

THE PITT

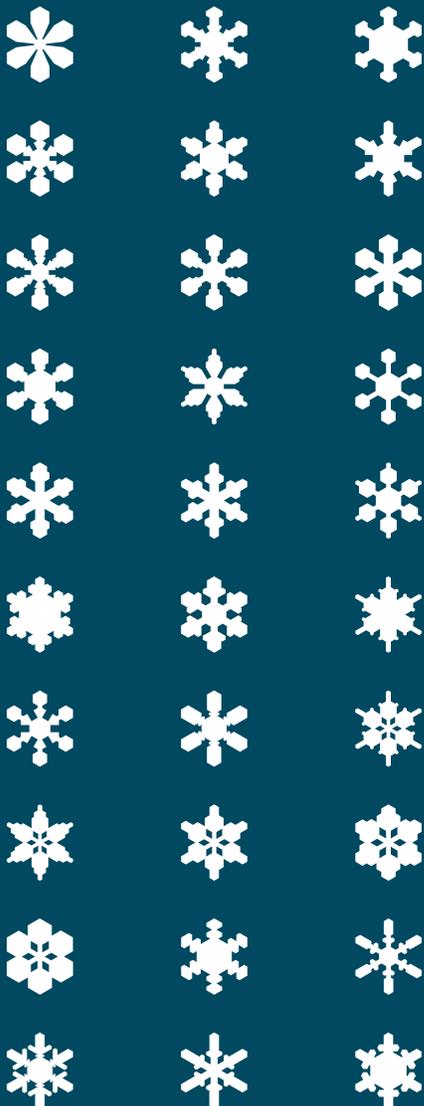


UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

P R I D E



Dean's Address



The holidays are a time for us to reflect on what we have done with the past year of our lives. Your daughters and sons, young adults away from home, have experienced a formative period toward shaping their future lives here in the School of Arts & Sciences. They have taken courses and exams, written papers and executed research, and ultimately reported to you their success stories, challenges, and final grades for this past term. But have they really found out all the School of Arts & Sciences has to offer? I want you to take just a moment at one of the many dinners that you will share with your children during winter recess, and ask them how much thought they have given to their academic journey and where they think their path might lead them.

For example, have they found out from at least one of their professors what inspired them to work in research, teaching, and service? Ask if they participated in a professor's research project, or are planning to do so. Which classes gave them the best insights on the intersection between textbook knowledge and the "real world"? Have they considered an internship to gain experience in the workplace? Have they offered their newly-acquired skills in service to the community? What was the single most interesting fact that they learned last term in class, and how will it influence them? Reflection is a critical component of considering where students are on their paths and where those paths might lead them.

There are many opportunities to integrate classroom learning with "real life" application – programs, courses, and services designed to help our students better understand themselves and think about what they wish to pursue. This family newsletter is dedicated to making the most of one's education. We have provided you with a view into some of these programs and services that make our community of learners a vital place – summer study abroad, undergraduate teaching assistantships, peer advising, internships, and service, to name just a few of the possibilities for making the most of a liberal arts education. We wish to encourage your son or daughter to explore all options and to gain as much experience as possible prior to commencement. Winter break is a great time to reflect, regroup, and plan for an exciting spring term, summer session, and beyond.

This December, some of our students will commence from the A&S to a new chapter in their lives. We wish them success in their new endeavors, prosperity, and happiness. We are looking forward to honoring these graduates on December 17.

We were grateful to have served you and yours in the past year. From me and my staff to you and yours, we wish you peace and a holiday season of joyful reconnection.

Happy Holidays,
Associate Dean Regina Schulte-Ladbeck
School of Arts & Sciences

Peer Advising

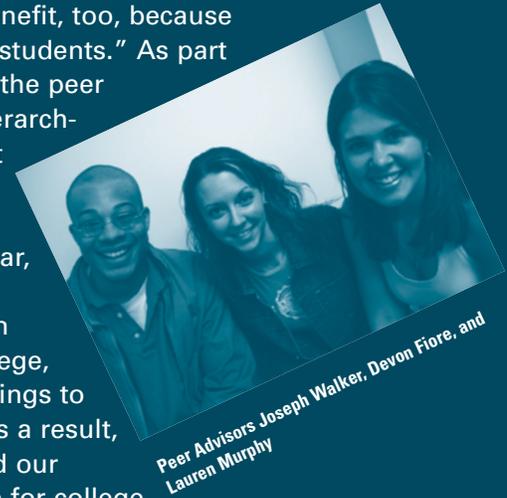
The School of Arts & Sciences Advising Center offers a special opportunity for students interested in student services – peer advising. Peer advising is a program that began four years ago as a way to enhance the advising services for first and second year students. Inspired by the model from our own Environmental Studies program, eight to 10 students now annually join the ranks of the Advising Center as paraprofessionals to support their fellow students with sound peer advice and information about campus resources. In the spring, peer advisors participate in an Advising Center internship for two credits, where they learn about advising, and, if successful, continue into the summer as peer advisors for the freshman PittStart sessions.

Each peer advisor has a mentor, a professional advisor, with whom they meet weekly, and regular training sessions help the peer advisors review important information about advising. During these regular training sessions, the peer advisors also learn about professional and academic integrity as well as leadership, listening, and presentation skills that will serve them for a lifetime. Says peer advisor Devon Fiore, "Being a peer advisor really enhanced my leadership skills. I not only got to help other students, but they helped me find out what I may want to do as a future career."

The program's major outcomes are a stronger bond between students and their professional advisor, and a mentoring system that helps the students, peer advisors,

and professional staff. Many current peer advisors are considering pursuing a student services profession themselves - they are here to serve and to learn, and the reciprocal arrangement offers benefits to all. Josh Baranowski, peer advisor, shares, "The program allowed me to practice people skills and is a great way for those who are interested in serving others later in life to get some good practice with peers and professionals alike."

