

AU Parents

A quarterly publication for families of AU students.

Winter 2009



Students Can Explore Career Interests Through Internships



Carlton Brown (left), Career and Internship Advisor in the Crouse Center for Student Success, often meets with AU students to share ideas about career choices and internship opportunities.

For the AU student there is value to participating in different activities. Being a member of an athletic team reinforces teamwork. Joining a club can spark new interests and friendships. Attending Arts and Ideas events on campus expands one's cultural experiences.

Amidst the extracurricular activities offered at Aurora University is a campaign to promote practical professional experiences — internships — among students. "AU's internship program is part of an increased effort to assist students with their career development," said Carlton Brown, Career and Internship Advisor in the Crouse Center for Student Success, who is spearheading the effort. "The focus on internships is aimed at enhancing students' preparedness to compete and succeed in a tightened labor market."

As the Internship Advisor, Brown is calling, sending out letters and knocking on doors of local businesses and organizations touting the benefits of internships. "A goal of the Crouse Center and Aurora University is to support the growth and development of the Fox Valley community, both now and in the future. We don't want to simply be a part of the community; we want to contribute

to the success of this community," he said. Although Brown does not directly place students with employers, he and the other Crouse Center advisors provide career-related assistance and internship leads. They also help students discover what it is they are interested in doing — all in an effort to help students become more independent.

"Internships introduce students to what a job or a career looks like. For students, it may be an entry into an industry. For employers, internships can serve as a trial run to see if a student is a good fit for an organization — a great benefit especially in these economic times. It may help an employer answer the question, 'Should we invest more in this student?'," he said.


Licensure programs such as education, nursing and social work have student teaching and clinical internships as part of their curriculum requirements. Students in these programs typically fulfill their requirements during their junior and senior years. Beginning this year, the Dunham School of Business is requiring double major students to complete eight hours of internship credit. Students can choose to major in business and commerce or double major in the business and commerce major and a

specialty major (i.e., accounting, business administration, finance, management information technology, marketing or organizational management).

Internships vary based on the employer's needs and standards, and the goals and objectives that are negotiated and agreed upon in collaboration with the student. During better economic times, students could count on companies offering paid internship experiences. Now, most internships are unpaid, and some companies stopped offering internships completely.

"Paid or unpaid, an internship is about gaining practical, real-world experience," said Brown. While internships are thought of as summer experiences, some students are participating in them during the academic year. During the academic year, if a student wanted to receive academic credit for an internship experience, that student would sign up for an internship just as he or she would a class. In this case, the student is responsible for securing a faculty sponsor, and that faculty sponsor would oversee the internship experience.

"At the conclusion of an internship experience, the internship site supervisor, the student and the faculty sponsor will complete an internship evaluation. But, I also strongly encourage students to write a reflection piece about their internship," said Brown. "Reflecting on an internship experience allows the student to capture the emotions and thoughts they experienced during the internship. It also allows students to identify their strengths and weaknesses, what they did well and where they need to improve." Brown adds, "An internship experience can confirm a student's understanding of what it is he or she wants to do and what he or she doesn't want to do."

Students interested in pursuing an internship are welcome to meet with Carlton Brown or their academic advisor in the Crouse Center for Student Success. 

Her Cheer for AU Students — Olé!

Denise Hatcher has taught Spanish at AU for nearly 13 years. She has been instrumental in developing the Spanish program by helping create the Spanish major and minor. She serves as chair for the university's Academic Standards Committee and is a member of the Faculty Senate.

Hatcher has "adopted" a bilingual classroom at Bednarcik Middle School in the Oswego school district and visits its students from time to time. She has also taught coursework for bilingual education through Northern Illinois University.

As a member of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, she has presented at the association's annual conference in Costa Rica. She is also on the advisory board for the Dominican Literacy Center in Aurora. The mission of this group is to educate women so that they can positively impact the education of their families.

An avid runner, Hatcher recently completed her third marathon. It was the second time that she ran as a charity runner to raise money and awareness for cystic fibrosis.



Denise Hatcher is the 2008 recipient of the Marcus and Mark H. Trumbo Excellence in Teaching Award presented annually to a faculty member for his or her ability to motivate students to intellectual activity, concern for values that give purpose and meaning to life, and the ability to accept students whatever their state of intellectual, social, or spiritual development.

