Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst recently proposed spending state money to train teachers and school employees to carry concealed weapons, but said nothing about using surplus funds from the state coffers this year to replenish the \$5.4 billion cut from the state education fund during the 2011 legislative session, a cut which forced UHCL to absorb a

20% budget decrease.

Do the actions of these elected representatives reflect the views of the UHCL community that they serve? The UHCL community (students, educators, employees) must come together to have a conversation and develop a consensus position regarding guns on campus.

If our community agrees with our legislators, we need to know. If our community disagrees with our elected legislators, we must meet with them to ensure that our voices are heard just as loudly as the other voices that endorsed and contributed to their campaigns, such as the NRA, Gun Owners of America, the National Association for Gun Rights, and Citizens United.

UHCL consistently ranks as one of the safest if not THE safest campus in Texas. Our community is wonderfully diverse both ethnically and culturally. We

serve a wide variety of students from traditional students to grandmothers, parents working full time, students working several jobs, and international students.

Our campus is an oasis within an urban community. Our students feel comfortable openly voicing their opinions both in class discussion and in student organizations. How would concealed handguns affect open discourse among students and faculty? How would allowing concealed guns on campus affect our culture?

While the actions of lone shooters in Sandy Hook, Colorado, and Virginia Tech are shocking, a more problematic scenario would be like that which took place on the campus of Lone Star College January 22, 2013, where a human being in a moment of anger and passion pulled an illegal pistol from a backpack

and started shooting. Some argue that guns should be allowed on campus in order for students to be able defend themselves that had another student been armed at Lone Star, the situation would have been quickly resolved. I strongly disagree. Making it legal to carry guns on campus would increase the possibility of another incident exponentially.

A tense situation where dozens of people have guns drawn is terrifying, not to mention the ramifications of a “friendly fire” incident where civilians (students, faculty, employees) carrying weapons could mistakenly shoot innocent people. How would first responders be able to determine the identity of the initial shooter if others have guns and are shooting as well? But most important, what would be the impact on the academic freedom within our UHCL culture if students and teachers guard their words and

studies out of fear?

We owe it to ourselves as a community to have a thoughtful and open dialogue about gun policy and to somehow reach a consensus. We must establish our position quickly and make that position known to our legislators before laws are enacted during the current Texas legislative session, which ends in April. If we can reach a consensus within our community, perhaps we can become a model for others. We *must* try. We owe it to our students, faculty, and employees to keep this educational oasis we call UHCL safe.

Mary Margaret Lobb  
Adjunct Professor in Humanities  
UHCL Alumna

## THE SIGNAL

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## HOUSTON: WE HAVE A POTENTIAL THEME PARK

The possibility of a future theme park in Houston is becoming a reality

### Ryan Little

The Signal

Thrill riders rejoice; one day Houston may get another theme park. It has been eight years since Six Flags AstroWorld closed its doors and left the greater Houston area without a theme park.

Since its closure, Kemah Boardwalk added attractions including a wooden rollercoaster called the Boardwalk Bullet. Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier opened this past summer as a small park built over the water.

While this is a start, Houston, the fourth largest city in the nation, still does not have a full-fledged theme park. There are four proposed theme parks for the Houston area, all with a chance to start breaking ground soon.

"I miss going with my

friends and family to Six Flags AstroWorld whenever I wanted to," said Jeremy Matthews, digital media major.

The Mayor of Texas City, Matt Doyle, announced that a man with ties to the old Playland Park in Houston has acquired about 25 acres south of the new Tanger Outlets mall with the intention of building a theme park.

"Yes, a gentleman has bought land with the intent to build a theme park," confirmed Nick Finan, director of management, Texas City.

The original Playland Park was located from the mid-1940s to the mid-1960s near the site where the famed AstroWorld once stood. With only 25 acres being purchased, this will not be the biggest of the four proposed parks. There are no other details available on this proposed park at this time.

Grand Texas Theme Park is a proposed 150-acre, Texas-themed park planned for the Woodlands area. Unlike some of the other theme parks, the owners want to include attractions such as paintball, a rope course and horseback riding. This park would also include rides and two rollercoasters. A Grand Texas spokesperson said he was not ready to give any interviews at this time but indicated more information would be available soon.

