

SUMMER VENTURES IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS: AN INTENSIVE SUMMER CURRICULUM FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Summer Ventures in Science and Mathematics (SVSM) is a government funded program for academically talented 15 and 16 year-olds who may pursue careers in science and mathematics. Students are brought together in residential settings for four weeks of intensive study at one of six university campuses across North Carolina. University faculty work in cooperation with master secondary school teachers to guide students through an academic program designed to provide experience in scientific inquiry and problem solving. Specifically, students learn experimental design, laboratory skills, instrumentation, problem solving and exploratory data analysis by creating, planning and executing individual research projects. The purpose of SVSM is to stimulate interest in science and mathematics among secondary school students especially females and minorities, to promote science as a career, and to encourage these students to attend one of the University of North Carolina system schools. In addition, SVSM promotes cooperation between university faculty and secondary school teachers, and gives secondary school teachers experience with the latest instrumentation and technology. Since 1987, UNCW has hosted an SVSM program with approximately 100 students each summer. All SVSM sites offer an array of courses, but at UNCW the focus has been on field-oriented oceanographic, geological, and environmental programs.