Sport Management Practicum Course

CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS/CEDAR RAPIDS KERNELS

Summer 2020

University of Iowa students can take a three-credit summer course that includes two weeks in Chicago completing sport business projects for the Chicago Blackhawks!

Check out the details below:

• The class will begin meeting on June 25 in Iowa City and conclude on July 26 in Chicago.

• During the first half, students will be in Iowa City working on a sport marketing project for the Cedar Rapids Kernels minor league baseball team. All transportation to and from Cedar Rapids (two trips) will be provided by the University of Iowa. *In past years the Kernels have used the best student marketing recommendations!*

• Students will report to Chicago on July 12 and be broken into project teams to receive business challenges from Blackhawks executives in marketing, digital content, sales, community relations and several other areas of organizational need. Each project team will work together to perform research and develop recommendations to achieve the Blackhawks’ business objectives. Each team will deliver a final presentation of recommendations to Blackhawks executives. *In past years the Blackhawks have used the best student recommendations!*

• Students will have additional opportunities, including helping prepare for and successfully run the Blackhawks Convention. Graphic Design students will have an opportunity to work with all student project teams to develop high-quality visual materials for submission to the Blackhawks. Some students will have the opportunity to cover a Blackhawks summer mini-camp by publishing stories/photos on Blackhawks.com and/or contributing other content...
for the team’s website and social media. There is a possibility for students with analytics experience to work on an analytics business operations project.

- Students will participate in a networking dinner with Chicago sport business professionals (including several Iowa alumni).

- Students will attend a sporting event while in Chicago (probably Cubs or White Sox).

- In Chicago all students will stay in college dormitories at Roosevelt University with dining hall service. Roosevelt University is in a secure high rise in the heart of Chicago overlooking Lake Michigan and Buckingham Fountain. In Iowa City students will need to provide their own housing.

- **Class size is limited!** Due to high demand, students will be required to apply for acceptance, just like an internship or job. In order to be considered, submit a professional cover letter and résumé to Dan Matheson via email (daniel-matheson@uiowa.edu). **The deadline to submit your application is February 14, 2020.** Your letter should:
  o Explain why you wish to take the course.
  o Explain what you can offer in terms of previous experience/internships, expertise, relevant course work, work ethic and/or any other qualities that you believe will contribute to success in the course. Desirable qualities include strong communication skills (public speaking/presentation and writing/editing), tireless work ethic, unyielding attention to detail, ability to work effectively with teammates, event management experience, dependability, maturity, creativity and an interest in performing market research in order to develop the best possible recommendations for the Blackhawks and Kernels.

GPA and coursework will be reviewed and taken into consideration, and finalists may be asked to interview for a spot in the course. There are typically 60-70 applicants for 20-25 available spots in the course.
Some of the many highlights from previous summers include:

- Students appeared in the *Sports Business Journal*.

- One student was hired by the Blackhawks as an intern in Photography and New Media, one student was hired as a full-time Graphic Designer, and one student was hired as a full-time Customer Service Executive.

- Several student recommendations have been implemented by the Blackhawks, and some students have been invited to participate in organizational meetings with Blackhawks executives after the course ended because their recommendations were considered for implementation.

- Students have helped generate written and photographic content for the Blackhawks’ website and social media platforms.

- Students have had their pictures taken with the Stanley Cup and other trophies, skated at the Blackhawks practice facility and toured United Center and the practice facility.
The Blackhawks take student input following the convention and implement student ideas for improving the convention experience.

Iowa students unanimously praise the Chicago practicum as one of the top experiences of their college careers. Below are excerpts from student reflection papers following the course:

- “The experience was one of the best of my life on a number of levels.”

- “I made so many connections not only with sports business professionals, but also with my fellow students. We created a bond that is going to last a lifetime and you can’t put a price on that.”

- “You can’t match this experience in a classroom or online. The level of professionalism we have to maintain during the practicum brings everyone’s work level up a notch.”

- “The most beneficial experience for me in Chicago was working the Fan Convention. Not only did it give me the opportunity to show Blackhawks staff my work ethic, it also allowed me to get real event management and customer service training.”

- “I never knew I could do so much in two weeks and I’m really proud of what I accomplished because I really believe that working with the Blackhawks forced me to put my best work forward.”

- “It was awesome hearing all the minor details and seemingly insignificant things that are actually extremely important to the contracts the Blackhawks have with their sponsors. After taking Recreation and Sports Promotion last semester, the meeting served as a perfect example of how sponsorship activation plays a role in the sports industry.”

- “These 3 weeks have been an experience that I will never forget. It has allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of what it is like to work in the sports industry. You have showed me the dedication it takes to make it in the sports industry. You have helped show me that something I once thought was impossible, like working in cooperation with the Blackhawks, is possible. With hard work, dedication, and motivation anything is possible. Thank you for opening my eyes and allowing me to realize that I am capable of more than I had thought. It was an honor to be a part of this experience!”
FINAL DETAILS:

- Students selected for the course will register and pay for three summer credit hours. Registration in the course will also require a course fee of approximately $1,500. The fee pays for housing costs in Chicago, public transportation costs in Chicago, breakfast and lunch dining hall service at the dorm in Chicago, networking dinner in Chicago, pizza dinner in Iowa City during the spring semester, a class outing to a sporting event in Chicago, and transportation in Iowa for the project during the first week. Students will arrange their own transportation to/from Chicago. Students should plan to bring additional spending money for personal meals outside the dorm, personal entertainment and souvenirs (if desired).

- Students from all majors are encouraged to apply. There is a specific need for Journalism students who can work on projects for the Blackhawks Digital Content department and Graphic Design students to help produce reports and other materials for submission to the Blackhawks and take on other design projects that may come up.


- Dan Matheson, Director of the University of Iowa Sport and Recreation Management program, will lead the course. Prior to joining the Iowa faculty, Dan’s career included 15 years working in the sport industry, first as the New York Yankees Director of Baseball Operations and then as NCAA Associate Director of Enforcement.

- Contact Dan Matheson (daniel-matheson@uiowa.edu) with questions. Remember the deadline to submit an application is February 14, 2020!

Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to attend all University of Iowa-sponsored events. If you are a person with a disability who requires a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in this program, please contact Dan Matheson in advance at 319-335-9485.

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