RCS Entertainment was formed by a management team to bring a theme park to the Houston area. The President of RCS Entertainment, Michael Sidener, previously worked for Six Flags AstroWorld. Their plan contains a theme park, water park, professional golf course, several five-star hotels and restaurants, retail shopping, and various other amenities.

Out of the four proposed theme parks coming to Houston, this one has the least current status. Their last Facebook status, states they are working on the Houston park. The RCS group is also trying to revive an abandoned theme park in New Orleans. RCS was contacted about progress but no additional information was given.

"IT'S A NO-BRAINER THAT A MAJOR THEME PARK SHOULD BE BUILT IN THE HOUSTON AREA. THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY DESERVE IT!"

-Robb Alvey  
ThemeParkReview.com

The last proposed theme park for the Houston area is also one with plans to include a big resort. Earth Quest Adventures theme park started off as a dinosaur museum to be built off U.S. Highway 59 north heading toward New Caney. After much planning and redesign, the original museum idea turned into Earth Quest Adventures.

The park is described as a \$500 million, 1,600-acre resort that will include a theme park as well as a water park, hotel, conference center and retail and office developments. The park was supposed to break ground in 2009, but because of the declining economy, plans were pushed back.

Fast-forward to 2013, the project is now proposed as a scaled down version of the original vision. Earth Quest has changed a lot since it was

first proposed, but Chris Brown with Contour Entertainment, the resort's original master designer, believes they can still get the park built. Contour took over the project in 2010 and is still pushing to get it built. They have been granted permission to secure remaining investors in order to start breaking ground. Earth Quest is the most developed of the four proposed theme parks.

"There are a few untapped markets in the United States for theme parks – Phoenix, Seattle, Miami, but Houston is the largest city in the USA without a major theme park," said Robb Alvey, owner and creator of ThemeParkReview.com. "It's a no-brainer that a major theme park should get built in the Houston area. The people of the city deserve it!"

"YES, A GENTLEMAN HAS BOUGHT LAND WITH THE INTENT TO BUILD A THEME PARK."

-Nick Finan  
Director of Management,  
City of Texas City



**COMING THIS FALL! GET YOUR SUBMISSIONS READY!**

## With great creativity comes great opportunity

**Lauren Lowry**

The Signal

Aspiring comic book writers and illustrators, mark your calendars. University of Houston-Clear Lake will be offering an opportunity of a lifetime for the students interested in becoming comic book/graphic novel writers and illustrators.

Comic books and graphic novels with notable characters such as Batman, Spiderman, Superman, and many more did not just appear out of thin air. It all starts with the creative process.

UHCL will be hosting its first comic book and graphic novel Symposium called 'comiCulture: From Creation to Consumption,' Sept. 21. The Symposium will include a panel discussion by comic book/graphic novel writers and illustrators and a portfolio review for upcoming artists.

Leading up to the Symposium, UHCL will be presenting Student Illustration and The Art of Sequential Storytelling Exhibitions. The Student Illustration Exhibition will display student comic book and graphic novel works.

"Students are encouraged to submit artworks to the UHCL comiCulture Student Illustration Exhibition," said Stuart Larson, associate professor of applied design and graphic arts and member of the comiCulture advisory

committee. "If you are interested in graphic novels, manga, anime, or children's books, don't let this opportunity go by. Be daring, be dynamic, use unique perspective and above all, have fun."

Jeff Bowen, the director of the UHCL Art Gallery, and the comiCulture advisory committee will select student works.

Larson encourages students to submit the following: "Suggested illustrations include, but are not limited to: Graphic novel pages, comic book sequences, children's book pages and panels, character designs sketches and samples. All artwork must be original designs, characters, and material."

Kalan Lyra, a UHCL graduate student alumnus and staff cartoonist for The Signal, is looking forward to the upcoming Symposium.

"I would advise students to submit their best work to date," Lyra said. "Work that they feel really communicates their point of view and who they are as an artist. If they have a variety of work to present, then would tell them to submit the best examples of their portfolio to show off a range of their abilities."

"I would also advise them to practice talking about their work. Often times a subject that

is presented in a piece can seem convoluted to a viewer's eye. An artist should be well versed in their responses and explanations of the things that they create."

The theme for comiCulture, From Creation to Consumption, will focus on how aspiring comic book and graphic novel artists break into the publishing industry. The panel of successful comic book writers and illustrators will be answering questions about the creative and publishing process.

