

Focus Topics

Workforce Experiences and Opportunities for Students from Underrepresented Groups

Internships

The **School of Art and Design** offers cooperative education/internship placement for Juniors, Seniors and graduate students who have attained a minimum 4.0/5.0 cumulative grade point average and who have been approved by the faculty in their major area. Employers are attracted to participation in this program due to the preparation of the students, the faculty oversight, and student diversity. Although the program is not restricted to women or minority students, it does serve a substantial number of women, Latinos, and African-Americans. Over the last academic year (99-00), 69% of the program participants were women, 30% were Latino, and 1% African American. The total undergraduate enrollment of the School of Art and Design is 640 for Fall 1999. Of that number, 4% were African American, 15% were Latino, and 56% were women.

The Art and Design (Graphic Design, Industrial Design, Photography/Film/Electronic Media and Studio Arts) program places interns in graphic design studios, television stations, galleries, museums, product design firms, universities, hospitals, zoos, and many other locations. Examples of employers with long associations with the program include Morningstar, Inc., Landfall Press, Museum of Contemporary Art, New Art Examiner, Scott Foresman Publishers, Helix, Griffin & Boyle Advertising, WBBM, and WGN-TV. Many internships are paid. Participation in this program is seen as an important entry on a graduate's resume. This work experience also carries credit, usually 4 hours for 15 hours of work per week in a given semester. Students can only receive a total of 8 credit hours through co-op. However, some students have such positive internship experiences that they choose to continue working in an internship setting for zero hours after reaching their maximum eight hours. Since students participating in this program must apply and be accepted by employers, the program helps students prepare resumes/portfolios and gives them tips on how to present themselves in job interviews. Many of the business sponsors of these internships have found permanent employees through the co-op program.

The **College of Business Administration** (CBA) established the Business Career Center to facilitate career success of their students. The mission of the center is to serve the needs of undergraduate business students, MBA candidates and MBA alumni by providing the skills and resources necessary to conduct successful internship and permanent employment searches. The center meets the needs of employers by facilitating the recruitment of bright, hardworking, diverse students.

The internship program is a keystone to a successful career. The Business Career Center has internships available for Business students throughout the year in all of the following areas: accounting, finance, information and decision science, economics, marketing and management. These internships do not carry academic credit but approximately 90% are paid. Major companies and institutions in the area participate in this program. A sample of the employers includes Abbott Laboratories, Arthur Anderson, the Chicago Board of Trade, the Chicago Stock Exchange, Citibank, CNA, FDIC, Leo Burnett, Lucent Technologies, Nestle, Sara Lee Corporation, and Yesmail.com. The total number of internships registered with the Business Career Center in 1999-2000 was 149. Of those, 9% of the interns were African American, 19% were Latino, and 54% were women. These numbers are almost identical to race/ethnic and gender distribution of the students enrolled in the College of Business in Fall 1999. (In Fall 1999, 9% of the students enrolled in the College of Business were African American, 19% Latino, and 52% were women.) Of the College of Business Administration degree recipients in 1999-2000, 37% accepted employment with the company in which they did their internship.

To better prepare students, the Center has two training programs that are required of all students who register with the Center. Both of these training programs allow students to learn successful career development skills, resume preparation, fundamental interviewing skills and advanced strategies for obtaining an internship. The Internship Seminar in 1998-1999 had 297 participants of which 50% were women, 18% were Latino and 9% were African American. Mock Interviews are also required for students to be eligible for the CBA internship program. In 1998-1999, 186 students participated in mock

interviews. Of those, 59% were women, 19% were Latinos, and 9% were African American.

The Center also sponsors the Intern-for-a-Day Program through which CBA undergraduate juniors and seniors, as well as MBA students have the opportunity to shadow a corporate manager for a day. The purpose of the program is to provide students a one-day information, interviewing, and networking session with a business professional in a field in which the student is interested. Ninety students participated in this program in spring 2000. Of the 56 undergraduates in the program, 64% were women, 16% African American and 20% Latino.

Internships and co-op education have a long history in the UIC **College of Engineering**. The college views internships and cooperative education as an excellent way to provide an added dimension to an engineering education. Through participation in these programs, students gain work experience that gives them an extra edge when seeking their first job after graduation. In fact, the documented work that students do through co-op can often be used as hours toward licensing. The College of Engineering program links students with employers not only in Chicago but nationwide. Some prominent employers are: Argonne National Laboratory, CellularOne, Charles Industries, Danaher Tool Group, R.R. Donnelley & Sons, Lucent Technologies, Motorola, and many other firms of varying size. Approximately 90% of the students participating in this program receive job offers from their employing firms upon graduation.

This program is open to advanced undergraduate students (junior and above) and graduate students in all engineering fields. Undergraduate students must have a 3.5/5.0 average and graduate students must have a 4.0/5.0 to participate. Students register for a UIC course which carries no academic credit but does allow oversight of both the student and the experience and documents their work experience. Both students and employers must file reports at the end of each semester. Most students devote summers to a full-time internship/co-op placement but do a part-time internship during the academic year. All engineering internships and co-op jobs are paid employment. The average salary is \$12 per hour.

