Abstract

This talk will focus on ongoing programs within the Louisiana State University (LSU) Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI). These programs employ a holistic approach to enhancing the participation and education of a diverse group of undergraduate students in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). One program example is the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Professors program and a second is the Louisiana-STEM (LA-STEM) program. Both programs focus on successful models for enhancing the educational experiences of a diverse population of undergraduate students through the use of mentoring, research, and educational tools. Both programs are reflective of the holistic model used in OSI for all of its programs. However, these two programs are designed to respectively enhance the educational performances of at-risk and high achieving diverse student populations. The HHMI and LA-STEM programs foster a “community of learners” atmosphere by providing an environment which focuses on peer-mentoring, metacognition (learning how to learn), time management, and undergraduate research. The elements and success of these two programs to date will be outlined and discussed. In addition, a comparison of the performance of these students relative to their LSU cohorts will also be outlined.