

campus

Program offers smaller classes

By EILEEN WALL
Battalion Reporter

Students with an overall grade point ratio of 3.0, who prefer smaller, in-depth classes which are taught by professors who enjoy working with smaller groups may be interested in the University Honors program here at Texas A&M University.

Dr. B. L. Shapiro, Director of the University Honors Program said the program is a University-wide program in which certain sections of some courses are designated as honors classes. They are not limited to any particular curriculum, nor is there a minimum number of courses required, he said. Any student from any department who meets the

qualifications may participate. The general qualification is a 3.0 overall GPR. Incoming freshmen who graduated in the top quarter of their high school classes need a combined SAT score of at least 1100 to be eligible for honors. Those in the lower quarters of their class need a minimum combined SAT score of 1200. Transfer students are admitted on an individual basis.

There are additional requirements for admission, such as higher SAT scores or tests, for some classes. To take Biology 113H, for example, a student must pass a special biology examination.

Shapiro said although a student may not initially qualify for honors,

he may be eligible later in his college career. Admission is on a semester-by-semester basis, he said.

No separate application is needed for admission to the honors program because enrollment in the classes occurs during registration, he said.

One of the advantages of honors classes is size, Shapiro said. He said general motto of honors programs across the country is "every student has the right not to be bored," he said. In a lecture of 250 students, the class is so large that the professor has to teach to the average student, he said. Consequently, the top 50 students get cheated.

While small classes aren't guaran-

teed in the honors program, he said, they are guaranteed to be smaller than non-honors sections. The average class size last fall was 24, he said.

Not only are the classes smaller, but they are made up of students with similar ability, thus making the classes more stimulating, he said.

Instructors for honors classes are chosen by their prospective departments. The basis for choosing them is their background and interest in teaching smaller groups, Shapiro said.

Two of the main things that worry students about entering an honors program is the workload and grades, Shapiro said.

Honors classes take a little more work than the regular sections but are more interesting, he said.

"We don't expect people to give up a normal life for the honors program," he said.

Students can expect about the same grade they would in a non-honors class, he said. "No matter what game you're playing," he said, "you always play up to the level of the competition you're with."

Around 885 students are currently involved in the University Honors Program, Shapiro said. The program is expanding, and the number of students has more than doubled in the past two years. It is expected to double again by next year, he said.

Flag to be flown half-mast to honor vet. employee

The flag in front of the Academic Building will be lowered to half-staff Tuesday to honor College of Veterinary Medicine employee Arno Mohr, 52, who died Sept. 1 of a heart attack. An electronic technician in veterinary physiology and pharmacology, he had been employed at Texas A&M University just less than 10 years.

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Judgment investor's safeguard

A&M teacher warns buyers

A financial analysis is needed to identify an investment hustle, whether based on diamonds, silver or gold, said Texas A&M University finance expert.

The first rule of thumb when investing in something unfamiliar is to know your seller, says Dr. John Groth of Texas A&M University's finance department. Second, beware of an apparently sophisticated analysis offered in a sales pitch.

Nothing has been devised to take the place of clear thinking, common sense and sound judgment, Groth said. While common sense may help find a good investment in the first place, it can just as quickly eliminate the hustle scheme offered by a fast-buck promoter.

"I've known some smart people — doctors and lawyers — who have been taken," Groth said. "Some people will actually buy high-risk investment items like diamonds over the phone."

"When someone tells you the investment is guaranteed to go up, a warning sign ought to go off in your head. There are no guarantees in risk investments," Groth said.

There is nothing wrong with risk, he said, as long as there is adequate

compensation for bearing it. Still, an investor must decide if the expected returns are sufficient, compared to other risk return alternatives. Government bonds and savings accounts are considered riskless.

In contrast, common stocks are more risky but can have much bigger dividends. On the far end of the investment scale are the high risk items like gold where there are volatile prices and no dividends, but the chance of big money — but always the chance of loss, as well.

With economic uncertainty and inflation high, Groth said people tend to seek high-risk investments.

"It's sad, but sometimes these searches are frantic, and too often common sense forgotten," he said. "When it gets to that point, there are plenty of promoters, both reputable and less than reputable, ready to spring up and help a person invest his money in a sure thing."

"Beware of investments being promoted over the phone or by

mail," he said. "Carefully examine who is bearing what part of the risk and how are the expected returns to be divided among the participants."

In some schemes, promoters bear little or no risk and yet share significantly in the returns, Groth warned.

He said an investor should ask, "If it is such a good deal, why are they trying to sell it to me?"

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