"The creative process is a magical thing, but if the plans in that initial stage are never executed then the art is never realized," Lyra said. "A work of art is result of an individual who has taken an idea from concept to creation."

Some featured artists and writers will include James O'Barr, creator of The Crow, David Doub, publisher/writer at Dusk Comics and Nick Pitarra, artist at Image Comics.

The exhibitions will take place Aug. 22- Oct. 18 in the Bayou Building Atrium I and the UHCL Art Gallery. The deadline for student submissions has not been determined yet but will be released soon. See comiCulture.org for information.



CALL OF DUTY 5: continued from page 1

2008; Virginia Tech in 2007; and the University of Texas shooting in 1966, when Charles Whitman killed 14 people and wounded 32 others from the UT Tower.

The FBI defines mass shootings as “four or more murders occurring during a particular event with no cooling-off period between the murders.”

“There has never been an active shooter at UHCL or any shooting for that matter,” said Paul Willingham, UHCL’s chief of police.

In order to get a CHL in the state of Texas, applicants will need to be at least 21 (unless active military), have no felony convictions and no Class A or B misdemeanors in the last five years.

That is the requirements applicants need in order to be eligible for a CHL. There is also a mandated 10-hour class, two of those hours involving range time. In addition, applicants will also need to pass a more detailed background check, which is different than the one required to purchase a gun.

Some believe that acquiring a CHL might not be enough training to handle an active shooter on campus.

“A CHL should be like a driver’s license with different classes providing different training,” said Billy Smith, graduate history major.

Having additional training still may not be enough to comfort all faculty members, students and staff.

“Currently I feel very safe in my classroom,” said Stuart Larson, associate professor of applied design and art. “But I have wondered, if the law passes, who in my class will be carrying an instant kill weapon. Do I need to get a concealed weapon to protect my students, or for protection from my students?”

To join in on the discussion, follow The Signal’s staff blog.

To view the actual Senate bill, check out [www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/83R/billtext/html/SB00182I.htm](http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/83R/billtext/html/SB00182I.htm).

CLASS: continued from page 1

for academic affairs and provost.

“It is necessary to meet students’ expectations as well as to accommodate the best practices in teaching freshmen and sophomores,” Stockton said. “By having this new schedule, we will be able to accommodate the needs of both traditional and nontraditional students. Graduate classes and most upper level courses that are taught from 4-7 p.m. and 7-10 p.m. will remain the same.”

UHCL is expecting 200 freshmen and 100 sophomore students to enroll in 2014.

“The typical student at this school is a part-time student, part-time/full-time worker who most likely has a family,” said Carla Bradley SGA vice president. “Having a class just one day a week works out best for them.”

UHCL was originally designed to cater to the unconventional student.

“UHCL was founded as an open admissions university with a commitment to the highest quality in teaching,” said John Gorman, professor of literature and a charter member of the university. “From the start we welcomed ‘nontraditional’ students. That tended to mean older people who had postponed or interrupted higher education when they were of traditional college age. Such students had complicated, fully adult lives; and we carefully planned things with their tight schedules in mind.

“We soon found that the younger students, too, were often coming from lives with an array of obligations. For years everyone was a commuter – often from considerable distances. The three-hour classes met the needs of all

and have been much appreciated.”

Shared governance is a big part of the university’s culture.

“I’m not at all happy that the rotation wasn’t brought before the whole faculty for discussion,” Gorman said.

“THE TYPICAL STUDENT AT THIS SCHOOL IS A PART-TIME STUDENT, PART-TIME/FULL-TIME WORKER WHO MOST LIKELY HAS A FAMILY.”  
  
– Carla Bradley  
SGA vice president

Some faculty members are curious it see if all freshmen are going to be conventional recent high school graduates or if we will continue to attract nontraditional students, drawn here because of the one-day-per-week classes.

“Our identity, at its core, is a liberal arts institution committed to student excellence and sincere teaching,” said Shreerekha Subramanian, assistant professor of humanities. “We basically can teach our students to reach upward toward graduate school ways of learning rather than whittle our standards down. Incoming students, I believe, can adjust to an existing order of three-hour classes much more easily than we give them credit for.”

