Warm greetings from the Experiential Learning & Career Development Center!

The weather is definitely keeping us on our toes this winter, so it’s a perfect time to begin (or continue) your experiential learning journey from the comfort of your warm dorm room or apartment. The ELCDC website is a gold mine of information. Need a cool workshop for your student organization or team? We’ve got you covered! The ELCDC’s “Workshop on Wheels” program allows you to select from 10 different topics and put your request in when you’re ready.

Want to see where your classmates are studying abroad and interning this semester? Check out our Experiential Learning Student Blog.

We also hope to venture out to our wide variety of events this semester. We have quite a few upcoming opportunities including the Study Abroad/Off-Campus Fair and a variety of workshops on topics such as choosing your major, interviewing skills, creating a resume and participating in the ACRE program.

Study Abroad/Off-Campus News
The 12th Annual Study Abroad/Off-Campus Fair will be held March 12, 10:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m. in the Campus Center Main Lounge. Program providers and Albright faculty members who lead courses abroad will be on hand to show you the possibilities and answer your questions. Whether you’re committed to studying abroad or just considering it, this event is a must. Don’t miss it!

Study Abroad/Off-Campus applications for summer and fall 2014 are due Friday, March 28, to the ELCDC in the Geiser House. To find out more about the Study Abroad/Off-Campus program visit our web pages at www.albright.abroadoffice.net/welcome.html.

Undergraduate Research News
A record 24 students took part in the 2014 Interim ACRE program in January. Students worked with a faculty mentor on a project in their field and presented a short summary at the culminating lunch. Take a look at the latest press release about these students and their intriguing projects. Deadline to apply for a summer ACRE project is March 10. You can find more information on the ACRE web pages.

Career Center News
You control your career destiny!

Just going to class and picking up your diploma after four years doesn’t cut it. You need to become active on and off campus. Becoming marketable to employers or graduate schools is a four-year job. Here are a few things you can do during college to make yourself marketable at job-search time. For a complete list, visit www.nacwee.org/gpo/career-strategy.aspx. If you do all of these, you’ll be unstoppable:

1. Actively explore career options — You owe it to yourself to find a career that enriches your life, not one that brings you down. Actively exploring careers means talking with professionals in occupations of interest and observing professionals on the job. Ask JM (Jobs, Internships, Mentors) lists alumni mentors and other volunteers who are willing to talk to you about their careers. Also, attend any career expos, career fairs, and career speaker panels that are offered.

2. Complete at least one internship in your chosen career field — More and more, internships are the springboards to employment and getting into graduate programs. Many recruiters say that when they need to fill entry-level jobs, they will only hire previous interns. In addition to making yourself more marketable, internships also are a great way to explore careers and determine whether or not certain careers are for you. When you work for a company as an intern for three to four months, you get a really good feel for whether the field (and company) is one in which you want to work day in and day out.

3. Gain an appreciation of diversity through study abroad, foreign languages and cultures — We are now, more than ever, working within a global work force. For you to be successful at work and in your life, you must stretch yourself, and learn about people and cultures different than yours. Take advantage of the wonderful study-abroad opportunities and the courses relating to diversity. This is your time to travel! Most people find it harder to take time to travel as they begin their careers and start families.

4. Use the ELCDC all four years
Remember, you control your career destiny. Don’t wait until your senior year to start realizing your goals. Your career train is on the move. Jump on board now so you can reach your destination!

— By Rob Ondrask. Courtesy of the National Association of Colleges and Employers.

Spotlight
Each issue of our newsletter features one student who has recently taken part in one or more experiential learning opportunities.

Dan McGurl, a junior environmental studies and political science major, recently completed an internship with the Pennsylvania state legislature.

During the fall 2013 semester I participated in a full-time, paid fellowship sponsored by the Pennsylvania House of Representatives Bipartisan Management Committee. I was placed with the Office of House Minority Gaming Oversight Committee Chairwoman Rosita C. Youngblood, who represents the 188th legislative district in Northwest Philadelphia. During my fellowship I assisted staff members in Chairwoman Youngblood’s office with policy analysis, constituent service and legislative affairs tasks. Additionally, the entire cohort of fellows was given the opportunity to meet with various people of influence in state politics such as lobbyists, the state Attorney General Kathleen Kane, Lieutenant Governor Jim Cawley, Governor Tom Corbett and other elected officials.

One of my primary tasks on a daily basis was to write policy analyses on bills and resolutions being considered by the Gaming Oversight Committee and distribute these documents to democratic members of the House of Representatives. Additionally, I was tasked with responding to questions and comments sent into the office of Chairwoman Youngblood by her constituents regarding bills being considered by the House, as well as responding to questions fielded by gaming industry representatives regarding current legislation.

From my first day the members of my office challenged me and treated me as an equal member of the team. I was never asked or expected to complete typical “intern” tasks such as making copies or keeping the coffee maker full. In fact, my direct supervisor, Bill Thomas, committee executive director, made a conscious effort to include me in experiences that interns typically don’t get to have such as closed door policy meetings and trade group events. Due to my office’s prominence within the House of Representatives and my being included in such meetings, I was granted an amazing amount of access and exposure to many elected officials and high level staff members.

In addition to my daily responsibilities, I was also required to draft my own original legislation in a topic of my choosing. For this project I was able to write legislation on a topic of great interest to me, which is the need for reform of the juvenile justice system. My final product was a resolution to assess the viability of providing parole hearings to all juveniles currently incarcerated to sentences of life imprisonment without the chance of parole in the state.

I am so incredibly fortunate to have been given the opportunity to be a part of this program. Within my four months working in the State House of Representatives I gained more knowledge and made more connections than I could have ever imagined. I hope to use the skills and information that I acquired to further my goal of pursuing a career in politics or public policy.