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**Points of interest:**

- Biology: 18 peer-reviewed journal publications, including seven with SHSU students
- Biology: 29 externally funded grants
- Every theatre major is required to give a general audition at the beginning of the fall semester
- Dance recently participated in the American College Dance Festival in Laramie, WY

*Agricultural Sciences*

*Art*

*Biology*

*Theatre & Dance*

*Chemistry*

*Music*

*Mathematics & Statistics*

*Physics*

*Computer Science*

*Geography & Geology*

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

As most of you are aware, the university has begun the initial phase of our SACS reaffirmation of accreditation. The on-site visit will not occur until spring of 2009, but I thought it would be helpful to you if I used this opportunity to explain some of the SACS related activities that you will hear about.

There are two primary committees that have been appointed to facilitate our preparations for SACS: the Leadership Committee and the Compliance Committee. Several members of our college are serving on these committees. The Compliance Committee is essentially charged with writing our self-study, while the Leadership Committee has oversight of the entire process. Another facet of the reaffirmation that you will hear about is our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The development and implementation of a QEP is required by SACS. It will be a university-wide effort to enhance educational quality throughout our curriculum. Several ideas are being explored by our SACS committees and our official QEP should be announced soon.

What is the department's role in the reaffirmation process? Our departments and faculty will play a critical role in the reaffirmation process. Each department will be called upon to assess our effectiveness in offering academic programs. Many of you will remember the Institutional Effectiveness Plans that were developed (or updated) during our last SACS visit. These plans state goals and objectives for the academic unit and provide mechanisms to assess whether or not the goals are being met. A similar plan will be at the heart of our

present effort, but there will be some slight modifications:

1. Each department's goals and objectives will be published and updated annually on our SACS website;
2. Assessment results will be published;
3. The academic unit must demonstrate that assessment results were used to affect changes in departmental plans;
4. The department must assess *student learning*.



Our biggest obstacle will be assessing student learning. It will not suffice to simply list grades in courses. We will need to develop mechanisms that assess whether students are acquiring the knowledge and skills that we present in our curricula.

I have no doubt that the College of Arts and Sciences will be successful in this reaffirmation process. We have excellent programs and excellent faculty to deliver these programs. In my discussions with our chairs, all of our departments are assessing goals and modifying programs, so we are doing the sort of things that SACS expects. Most of our departments will need to begin assessing student learning, but it will be a college-wide effort and I know that we will succeed in this effort as well!

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Thanks is in order to all the departments featured so far. The timely responses and detailed information has made our job much easier and we hope the results are obvious.

A friendly reminder on upcoming information deadlines:

- 3/15—Music & Chemistry Departments

- 4/15—Mathematics/Statistics, Physics, Computer Science, Geography/Geology Departments

When sending information, please include highlights, new faculty, fun facts, and departmental trivia.

If there are any questions, please call the COAS office at 294-1401 or email the editors at [stdbj20@shsu.edu](mailto:stdbj20@shsu.edu) or [stmrt21@shsu.edu](mailto:stmrt21@shsu.edu).

# BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT

## Highlights

- 18 peer-reviewed journal publications, including seven with SHSU students!
- Publication of a major (national distribution) lab manual.
- 42 professional society presentations, including 20 with SHSU students!
- Four faculty serving as editors on peer-reviewed journals:

Dr. Tamara Cook – editor for *Comparative Parasitology*

Dr. Jerry Cook – associate editor for *Southwestern Naturalist*

Dr. William Lutterschmidt – associate editor for *Southwestern Naturalist*

Dr. Justin Williams – editor for *Phytologia*

- Several faculty are serving on national grant panel reviews, including:

Dr. Tamara Cook – NSF

Dr. Jerry Cook -- NSF

Dr. Jack Turner – EPA

Dr. Matthew Rowe – Sigma Xi

- The 16 faculty in the Department of Biological Sciences have a total, this academic year, of 29 externally funded grants
- Two faculty were awarded competitive off-campus developmental leaves of absence for the upcoming year – Dr. Jack Turner will spend fall '06 and spring '07 studying the impacts of golf course runoff on “at risk” species inhabiting vernal pools in California, while Dr. Diane Neudorf will spend fall '06 attending an international ornithological conference in Mexico (where she will also serve as a judge in the “best student presentation” competition) and working on a major review of gender differences in nest defense in birds.
- Mr. William Patrick Spencer won the undergraduate poster presentation of the year by the American Society of Horticultural Scientists at their summer '05 national meeting in Las

Vegas. Patrick's research, directed by Dr. Justin Williams, uses GIS to map invasive plant species in Texas.