The School of Human Sciences and Humanities put together a subcommittee to look into this change.

“I would like to see the question of scheduling studied to determine its potential affect on student learning, course selection, attendance and retention,” said Chloe Diepenbrock, associate professor of writing and literature and chair of the subcommittee, looking into class rotation changes.

There are concerns that shorter class periods will be less productive for some disciplines, and that commute time and expense will create a hardship for students and adjunct faculty.

The new class schedules would have “a huge impact on student life and access to education,” said Kim Case, associate professor of women’s studies and psychology.

Case worries that the change will impose “limits on innovative teaching approaches that require longer class meetings.

Bendeck believes all students will benefit as a result of more efficient scheduling.

Just as this change is being made at UHCL, San Jacinto College, the university’s largest source of transfer students, has also made changes to its schedule grid. SJC now offers three-hour classes once a week as well as one-and-a-half-hour classes on a Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday rotation in an effort to serve more nonconventional students.

Faculty Senate President Kathryn Ley encourages any faculty who wish to express their thoughts to contact their Faculty Senator.

Students may contact the Student Government Association regarding the changes.

HUMAN: continued from page 1

Learn to Recognize the Signs of Human Trafficking

Identify Human Trafficking Victims:

- Living with an employer
- Poor living conditions
- Multiple people in cramped space
- Inability to speak to individual alone
- Answers appear to be scripted and rehearsed
- Employer is holding identity documents
- Signs of physical abuse
- Submissive or fearful
- Unpaid or paid very little
- Under 18 and in prostitution

Questions you can ask:

- Can you leave your job if you want to?
- Can you come and go as you please?
- Have you been hurt or threatened if you tried to leave?
- Has your family been threatened?
- Do you live with your employer?
- Where do you sleep and eat?
- Are you in debt to your employer?
- Do you have your passport/identification? Who has it?

Visit the U.S. Dept. of State website for more information: [www.state.gov/j/tip/id/index.htm](http://www.state.gov/j/tip/id/index.htm)

trafficking and 4.5 million people in sex trafficking,” said Tim Johnson, chair of Locke Lord’s White Collar Criminal Defense and International Investigations.

One out of every five of those victims resides in Texas. The second largest criminal industry in the world, human trafficking is defined as the recruitment or illegal trade of a person for involuntary labor or sexual exploitation. It is essentially modern-day slavery.

Of the twenty-one million captives in human trafficking, Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition indicate that between 14,500 and 17,500 of those individuals are brought into the U.S. every year from other countries.

Maria, a victim of this growing epidemic, is one of the lucky ones: she escaped. Now in her early twenties, Maria appeared at the 27th Law & Media Seminar in downtown Houston Feb. 2. It was there she voiced her story to raise awareness about human trafficking and also to help her cope with the suffering she has experienced.

Fleeing from gangs in her homeland in Central America, Maria was sent to Houston for the opportunity of a better life and to help support those back home. It was not long until she realized her family had trusted the wrong person. The man who helped her get to America became her “owner” and cut off all ties she had with her family.

For years Maria was beaten and sold to men as a sex slave by her owner/pimp working mainly out of a Houston cantina.

“He forced me to put on the clothes and showed me how to act,” said Maria as she vividly recalls her first time at the cantina. “That night I was with 10 men.”

“Cantina-related trafficking cases have involved victims from Central America and Mexico – often children or young women – who were kidnapped, beaten or otherwise coerced into prostitution,” says Lise Olsen, an investigative reporter for the Houston Chronicle with 20 years experience on crime, corruption and human rights issues. Common in Houston, cantina cases are not as typical elsewhere.

Many efforts have been made to help stop this rising criminal industry. In 2000, Congress passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), declaring human trafficking of all kinds a federal crime. In 2004, Houston founded the Human Trafficking Rescue Alliance to further address human trafficking. The most recent act was passed in 2008. The William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection

Reauthorization Act enhanced federal efforts to deal with international and domestic trafficking.

Even with these laws, Human Trafficking continues to grow and even occurs at mainstream places.

“There are credible allegations from advocates and from city and county officials that Houston’s strip clubs and massage parlors are centers for human trafficking,” Olsen said.

Houston is considered a main hub for human trafficking. It is close to the Mexican border, and has an international airport and interstates running through it.