What schools did you attend?

I graduated from Northern Illinois University three times with my bachelor's degree (1989), my master's degrees (1994) and my doctorate degree (2003).

Why did you decide to become a professor?

In third grade, I had the most amazing student teacher who really let me and my classmates know that she enjoyed coming to teach us each day. I knew then and there that I wanted to teach. I chose Spanish because of my seventh grade and high school Spanish teachers who were amazing and never taught a boring class.

What is your previous teaching experience?

In seventh grade, I was excused from my reading class to go and teach with my language arts teacher. Shortly thereafter, I also began to coach at my gymnastics club.

As a college graduate, I have taught English as a foreign language in Mexico City, Mexico; bilingual education at Eisenhower High School in Blue Island, Illinois; Spanish at Wheaton Warrenville South High School;

English as a Second Language at Waubensee Community College; and graduate coursework at Northern Illinois University.

What do you enjoy most about teaching at AU?

I love the personal relationships that I can develop with students as they move through the Spanish program. It is rewarding to see students grow in their appreciation and understanding of a second language.

What is your teaching philosophy?

I believe that everyone can learn a foreign language but must be willing to learn how he or she learns best in order to do so. Learning a foreign language affords more privileges and opportunities than anyone can imagine — it is well worth the time one invests to do so!

What other programs and activities are you involved with on campus?

I am the faculty advisor for Circle K, a college service club affiliated with Kiwanis International, and the coach for the Spartanettes,

AU's cheer and dance team. I am also a member of the faculty running club.

What advice would you give students to help them be successful?

First, make your coursework your top priority. You are in college to receive an education that will allow you to find a career that you love instead of keeping the job that you currently have. Second, go to every class. Once you miss a class, it becomes easier to miss a second and a third. So, view each class period as a valuable learning opportunity that you do not want to miss.

What advice would you give parents to help support and guide their sons and daughters while they are attending the university?

I think it is important that parents ask their sons and daughters how their college coursework is going and what most interests them. It is imperative that parents keep this line of communication open especially as their sons and daughters embark on their life-changing journey. **AU**

AU Offers Financial Aid “Roadside Assistance” for 2009–2010

by Heather McKane, Dean of Student Financial Services

Like any trip, the journey through the financial aid process progresses more smoothly when there is a mapped out plan. This plan includes establishing a timeline, setting a budget, preparing for unexpected detours, and knowing your stops and resources along the way.

Timeline

An eligible student who provided an e-mail address on his or her Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) last year will receive a reminder that it is time to file the FAFSA again. The FAFSA filing should be done no later than April 15 but after filing 2008 federal taxes.

Students should refer to their online WebAdvisor account for the 2009–2010 award letter and a list of needed documents (award letters will not be mailed). The list of needed documents and due dates are listed in the “My Documents” section. This information should be available within two to four weeks of the Office of Financial Aid receiving a student’s 2009–2010 FAFSA information.

Financial aid paperwork should be submitted no later than July 1, which allows time for a student’s financial aid file to be reviewed and finalized. Please note that finalizing financial aid does not mean that a student will not owe an out-of-pocket amount.

Budgeting

Once the out-of-pocket amount is determined, explore how it will fit into a budget. What will the student owe after all of his or her financial aid has been applied to the bill? Become educated on the options for paying the out-of-pocket amount and the due dates. Are there additional loan options? What is needed to secure these loans in time for the tuition due date? An option may be a monthly payment plan

coordinated by the AU Office of Student Accounts which can be contacted at student.accts@aurora.edu or 630-844-5470.



Navigating an Unexpected Detour

Know the “rules of the road” to more effectively navigate the financial aid process, and involve students in the process. Students who are not “in the know” may delay submitting the needed paperwork, which can add weeks to the financial aid process.

The Office of Financial Aid also works to prevent unexpected detours along the way. With the current state of the economy, many families are facing a variety of hardships. Families experiencing a special circumstance are encouraged to contact the Office of Financial Aid to discuss options and determine if additional aid eligibility is a possibility.