- Eight ESC internships in summer '05, including with Dupont, M.D. Anderson Cancer Research Center, UT Health Science Center, and others. This is our 18<sup>th</sup> year that the Biology Department has supported summer interns in the Environmental Science Program, with over 200 interns placed since the beginning of program. J. DeShaw, is the intern coordinator.
- Biology also houses a very active though informal exchange program for students from less-developed countries to complete undergraduate degrees at SHSU. Dr. Everett Wilson is currently hosting three students from Belize (two in Biology, one in computer science), with a fourth to follow this fall. Dr. Wilson has been host to approximately 15 such students over the last decade, many of whom have gone on to professional programs or graduate school after completing their undergraduate degrees here at SAM.

## New Faculty

**Dr. Todd Primm** joined the faculty in fall semester 2005. Dr. Primm was on the faculty of the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Texas at El Paso for the past five years. He earned a B.S. in Biochemistry from Texas A&M and a Ph.D. in biochemistry at Baylor College of Medicine in 1997. This was followed by post-doctoral study at the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Primm's research is focused on bacterial physiology and antimicrobial drug development. On the significance of his studies, Dr. Primm states: “As many of the readers will know, antibiotics are a tremendous medical advance and have served to combat infections in patients for many years. However, the rise of multi-drug resistant bacteria is a major challenge to the continued utility of antibiotics. My lab is working on a better understanding of how certain compounds kill bacteria, with the goal of discovering new targets in bacteria and possibly new antibiotics.”



Dr. Wilson holding an eight foot boa, an exotic snake to the island of Aruba and a significant threat to the island's native fauna



Student on the Belize field course showing Dr. Wilson a magnificent sea cucumber.

## Upcoming Events

- E.O. Wiley Lecture – Dr. Michael Ryan, Clark Hubbs Regents Professor in Zoology, University of Texas at Austin, and Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Balboa, Panama. “Calling for Sex – the Sexual Communication System in a Frog.” March 9<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m., location to be announced.
- 53<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting of the Southwestern Association of Naturalists. University of Colima, Colima, Mexico, 13-15 April 2006.

For more information regarding the department, visit their website at: [http://www.shsu.edu/~bio\\_www/](http://www.shsu.edu/~bio_www/)

# THEATRE AND DANCE DEPARTMENT

## Highlights

- A new fresh face on Broadway is SHSU's very own Katie Clarke. The fall 2005 musical theatre major has been discovering Italy and true love nightly as innocent ingénue Clara Johnson in *The Light in the Piazza*.
- The dance program will be represented at the American College Dance Festival (ACDF), Northwest Region Conference, hosted by the University of Wyoming in Laramie, WY at a four-day conference March 8-11. In addition to Assistant Professors Kista Tucker and Melissa Wynn attending the conference, accompanying them will be 14 undergraduate students and three M.F.A. candidates. ACDF offers opportunities for choreographers to have their work adjudicated by professionals in the dance field. Works selected by the adjudicated panel will be performed at a Gala concert at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. later in the spring. This year, SHSU will be submitting Assistant Professor Melissa Wynn's "Songs of Enchantment" and M.F.A. candidate Courtney Mulchay's "Hush" for adjudication. Additionally, Megan Jinks, a junior in the B.F.A. program, will present "Breathe" as an informal, non-adjudicated work. Melissa Wynn and Kista Tucker will be teaching master classes in modern dance technique, and will be members of discussion panels. M.F.A. candidates Megan Lasher, Courtney Mulchay, Smanantha Angus, and Mary Zepeda will teach master classes in fire dance, modern, hip-hop and Latin dance, respectively.



