Sport Management Practicum Course
CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS/CEDAR RAPIDS KERNELS
Summer 2022

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

Check out the details below:

• The class will begin meeting during the week of June 20 in Iowa City and conclude on or around July 29 in Chicago. (Exact dates could change slightly based on the Blackhawks schedule.)

• During the first half of the course, 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) to meet with team executives will be arranged by the University of Iowa. Housing in Iowa City is the responsibility of the students. *In past years the Kernels have used the best student recommendations!*

• Students will make two trips to Chicago, with each trip lasting 2-3 days.
  o Transportation to and from and housing in Chicago will be arranged by the University of Iowa.
  o During the first trip on or around July 10, students will be broken into project teams to receive business challenges from Blackhawks executives in marketing, digital content, community relations, retail and other areas of business operations.
  o Between trips while the class is in Iowa City, each project team will have access to their project liaisons from the Blackhawks staff and perform research and develop recommendations to achieve the Blackhawks’ business objectives.
  o During the second trip on or around July 27, students will make final presentations of recommendations to Blackhawks executives.
Students will tour the United Center and the Blackhawks Fifth Third Arena training facility.

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Students will have additional professional development opportunities:

- Students will participate in question-and-answer panels with Blackhawks executives on topics such as sports marketing, social media careers, women in sports, event management, sales and more.
- Students will participate in a networking function with sport business professionals, including several Iowa alumni.

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 and Kernels. Graphic designers will have an opportunity to work on branding projects with the Blackhawks design team. Two graphic designers from past practicums now work on the Blackhawks design team, and one is a designer for the Minnesota Wild!

Class size is limited! Due to high demand, students will be required to apply for acceptance, just like an internship or job. 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 for priority consideration is February 14, 2022.

Your letter should:

- Explain why you wish to take the course.
- Explain what you can offer in terms of previous experience, 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, 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.
Some of the many highlights from previous summers include:

- Students appeared in the *Sports Business Journal*.

- One student was hired by the Blackhawks as a Photography and New Media intern, two students were hired as Graphic Designers, two students were hired as full-time Account Executives, one student was hired as a Communication and Media Relations intern.

- 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 and skated at the Blackhawks practice facility.
Students have had opportunities to work in event management during Blackhawks summer events:

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

- “The experience was one of the best of my life on a number of levels.”
- “The skills I learned during my time in the practicum guide my work and attitude every day, I am so incredibly grateful for the opportunities and experience the practicum brought me. I am beyond grateful for your wisdom and guidance over the summer, your kindness and expertise are something I strive to achieve in this lifetime.”
- “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.”
- “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!”
- “My experience in your Chicago Blackhawks Sports Practicum in the Summer of 2016 continues to give me a competitive edge and pave the way for me. Not only did talking about you, my summer in Chicago, and where the Official Blackhawks Bar program is today instantly make me more comfortable during job interviews, but it is what I believe was the deciding factor in Volkswagen extending me an offer. The Chicago Blackhawks Sports Practicum is how I was able to find my passion for marketing, which was something I had never done before. As I
reflect on the opportunities I have had in the two years since then, I am still unbelievably thankful for your willingness to take a chance on me. Dan, your dedication to the professional development and growth of your students, as well as your ability to create rewarding work and lifelong memories is something that I will always cherish. Thank you, thank you, thank you.”

○ “What I really enjoyed about this practicum was the ability to interact with our assigned Blackhawks staff. It was a lot of fun and beneficial being able to interact with them so much as well as learning more about their jobs. This felt like we were beginning to develop a connection with them rather than a one-time client. They gave so much guidance and advice that I’ll be able to use in other jobs, internships or practicums.”

○ “The Blackhawks project was very rewarding because for one of the first times in my life I finally felt challenged when working on a project. Working with the Blackhawks challenged my abilities to think more analytically than just relying on my creativity to develop research ideas that I believed in.”

○ “Looking back at this course, the most beneficial experiences for me were definitely the days we presented to the Blackhawks and Kernels. It taught me both how to present professionally, along with what these professionals are looking for when presenting to them. These are once in a lifetime presentations, so the preparation and teamwork it took to get to that final goal took a ton of planning and practice that I will be proud of for the rest of my life.”

**FINAL DETAILS:**

- Students selected for the course will register and pay tuition for three summer credit hours. Registration in the course will also require a course fee. The course fee is set at $1,450, but UBill accounts will be reimbursed for any excess fee at the end of the course. In 2021, the course fee after reimbursement was only $700, which covered transportation, housing in Chicago, some meals, and entertainment. **A LIMITED NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE!** Go to our website here: [https://clas.uiowa.edu/hhp/undergraduate-sport-and-recreation-management/scholarships](https://clas.uiowa.edu/hhp/undergraduate-sport-and-recreation-management/scholarships) under “John E. Evans Experiential Learning Award” for more information on applying for a scholarship.

- When the class is in Chicago, students should plan to bring additional spending money for any outside meals, personal entertainment or souvenirs (if desired).

- Students from all majors are encouraged to apply. There is a specific need for Graphic Design students and Analytics students.


- Dan Matheson, Director of the 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 with the New York Yankees and NCAA.

- Contact Dan Matheson ([daniel-matheson@uiowa.edu](mailto:daniel-matheson@uiowa.edu)) with questions. **Remember the deadline to submit an application for priority consideration is February 14, 2022!**
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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