STAY AT THE WORLD’S BIGGEST SANDCASTLE THIS SUMMER

With over 1,000 courses in 100 departments, Summer Sessions is an opportunity to make the most of summer vacation. Pre-freshmen are welcome to get a jump start on their studies through our Summer Institutes, which are 7-credit blocks of entry-level courses during 6-week Summer Session II, June 20 – August 1. Lists of individual summer courses, categorized by level of study, may be viewed at www.cas.pitt.edu, and Arts and Sciences course descriptions are located at www.fcas.pitt.edu/course_descriptions/BrowseCourses.html. Register for courses at www.solutions.pitt.edu/summer. If your son or daughter will be spending the summer vacation with us at our fabulous resort, the Cathedral of Learning, here’s some hot fun in the summertime:

DATES TO REMEMBER

- March 11 University’s observance of Spring Holiday (University closed)
- March 16 Spring Term deadline to submit Monitored Withdrawal forms to Dean’s Office
- March 17 Fall Term Registration and Add/Drop begins; first two days reserved for seniors
- April 1 Deadline to apply for August 2005 graduation
- April 22 Last day for Spring Term undergraduate day classes
- April 25-30 Final exam period, Spring Term ends April 30
- May 1 Commencement; Deposit deadline for new freshmen
- May 2 First registration deadline for Summer Sessions 6 Week 1, for all Summer Sessions deadlines, scroll through the Academic Calendar at www.pitt.edu/~registrar/cal0405AcdCal.htm
- May 30 University’s observance of Memorial Day (University closed)

Academic Calendar is at:
http://www.pitt.edu/~registrar/cal0405AcdCal.htm

USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

( more info on the Site Index: www.pitt.edu)

- A&S Policies, Procedures, Appeals (412) 624-6480
- Academic Resource Center (412) 648-7920
- Academic Support Hotline (412) 624-2052
- Advising Center (412) 624-6444
- Associate Dean’s Office (412) 624-6480
- Career Services (412) 648-7130
- Counseling Center (412) 648-7930
- Disability Resources and Services (412) 648-7890
- Financial Aid (412) 624-7488
- Housing, Dining, Student IDs (412) 648-1100
- Office of Experiential Learning (412) 624-6828
- Parking, Transportation and Services (412) 624-8612

 Registrar, Transcripts, Grades (412) 624-7600
 Residence Life (412) 648-1200
 Student Records, Graduation (412) 624-6776
 Summer Sessions (412) 624-6600
 Student Health Service (412) 383-1800
 Study Abroad (412) 648-7413
 TTY (412) 383-7355
 University Honors College (412) 624-6880

Visiting Pitt?
http://www.pitt.edu/~oaafa/lodging.html has lodging information.
Find out more about what’s happening around campus by visiting Pitt Magazine at:
http://www.imc.pitt.edu/pittmag/ and The Pitt News at:

• Pitt Arts, www.pittarts.pitt.edu has student discounts to summer events and shows
• CitiParks Cinema in the Parks and recreation: www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us
• Venture Outdoors into scenic Western PA, www.wpfi.org
• Three Rivers Arts Festival’s free concerts, arts market, and more: www.artsfestival.net
• Kennywood, one of America’s best theme parks: www.kennywood.com
• Sandcastle water park: www.sandcastlewaterpark.com
Here is the eternal spring, for you, the very stars of Heaven are new — so reads the inscription on the iron gate that arches across the Cathedral of Learning Commons Room hallway. At the end of this term, some of our Arts and Sciences stars, your sons and daughters, will graduate - sparkling away from the School and the campus. We wish them success, intellectual excitement, and happiness in their future endeavors! As we proudly celebrate these Spring graduates, we are already preparing for renewal. The class of 2009 will be on campus for registration and advising sessions are starting in just a few weeks. They come with new ideas, new aspirations, and a fresh view of what our School ought to be. My staff and I are thrilled to meet you, our new families, and to discover your sons and daughters! They will be the new stars on our campus, and we are ready to see them shine.

Every new student brings new ideas that help improve our School. Every new faculty member’s original research contributes to the curriculum of tomorrow. Every new staff member shares fresh thoughts on how to improve our one-on-one care for your sons and daughters. But while the students, scholars and staff are ever-changing, one basic tenet remains the same: the School of Arts and Sciences is committed to providing a liberal arts and pre-professional education for undergraduate students that is grounded in scholarly excellence and that gives students the knowledge, understanding, analytical tools, and communication skills that they need to become reflective citizens within a diverse and rapidly changing world.

Albert Einstein said, "We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.” We thus are committed that each student be able to form an independent opinion grounded in knowledge, to use this
knowledge of difference to understand others, and to contextualize the present and future innovations by understanding the past. Our purpose, which we undertake with the utmost resolution, is to equip students with the foremost liberal arts knowledge by consistently developing our curriculum, faculty and facilities to be the most cutting-edge possible. A newly revised Film Studies major, a renovated Chemistry building and the addition of renowned Mellon Professor of History Donna Gabaccia are just a few recent examples of how Arts and Sciences maintains its promise to provide a high quality and relevant education of our time. And, as families of Arts and Sciences students, we value you as our active partners in supporting our students, your sons and daughters, to meet the demands of college life and beyond.

Congratulations to our May 1 graduates. Happy Spring, and Hail to Pitt!

- Dr. Regina Schulte-Ladbeck, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies

**Making a difference with THE LIBERAL ARTS**

**Akshar Abbott**, a junior working toward a triple major in Biological Sciences, Religious Studies, and Political Sciences, is working on his dream to implement healthcare infrastructure in the developing world. Through his Religious Studies and Political Science majors, Akshar is acquiring insights into others’ cultural and political frameworks, thereby gaining critical knowledge to support his pursuit to bring medical expertise to the world’s most needy.