During the 1999-2000 academic year, 92 students participated in this program. Of those, 16.3% were women, 8.7% were Latino, and 1% were African American. Although this is lower than the College enrollment of 19.6% women, 13.3% Latino, and 6% African American, it does show that women and Latinos are beginning to use this program. There is more work that needs to be done to convince minority and women students of the importance of this experience to their future. Many students are taking summer and part-time jobs that are not internships/co-op due to higher pay. However, they do not get credit toward licensure in these unsupervised positions.

The **College of Liberal Arts and Sciences** offers both cooperative education and internship experiences to provide students with an opportunity to gain practical hands-on work experience related to their fields of interest before they graduate. Opportunities are available for students with all of the following majors: Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Communication, Criminal Justice, Economics, English, Geography, Psychology, Political Science, Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science, and Sociology. Students are most interested in placements in the following areas: media companies, advertizing, public relations, marketing, law enforcement, government, science-lab research, and computer science. To participate in this program, students must have completed 45 hours (120 hours required for graduation) of study with a UIC grade point average of 3.5/5.00, and have a declared LAS major.

For AY 1999-2000, 100 students participated in the LAS Co-op/Internship Program. Of these, 60% were women, 8% were African American, and 7% were Latino. Fall 1999 undergraduate enrollments in LAS were 59% women, 11% African American, and 18% Latino. Of the positions filled in AY 1999-2000, 45% of the participants were paid, 5% received a stipend, and 50% were unpaid. Limited academic credit is available if the appropriate academic department agrees to oversee the student's work.

Employers participating range in size and type. Some of the most recognizable include Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Searle/Monsanto, and the Wm. Wrigley Co. Of particular interest are the minority-owned companies that participate in this program – RJ Dale PR/Advertising, Exito New Paper, and Flower Communications.

In addition to the internship programs offered by the various UIC colleges, UIC has entered into a partnership with INROADS, a career development organization that provides leadership development through paid summer internship experiences for high achieving African-American, Latino and Native American college students. Students selected in the INROADS program are required to participate in career and leadership development workshops and monthly advising sessions with the INROADS staff adviser. UIC (campus-wide) has 31 students currently in this program. The goal is to increase this number and assist INROADS by promoting the program more on-campus.

Tech Prep Programs

Both the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services (LARES) program and the African American Academic Network provide a computer component in their summer bridge programs. These programs address deficiencies in the computer and internet skills of entering first-year students.

Through a grant from Ameritech, the College of Business Administration provides a unique opportunity to 100 graduating eighth grade students. The UIC/Ameritech Summer Computer Camp provides two three-week computer workshops at UIC's computer lab. This outreach effort is essential to the later success of students from less advantaged backgrounds.

Placement

The **Office of Career Services (OCS)** is open to all students but some of its programs are targeted for minority students. OCS holds the largest university-based job fair in the Chicago area. This fair, called Diversity Career Day, targets placement of minority students. The number of employers and of student participants have increased markedly over the last few years. For example, in AY 1997-1998 163 employers and 1600 students participated compared to 183 employers and between 2,500 and 2,600 students participating in AY 1999-2000. To highlight minority students at this event, Career Services partners with various student groups such as the Latino Association of Business Students, the National Society of Black Engineers, the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, and the Society of Women Engineers to provide staff for the event. Another large job fair, labeled the All Majors Career Day, was also staged with a similarly large turn out – 150 employers and approximately 1,500 students participated in AY 1999-2000. This event is open to all students. Job fairs targeting particular market segments were also held. These included the Internship Job Fair (64 employers, 1100 students), the Engineering Fair (38 employers, 800 students), Radio Career Day (23 employers, 300 students), and Non-Profit Career Day (55 employers, 450 students).

In addition, Career Services offers Career Preparation Seminars as well as workshops on how to “work a job fair,” prepare a resume, respond in an interview, and prepare for graduate school. OCS also assists the African American Academic Network and the Minority Engineering Recruitment and Retention Program in career programming for their students.

As reported last year, the Office of Disability Services refers students to the Office of Rehabilitation Services of the Illinois Department of Human Services for assistance with job placement as well as to the UIC Office of Career Services. ODS participates in a nationwide resume database (Resume Database for Persons with Disabilities) that allows students with disabilities to submit their resumes for possible positions. The Resume Database is hosted by The National Business and Disability Council which is the leading national resource on all issues related to the successful employment of persons with disabilities. The Resume Database allows persons with disabilities looking for employment who hold at least a two-year college degree to register their resume on an Internet database free of charge. Once these data are verified, the resume is posted and reviewed by a substantial number of Fortune 1000 companies. The Office of Disability Services also coaches students on how to approach future employers concerning needed accommodations and the legal requirements governing the timing of such discussions.

One of the services offered by the Office of Disability Services that has a significant positive outcome on future job placement is help with obtaining internships. ODS staff use various lists of internships to find appropriate placements for students wishing this experience. The Office of Career Service and the

Office of Disability Services offer special workshops designed to assist disabled students in obtaining work placements. Student response has been limited.