## New Faculty

**Ron Song Destro**, received a B.A. from the University of Southern California where he was an award-winning playwright, director, and actor. He received a M.F.A. from Brooklyn College. As a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts grant, creator of an Emmy-Award winning Chinese TV series, and having trained, worked, and taught with leading artists of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Shanghai Opera Theatre, Kristin Linklater, John Houseman, and John Barton, Destro has a lot to offer SHSU. He also lectures on the Shakespeare authorship question at universities such as Harvard.



**Gregg Buck**, received a B.A. from Shippens Burg University and M.F.A. from the University of Maryland. Emphasizing in computer design, he previously taught at the University of Memphis, professional set and projection design for the Theatre Memphis, Olney Theatre Center, and Clarion University. Buck has workshop experience with Ming Cho Lee, Constance Hoffman, and Cobalt Studios.

**Thomas Prior**, received a B.F.A. from Carnegie-Mellon University and a M.F.A. from the University of Houston. Before coming to SHSU, he taught at the University of Houston from 2000 to 2003. He teaches Acting and Voice for the Actor. Prior has professionally worked as an actor for the past 17 years. In 2003, Prior received the Houston Press "Best Actor" award for his work in "Syncopation" at Stages Repertory Theatre. His recent productions include: "Searching for Eden," "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change" and "Spitfire Grill" at Stages Repertory Theatre and "As You Like It" and "Hamlet" at the Houston Shakespeare Festival.



Katie Clarke in *The Light in the Piazza*.

## Upcoming Events

- *Dances @ 8*, AB3-Dance Theater, Tickets \$5, March 28-30
- *Jesus Christ, Superstar*, Mainstage Theatre, April 5-8
- *U.I.L Regional One-Act Play Festival*, Mainstage Theatre, April 21-22
- *SHSU Dance Company in Concert*, Mainstage Theatre, \$10 general admission/\$8 students & seniors, April 27-28 @ 8pm and April 29 matinee @ 2pm
- *Non-majors Workshop*, AB3-Dance Theater, Free admission, May 1-2, 7pm
- *Majors Workshop & Awards Ceremony*, AB3-Dance Theater, Free admission, May 3, 7pm

For more information regarding the department, visit their website at:  
[http://www.shsu.edu/~drm\\_www/](http://www.shsu.edu/~drm_www/) and  
[http://www.shsu.edu/~dnc\\_www/](http://www.shsu.edu/~dnc_www/).



# Vision and Mission



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## Vision

The College of Arts and Sciences at Sam Houston State University embraces the traditional aim of a liberal arts education: *a critical understanding of diverse cultures as expressed through the arts and sciences*. The College also strives to foster analytic, interpretive, creative, communication and interpersonal skills and abilities which are fundamental to functioning effectively within the University and in the larger community. In providing educational foundations which enable students to develop, evaluate and express ideas critically, the College hopes to contribute to the formation of responsible citizens and competent professionals.

## Mission

In order to cultivate an enthusiasm for the richness of life, the mission of the College of Arts and Sciences is to recruit, support and encourage a community of nationally recognized artists and scientists who through intellectual rigor and innovative curricula promote a life-long appreciation for scientific and artistic literacy, inquiry, refinement and creativity. The college fosters understanding and appreciation of the arts and sciences among all students through the delivery of a relevant and timely general curriculum; and provides an environment that promotes the development of relevant knowledge and skills associated with the study of specific disciplines within the college.

## Out and About *with* BIO & THR/DNC

**The Department of Theatre and Dance originally emerged from the English Department as the Speech Department in 1940.**

**Dr. Everett Wilson taught a two-week international field course on the natural history of Belize during the summer of 2005. 17 students had their horizons expanded by exploring Central American rain forests, snorkeling on coral reefs, and immersing themselves in Caribbean culture. By popular demand, the course is being offered again this summer.**

**In 1979, Dance became a separate administrative unit, moving out of Physical Education.**

**Dr. Bill Lutterschmidt went to the Island of Aruba, where he and Dr. Everett Wilson and colleagues studied the impact of an exotic boa constrictor on the native fauna of the island**

**Then, in 1992 "Drama" was changed to "Theatre," creating the Division of Theatre and Dance. Another adjustment came in 1994 to name the unit Department of Theatre and Dance.**

**6 Biology pre-med students received internship credit by shadowing physicians, dentists, one physical therapist, and a chiropractor. E. Wilson is the intern coordinator**