Financial Aid Resources


www.fafsa.ed.gov

This is the official site for filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year.

www.aurora.edu/admission/financialaid/links.htm

This site provides information regarding outside scholarships.

www.aurora.edu/admission/financialaid

AU’s Office of Financial Aid Web site is one way to keep informed of financial aid updates and information. The office staff may also be contacted by calling 630-844-6190 or 800-742-5281, or by e-mail at finaid@aurora.edu. The office also has a presence on Facebook (search for “AU Financial Aid”). Students and parents are also welcome to visit the office in room 205 of Eckhart Hall, Monday–Thursday from 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. and Friday from 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. 

His AU Decision was a Home Run



Looking back on my nearly four years as a college student-athlete, the choice of attending AU was an easy one. It was also a decision that reflected what I needed in a college. That is, a university that would best prepare me for pharmacy school.


Three main features factored into my choice to attend AU: the prospect of an excellent education, great athletic and student life opportunities, and financial aid resources. Not having the pressure of huge student loans to pay back allowed me to focus on academics and be involved in activities outside the classroom.


One of the greatest experiences I’ve had at AU is playing on the baseball team. I’ve made friends, played baseball at a regional and World Series, and served as a student-athlete role model for local elementary school children.

As a chairman of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, I am also helping build a stronger community on and off campus. I’m involved in different activities throughout the year such as an effort to make fleece blankets for children during the holidays and I help serve AU students at Pancake Night during finals week.

This year also marks my third as a peer advisor. I am working with new freshmen to ensure that they have a successful transition to college. The role provides me with challenges, but also many rewards that include connecting with freshmen as well as upperclassmen, faculty and staff.

Inside the classroom, the health science program keeps me busy with demanding courses. Despite the challenging coursework, AU teachers make themselves accessible. No matter what it is — needing class help, seeking advice on what courses to take, or mentoring — they always support me.

My schedule can be a little hectic; however, for me the key to success is planning, which involves staying on top of coursework and making time for the baseball field. Thanks to the lessons and opportunities presented to me at AU, I’ve learned how to keep all my bases covered. 

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Visit the new AU Web site at www.aurora.edu!

Aurora University Calendar

ACADEMIC SCHEDULE

March 8–15

Spring Break

April 10–13

Easter Break

Friday, April 24, 2009 • 2:00 p.m.

Honors Convocation

Crimi Auditorium • Institute for Collaboration

Monday, April 27 and Tuesday, April 28, 2009

9:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.

Fifth Annual Aurora University Undergraduate

Research Conference • University Banquet Hall

Sunday, May 10, 2009 • 2:30 p.m.

Undergraduate Commencement • University Quadrangle

May 11–30

May Term

CELEBRATING ARTS AND IDEAS SERIES

Thursday, February 26, 2009 • 7:30 p.m.

Lecture: *Summers with Lincoln* featuring

Author James Percoco*

Crimi Auditorium • Institute for Collaboration

Tuesday, March 3, 2009 • 7:00 p.m.

Wackerlin Center for Faith and Action Lecture: *Why Did Jewish-Christian Dialogue Start the Trend Toward Better Interfaith Relations?**

Perry Theatre • Aurora Foundation Center

Monday, March 23, 2009 • 7:00 p.m.

AU Film Series Presentation: *Bigger, Faster, Stronger**

Crimi Auditorium • Institute for Collaboration

March 27–28 and April 1–4, 2009 • 7:30 p.m.

AU Theatre Department Presentation: *The Habitation of Dragons**

Perry Theatre • Aurora Foundation Center

April 7–September 7, 2009 (opening reception on

Tuesday, April 7 • 4:30-6:30 p.m.)

Ninth Annual Aurora University Student Art Show

Schingoethe Gallery • Dunham Hall

Friday, May 1, 2009 • 7:30 p.m.

University Chorale Concert: *An American Sampler III**

Crimi Auditorium • Institute for Collaboration

* Seating is limited and reservations are required.

To make reservations for these free events, please call 630-844-4924 or e-mail artsandideas@aurora.edu.

For a complete listing of all events available on campus, visit www.aurora.edu/events/

www.aurora.edu

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AURORA UNIVERSITY

