SPORT MANAGEMENT PRACTICUM COURSE - SUMMER 2016

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 or around June 23 in Iowa City and conclude on or around July 20 in Chicago (precise dates to be finalized prior to the course)

- During the first week, students will be in Iowa City working on sport marketing projects for organizations such as the Cedar Rapids Kernels or Waterloo Bucks baseball teams. Any necessary transportation to and from Cedar Rapids or other locations for such projects will be provided by the University of Iowa.

- Students will report to Chicago on or around July 5 and be broken into project teams to receive business challenges from Blackhawks executives related to marketing, communications, sales, fan relations, and related areas. Each project team will work together to perform necessary research and develop recommendations designed to achieve the Blackhawks’ business objectives. Each team will make a final presentation of recommendations to Blackhawks executives. In past years, the Blackhawks have actually used the best student recommendations!
• Students will have additional opportunities, including helping prepare for and successfully run the Blackhawks Convention. Moreover, Journalism students in the course will have the opportunity to cover Blackhawks Prospect Camp in various capacities with opportunities to publish articles on Blackhawks.com and/or contribute other new media content for team websites and social media. Design students will have an opportunity to work with all project teams to develop high-quality visual materials for submission to the Blackhawks. Finally, some students will have the opportunity to shadow Blackhawks staff in the office.

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

• While 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 the lake and Buckingham Fountain.

• 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 cover letter and resume to Dan Matheson via email (daniel-matheson@uiowa.edu). The deadline to submit your application is February 19, 2016. 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, event management experience, dependability, maturity, creativity and an interest in performing market research in order to develop the best possible recommendation for the Blackhawks.
  ◦ GPA and coursework may be reviewed and taken into consideration. Finalists may be asked to interview for a seat in the course. Last year there were about 60 applicants for a total of 18 available seats.
• The Chicago Practicum has been in existence for two years. Some highlights from previous summers include:
  ◦ Following the 2015 course, one of the students who was graduating was hired by the Blackhawks as a 12-month, paid intern in Photography and New Media.
  ◦ Following the 2015 course, several students were invited to participate in organizational meetings with Blackhawks executives to further discuss the student recommendations on sponsorships and marketing because the research and recommendations generated by the students was being considered for implementation.
  ◦ Four students published articles on Blackhawks.com during Blackhawks Prospect Camp.
  ◦ One student produced Blackhawks Instagram posts during Prospect Camp and Blackhawks Convention.
  ◦ Students exceeded the sales goals set for them during the 2014 Blackhawks Convention and earned autographed Blackhawks t-shirts.
  ◦ During the 2015 Blackhawks Convention, students had two photo sessions with the Stanley Cup.
  ◦ One student assisted Blackhawks Reporter Eric Lear in the production of podcasts and other media for the Blackhawks website during Prospect Camp.

• UIowa students who have been through the practicum unanimously praise it as one of the top experiences of their college careers. Below are excerpts from student reflection papers following the courses:
  ◦ “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!”

- 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 $1450. The fee pays for housing costs in Chicago, ground transportation costs related to the course, breakfast/lunch/dinner 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 or other entertainment in Chicago, a bus ticket to and from Chicago (if you choose to travel with Dan Matheson and other students on the Megabus), and transportation in Iowa for the project during the first week.

- Students from all majors are encouraged to apply. There is a specific need for three Journalism students who can work closely with the Blackhawks New Media and Creative Services department to produce website content while covering Blackhawks Prospect Camp and three Graphic Design students to help produce reports and other possible materials for submission to the Blackhawks and take on other design projects that may come up.

- Dan Matheson, University of Iowa Sport and Recreation Management Lecturer, 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 19, 2016!
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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