During her imprisonment, Maria became pregnant and regularly saw a doctor. Too scared to reach out for help, her exploitation remained unnoticed.

“I was angered that doctors didn’t know I was being exploited,” Maria said.

Finally free, Maria still battles with nightmares and hallucinations from her past.

The case to convict her captor is still being investigated. If her sex trafficker is prosecuted, he faces up to life in prison with a minimum sentence of 10 years.

Targets are not only illegal immigrants or children; anyone who is uneducated on this issue can become a victim. In fact, Super Bowl Sunday has been exposed as one of the “largest human trafficking incidents in the U.S.,” said Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott in a public statement.

Children at Risk, a nonprofit organization that advocates change for children, warns major sporting events provide a great demand for the commercial sex industry and traffickers often travel to these events to fill that demand.

“It’s equal opportunity slavery,” says Maria Trujillo, executive director for the Houston Rescue and Restore Coalition. “Becoming aware is the best way to stop human trafficking.”

There are many warning signs that can indicate possible human trafficking. The U.S. State Department notes some key signs to look for are: an employee living with an employer, signs of physical abuse and an inability of the person to speak to individuals alone. More resources can be found at <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/index.htm>.

If you believe you recognize someone as a possible victim of human trafficking, alert law enforcement immediately or call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-888-373-7888.



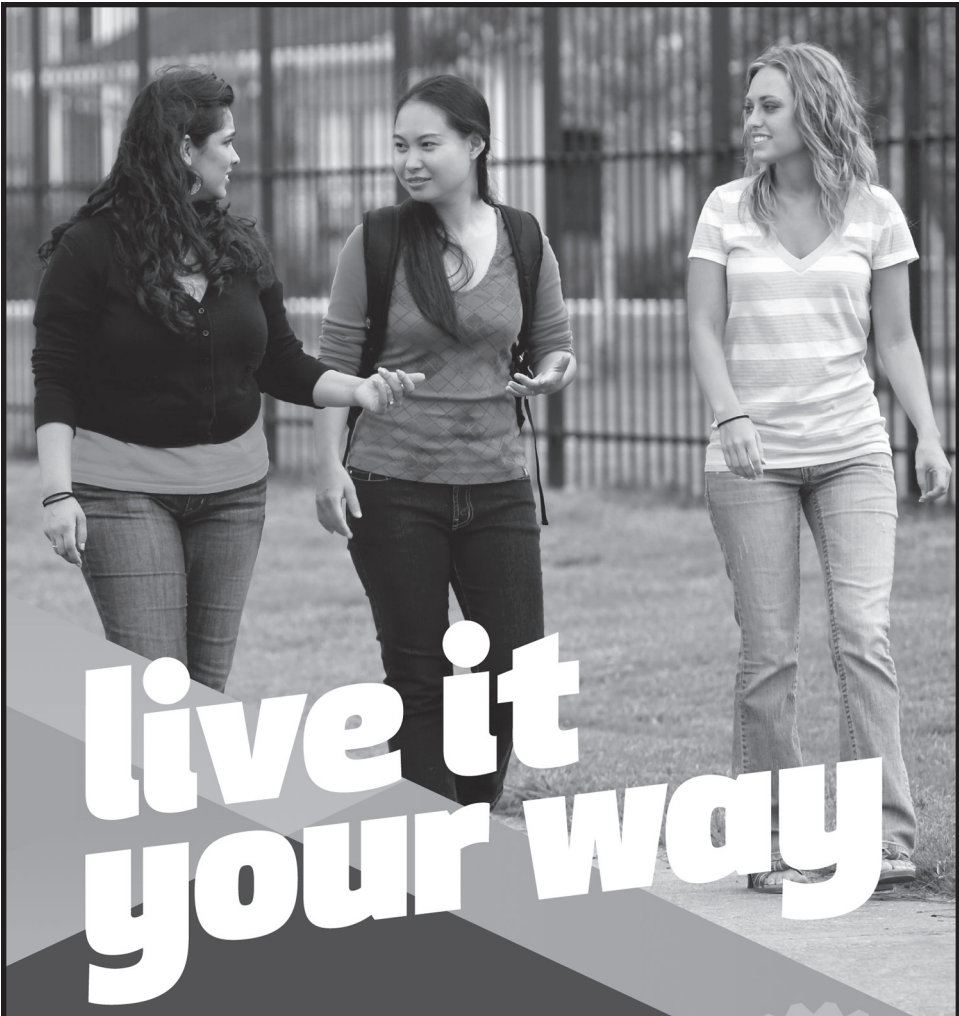
UHCL's

Day of Service

Saturday  
March 2, 2013

Join your fellow students, faculty, staff, alumni, family, and community in volunteering for UHCL's Day of Service program, which consists of a day of various projects to give back to our community.