For the past two years, Akshar has been working with the Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology, in Kakinada, India in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Akshar assisted efforts to upgrade equipment sterilization, obtain an eye surgery laser, and equip two of the hospital’s eye clinics for children. Right now, he is building a hospital endowment and is working with USAID to establish a solar array as the hospital’s stable energy source. While recently visiting Kakinada, Akshar was on a train the day the tsunami hit. When he returns to Kakinada in December, he anticipates meeting a people in serious need.

Akshar is from New Delhi, India, and grew up in Morgantown, West Virginia. He came to Pitt through the University Honors College, and his UHC entrance interview included international development and healthcare as two hot topics – topics that have since come to fruition for Ashkar in his studies and in the community. Akshar will graduate in April 2006 and is looking forward to medical school.

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**ALL ABOARD THE ARC**

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) has officially moved to its new home in the Gardner Steel Conference Center! A&S now has a one-stop-shop for all students to expand their skills and study strategies in order to perform to their maximum. The new ARC has a wonderful meeting space, computers, areas for one-on-one tutoring, evening hours and, in the near future, expanded peer tutoring for more subject areas.

Gail Austin, Associate Director, shares the center’s purpose and mission: “The Academic Resource Center serves as an excellent resource for students who want to enhance their academic and study skills. Tutoring is one of our most popular services, generally used by students who are doing well in courses. Too often people operate under the misconception that tutoring is only prescribed for students who are struggling in their courses. To the contrary, students who seek out tutoring are often high achieving students who wish to maintain high standards. All students would be better served if they adopted this study strategy and used ARC tutoring services on a regular basis.” The ARC, at its new location in the Gardner Steel Conference Center at the corner of Thackeray and O’Hara Streets, is open 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Monday – Thursday; 8:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. Friday. Call (412) 648-7920 for more information.
When you think about college courses, what might come to mind are good old standards such as College Algebra. But what about courses such as Germany Today or Westerns and Samurai Films? (See “Classic Clips” at www.cas.pitt.edu/pitt/index.php) While professors teach courses pertaining to their particular areas of expertise, new courses are constantly evolving. When creating a new course, faculty develop course proposals to fit not only their areas of expertise but also the department’s curriculum, requirements for majors and minors, and the overall philosophy of the A&S curriculum.

Shaping the Curriculum

Course development is not a quick, simple process. For example, a new undergraduate course is being shaped right now by a collaborative team of faculty and graduate students from the Department of History and the Global Studies Program. After these initial eight people hammer out the proposal draft, additional faculty members will also review the proposal. The new course proposal must then pass inspection by the Department of History’s Curriculum Committee, Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Council, Arts and Sciences Council, and the Arts and Sciences Planning and Budget Committee, to name a few hoops. The whole process could take a year or two. Proposals for new majors, minors, or certificates go even further by requiring the Provost’s approval. Recent changes to the A&S curriculum include the introduction of a new Slavic Studies major and a new course sequence for the Women’s Studies Certificate.

If developing new courses, majors, or certificates take so much time and effort, why bother? Because in today’s ever-changing world, contemporary ways of thinking, teaching and learning quickly become those of the past. For example, one of the two most common vocations for History majors is teaching, yet many of today’s high school history teachers are not adequately trained to meet the increasing demand to teach a more global world history. As part of its commitment to prepare students for the teaching of global history, Donna Gabaccia, Mellon Professor of History, summed up the Department of History’s mission: “We train regional specialists who have global reach.” She stated, “I’m committed to the idea that the best introduction to study of history for undergraduate students is an introduction to the contemporary world.”

First Experiences in Research

First Experiences in Research is a dynamic undergraduate research program offered by the Office of Experiential Learning (OEL). Undergraduates partner with research faculty in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences and participate directly on that faculty member’s research team. These one-on-one relationships help students see what it would be like to be a neuroscientist, archaeologist, or art historian. This spring, approximately 60 undergraduates participated in the program, receiving the benefit of priceless mentorship and earning direct experience as they explored roles they have always dreamed of becoming.

Undergraduate research is one component of an array of opportunities for students to learn through experience. OEL offers students opportunities to learn outside the classroom by participating in research, internships, teaching and community service-learning that is related to their fields of study. These critical experiences give students first-hand insights into the skills required in their future professions. Margaret Heely, Director of the OEL, describes its mission: “Experiential learning is an opportunity for students to take their learning beyond the classroom. Students are then able to integrate their learning from these experiences with their academic studies to make their undergraduate experiences richer and more meaningful to them.” To find out more about OEL, visit their website at www.pitt.edu/~oel.

Announcements & Reminders

> The Sophomore Honors reception for students, which was postponed this past fall, will be held on March 23, 2005 in the William Pitt Union Ballroom.
> For those students graduating on May 1, please check with your department for graduation receptions.
> Congratulations to those who made the Dean’s list this fall! There were 2,666 full time undergraduate students who earned a 3.5 or better.
> A reminder to your daughter or son that all students receive free admission, with Pitt student ID, to the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History, and to the Mattress Factory and Andy Warhol museums.
> Congratulations to the undergraduates honored at the February 28, 2005 Honors Convocation. Student Jessica Heath addressed her fellow scholars.
> 347 full-time undergraduate students from fall term earned a 4.0 and received a $50 Book Center gift certificate, courtesy of the Office of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and the Wilma Binder Zeder Fund.