Meeting the Needs of All Students

Social, Cultural, and Recreational Opportunities

Two cultural centers on the UIC campus are the major units that address the need for cultural, social and recreational activities that target African American and Latino students. Although activities are open to all, the programs of these centers celebrate the cultures of these underrepresented groups. The Office of Women's Affairs is the primary sponsor of programming for women. Many activities are also sponsored by the support programs (The African American Academic Network, the Latin American Recruitment and Educational Services, and the Native American Support Program are reviewed in this report in the section on Formally Organized Units.), academic units, and the Chancellor's Status Committees. This section will give a short description of the Cultural Centers and the Office of Women's Affairs.

The **African-American Cultural Center** (AACC) contributes to the academic mission of the university by promoting the expression and analysis of all African-American creative and cultural traditions, the trends developing in these traditions, the African ancestral roots of these traditions, and the influence of these traditions and trends throughout the Diaspora and on other ethnic cultures. The Center is especially concerned with nurturing the appreciation and study of African-American traditions to support the development and dissemination of the culture and to bring about the end of racism and discrimination against African-Americans and all other ethnic groups of color in the United States and around the world.

To this end the Center sponsors and advocates creative productivity and cultural research, cultural programming, student networking and community outreach. Of particular importance is the Center's objective to promote retention of African-American students through enhancing a sense of belonging. High attendance at events sponsored or co-sponsored by the AACC indicates the Center's success. Examples of these events include programming for Black History Month, academic forums, visiting lecturers, artists, entrepreneurs, and film makers series, and a series targeted at cultural awareness.

The **Rafael Cintrón-Ortiz Latino Cultural Center** stated mission is to enhance the quality of life for Latino students at UIC. This is done primarily through the provision of cultural, social and academic activities that affirm Latin American identity and values. The Center also strives to broaden the channels of communication between Latino students and the larger University community. For that reason the Center also attempts to expose all groups of the University community to the cultural, scientific, and historical contributions of the Latin American people.

The Center also promotes Latino student advancement both by providing additional educational opportunities for Latino students and by providing opportunities for Latino students to develop leadership skills. The Center attempts to broaden and consolidate the communication between students and the Latino community by using concerns and needs of the Chicago Latino community as foci for student learning and training.

The success of the Cintrón Center's programming is due to the Center's policy of empowering students to choose and implement various programs in concert with the Director. By empowering the students, the participating students have learned organizational and leadership skills and the number of students attending sponsored events has increased markedly.

The stated mission of the **Office of Women's Affairs** (OWA) is to work proactively to ensure the institutional commitment to equity for all women at UIC. One of OWA's foci is educating the University community on issues that affect women through programs and services. To this end, OWA has sponsored or collaborated with other units to stage many important activities relevant to women at UIC. OWA offers three cornerstone events each year: the Women's Leadership Symposium, Women's Heritage Month, and UIC Daughters@ Work Day.

This year's Women's Leadership Symposium was attended by 334 women. Participants who filled out

evaluations were: 58% support staff, 27% academic professionals, 8% faculty, 4% students, 2% civil service professionals and 1% other. The racial and ethnic breakdown of the participants was as follows: 61% African American, 20% Caucasian, 15% Latina, and 4% Asian-American. Participants rated the symposium positively.

Women's Heritage Month continued to be a successful programming effort that reached faculty, staff, students and community members. Student attendance at these events has been consistently high. This success is attributable to student participation in the planning committee and by partnerships with different academic departments. Because these events have historical and cultural relevance they augment academic learning objectives and professors often opt to bring their class to an event or offer extra credit for attending one of these events. A total of 1871 students, faculty, and staff attended the programs.

UIC Daughters @ Work Day was inspired by the national program founded by the Ms Foundation to help combat the precipitous drop in self-esteem and career aspirations that occur in girls ages 9-15 because of the impact of stereotypical gender expectations. There were approximately 180 girls and 85 sponsors who attended the morning program.

The Chancellor's Status Committees sponsor many events that enrich the cultural life of UIC. In the area of persons with disabilities, the Status Committee is the group primarily responsible for programming. The main event of AY 99-00 was an evening with John Hockenberry and presentation of his show "Spoke Man."

Curricular Modifications

Three academic units at UIC provide courses and programs that are important to underrepresented and women students. These units are the Department of African American Studies, the Latin American Studies Program, and the Gender and Women's Studies Program. Both African American Studies and Latin American Studies offer undergraduate majors and all three offer undergraduate minors. In addition, the Gender and Women's Studies Program offers a concentration for graduate students in a substantial number of areas.

These academic programs are key to the perceived openness of UIC to ethnic minorities and women. Students see that people like themselves have achieved greatness, altered history, enhanced literature, created art, and made breakthroughs in science and engineering. The existence of courses in these areas validates minority students and women and thus enhances their probability of graduating.

Academic support programs reviewed under formally organized units in this year's report, provide study groups, workshops, one-on-one tutoring, academic skills classes, and other services to assist minority students. In addition, both LARES and AAAN (in conjunction with the Trio program) offer summer bridge programs that assist minority students entering UIC who appear at risk. For these students participation is required as a condition of acceptance to UIC.