For more information visit:  
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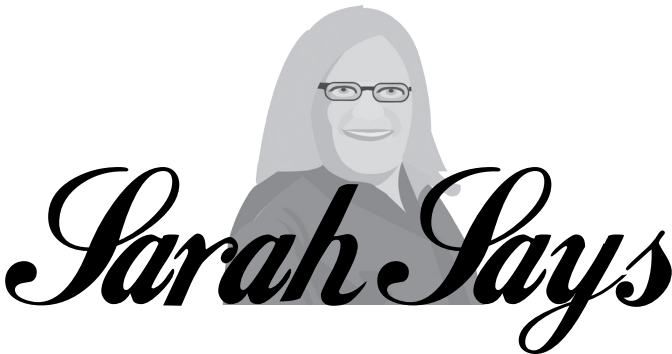


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Welcome back y'all!  
Although I'll be here for a small fraction,  
now is the time to spring into action.  
Happy Mardi Gras & Valentine's Day  
from all of us here at SGA.

- Does parking suck? Buy a parking raffle ticket.  
1 ticket for \$1, 6 tickets for \$5. Stop by SSCB 1.205 before Feb 26.
- Vote for February's Student Leader of the Month.  
Deadline: February 20, 2013 at 10 a.m. in SSCB 1.205
- Get involved! Join a committee  
Applications available in the SSCB 1.205 or Student Lounge

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Spreading our wings to welcome incoming freshmen



DAVE VALDEZ: THE SIGNAL  
Welcome Table at the UHCL Hawk Premiere held in the Lobby of the Students Services Building.

**MORE ONLINE**  
Scan the QR code to the right to view a slideshow about the Hawk Premier or visit UHCLTheSignal.com from your computer at: <http://wp.me/pBIML-25s>



Taylor Clinton  
The Signal

As the doors of the Student Services and Classroom Building slid open, one could feel the excitement and energy as the first potential UHCL freshmen entered the building.

The Hawk Premiere, which took place Feb. 2, was the first freshman information session on campus.

After more than 30 years of recruiting juniors, seniors and graduate students, UHCL will begin accepting its first freshman and sophomore students. Previously a two-year, upper-level university, in fall 2014 UHCL will expand to a four-year university that will introduce lower classmen into the academic community.

“This opens up doors of opportunity for those students who want the UHCL experience,” said Lori Lopez, assistant director of admissions. “Opportunities for doors to be open where they haven’t been previously.”

Inside the SSC building were booths full of smiling faces, volunteers and staff offering assistance. There was a DJ playing upbeat music and a photo opportunity with “Hawkins,” a live hawk representing UHCL’s new mascot.

Parents and prospective fresh-

men filed into the SSCB Lecture Hall for the welcome session. The room was so full that it quickly became standing room only.

Representatives from each school gave a preview of what exactly UHCL has to offer.

UHCL faculty and staff emphasized excellence, possibilities and integrity by talking in great detail about the success and accomplishments of their programs. They also promoted the small classroom settings that the university offers and the importance of individual success.

“The four-year initiative is an important part of UHCL’s history as well as the history of this area by giving high school graduates an opportunity to begin and complete their educational journey close to home,” said William Staples, UHCL president.

The Hawk Premier featured campus tours, parent workshops, financial aid and scholarship workshops, student services workshops, and freshmen advising and information sessions.

“I would be honored to be a part of this,” said Ashley Salter, attendee and potential freshman.

Students were not the only curious prospects who attended this event. Many parents were also interested in seeing what the university had to offer.

“I feel like with the smaller classrooms you would get a lot more personal attention and other schools lack that,” said Steve Schneider, attending father and UHCL alumnus.

Students in attendance said that they felt welcomed from those who represented the university.

Those representatives included faculty, student organizations and various student services offices on campus.

This historic event was attended by 83 potential students and their parents, families and friends.

“I feel like attendees left feeling like an individual more than a number,” Lopez said.

Faculty and staff at UHCL expressed high hopes for the possibilities that expansion will bring campus.

“By having freshmen and sophomores on campus we want to create new pathways for students in our community,” said Carl Stockton, provost and senior vice president of academic affairs. “However, given the mission of UHCL, we will continue to support upper-level transfer and graduate students.”

UHCL is expecting 200 freshmen and 100 sophomores in fall 2014.

Celebrate contributions of notable Americans during Black History Month

Veronica Lopez  
The Signal

Events will be held throughout February at the University of Houston-Clear Lake to provide students, faculty and staff the opportunity to celebrate the identity of notable Americans during Black History Month.

The events, which are sponsored by both the Office of Intercultural and International Student Services (IISS) and the Black Students Association (BSA), kicked off Feb. 1 with a book display in the Neumann Library and a showing of “The Powerbroker,” a film documenting the life of influential American civil rights leader Whitney Young, Jr.

The film was followed by brief lectures and a question-and-answer session by Everette Penn, professor of criminology, and Stephen Cherry, professor of sociology.

Penn spoke of the effect that people’s perception of other’s identities can have on personal advancement and how vital it is to use teaching methods and instruction rather than force, as Whitney Young demonstrated through his businessman approach in “The Powerbroker.”

Penn also noted that focus needs to be placed on promoting the common welfare for all, especially in the midst of the backlash of President Obama’s second election. He recommends attending Reverend Andrew Berry’s lecture “Where Are We Now? America in the Obama Era!” Feb. 12 in the Garden Room of the Bayou Building.

“Black History Month is not all about race; it’s about making equality reign,” Penn said.

Cherry spoke of the integrity involved in overcoming racial conflicts through peaceful means. He said the identity of those who achieved this through the course of black history must be recognized and

pointed out its importance to American history.

“Too many people don’t get recognized, especially in the shortest month of the year, and for something that is a part of American history,” Cherry said.

Cherry also believes it is significant that we realize how difficult it was, especially during the Civil Rights Movement, for black individuals to secure an identity.

“There were those taking the calm, diplomatic way like King, those taking the businessman way like Young, and those taking the forceful way like the black power movement, and each of these is a different identity that sometimes challenged the identity of the others,” Cherry said.

Assistant Director of IISS Susana Hernandez believes it is beneficial to the UHCL community to hold the events because it gives students the opportunity to join the nation in celebration, acknowledges to the UHCL black community that the university cares, and educates the community.

“It is important that we educate and highlight current issues and most importantly celebrate successes,” Hernandez said.

Tomeka Banks, president of BSA, believes it is important to the UHCL community to hold the events because black history is rich, especially in the United States, and it is essential to educate outside of the mainstream.

“There is no American history without black history,” Banks said.

Banks appreciates the hard work of Whitney Young and all who held on tight to their identities and made significant advances to civil rights.

“I can identify and I am thankful for their work because it gives me my life today; it makes me proud and makes me love people more,” Banks said.

EVENTS ON CAMPUS	
Panel Exhibit Feb 1 - 28 Atrium I	
Feb 12 3:30-5:00pm Garden Rm	Reverend Andrew Walker Berry <i>The Things We Share: Family, Community &amp; Faith</i>
Feb 19 12:00-2:00pm Atrium I	Black Students Association <i>Potato Bar Fundraiser to support the BSA</i>
Feb 20 5:00-6:30pm Garden Rm	Reverend Michael Haywood <i>Overcoming Our Fate: Breaking the Bonds of Educational Oppression</i>
Feb 24 3:00-4:00pm Atrium I	Capoeira Angola Dance Lesson <i>Free Lesson provided by UHCL graduate student Gabriel Bata</i>
Feb 27 4:00-5:30pm SSCB Lounge	Make Your Own Quilt <i>Learn the art of African-American quilt making</i>
Feb 28 4:00-6:30pm Garden Rm	Author Shawn McCann <i>Discusses his book “Asleep at Work” followed by a book signing</i>
For more info., contact Intercultural and International Student Services at (281) 283-2575 or <a href="mailto:iiss@uhcl.edu">iiss@uhcl.edu</a>	