By training and developing themselves, peer advisors learn and then share that knowledge with their fellow students, which also provides the professional staff direct information about student concerns and needs. Mary Beth Favorite, senior advisor and coordinator to the peer advisors, states, "We benefit, too, because we get insight from the students." As part of their responsibilities, the peer advisors develop an overarching research project that both helps undergraduates and assists the Advising Center. Last year, students researched the nuances of the transition from high school to college, and presented their findings to the professional staff. As a result, the peer advisors helped our freshmen better prepare for college life at the PittStart sessions.



Peer Advisors Joseph Walker, Devon Fiore, and Lauren Murphy

Undergraduate Teaching Assistants



Maura Clark



Sheila Isong

One of the key ways to participate in the teaching mission of the School is by becoming an undergraduate teaching assistant.

When one thinks of a "TA", an image of an overworked grad student feverishly grading papers may come to mind. Undergraduate teaching assistants differ greatly from that picture, as evidenced by Maura Clark, a junior UTA for a Freshman Writing Seminar. Maura, who really wanted some teaching experience, is currently a UTA in the Freshman Seminar that explores the value of a literary education, which correlates perfectly to her junior seminar in English literature. She states, "I was really paranoid about academics my freshman year and Freshman Studies helped me see the networking and various communities, both academic and

non-academic, that exist in the Arts & Sciences and on the Pitt campus." UTAs support Freshman Programs courses as part of the School of Arts & Sciences' student development approach, aimed at providing leadership and personal development opportunities for undergraduates. Like Maura, many UTAs have thought about becoming teachers themselves, and assisting an instructor once a week is a great way to find out more. While UTAs do not teach the class and do not evaluate student work, they learn pedagogical concepts through a mentoring relationship with the instructor, and help their peers by setting up peer led study groups. "I got so much value out of my own Learning Community, I felt that I wanted to give something back and help our freshmen have a similar, positive experience with their first term, too," says Sheila Isong, sophomore politics-philosophy major who was in a Learning Community last year.

To apply, contact Freshman Programs at 412-624-5759. UTAs are matched with appropriate courses and earn a Book Center gift certificate.

See the World Next Summer



Pitt in France

Since becoming a global citizen is integral to being a 21st century adult, the School of Arts & Sciences emphasizes study of international cultures as an important part of our curriculum. Pitt's Study Abroad Office serves hundreds of students each year as they determine where and when they might want to pursue international study, and the options abound: Study at another university, participate in an exchange program, or spend the summer abroad with our very own Arts & Sciences faculty in Italy, China, Germany, India, or France. **"Pitt-Developed Programs"** is the term for programs where Arts & Sciences faculty lead students on study abroad experiences. Programs usually last between four and six weeks, and students earn six to seven credits and the experience of a lifetime.



Pitt in France

Says Professor Heather Allen, coordinator of the Pitt in France program, *"Summer is a great time to go abroad, when students can commit 100 percent of their energies toward an experience without the pressures of the regular school year. We carefully plan our Nantes experience so that it is before the European universities let out and before American tourists arrive so that students can have an authentic experience."* Nantes received recognition as the "Best Place to Live in France" (*Le Point* magazine, 2003 and 2004) and "Greenest City in Europe" (*L'Express* magazine, 2003). *Time Europe* recently referred to Nantes as having the best quality of life in Europe. With Paris two hours away and the Atlantic a 30-minute drive, Nantes offers many opportunities, and a homestay with a French family provides students firsthand knowledge of French language and culture.



Pitt in China

Professor Wenfang Tang in our Department of Political Science founded the Pitt in China program, and he has taken hundreds of students on learning expeditions to China. He shares, *"One of the most valuable experiences of Pitt in China has been the development of sensitivity toward another society that operates under a very different political, social, and cultural environment. It is common for our students to realize that China is not as repressed as it is portrayed in the American media and in their high school textbooks. Students have the opportunity to witness the rapid transformation of the Chinese economy. Some of them returned to China later and found jobs. Others found China-related jobs in the U.S. because of their China experience."* Matthew Mazonkey, 2004 Pitt in China participant, echoes this sentiment. *"Teachers in America are teaching students about a China they read from books printed twenty years ago. They are teaching students about the backwardness of the communist party, the brutality of the Chinese government, and the underdevelopment of Chinese cities. But China is much different today than it was twenty years ago, and much different from even five years ago."*

The Summer Language Institute, or SLI, another popular summer program, is offered through our Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures. Cultural and social activities such as lectures, discussion groups, cooking demonstrations, and performances supplement intensive language courses in Slovak, Bulgarian, Serbian, Polish, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Russian, or Macedonian. Students who attain solid language proficiency may continue their SLI program overseas through accredited schools such as Moscow State University or the New Bulgarian University in Sofia. Find out more at <http://sli.slavic.pitt.edu/>.

For more information about the Study Abroad Office's summer programs, visit www.abroad.pitt.edu.

Students Come to the Aid of Hurricane Victims

Pitt has joined the ranks of other universities in the enormous task of helping New Orleans-based students find temporary academic accommodations while the nation awaits the rebirth of a city. One of our very own students was involved in the rescue efforts, with the loan of his personal helicopter. Warren Gaughen, a junior Film Studies major, and Chet Michaels, a Marine, along with two other friends from the Carlisle, PA area participated in helicopter rescues with FEMA and the Red Cross. The four have shared ownership of a helicopter for the past three years, after Warren and his friend got hooked when they went up on their first ride. Warren shares, *"When Katrina hit, my friends suggested to me – why doesn't one of us fly down there and help FEMA and the Red Cross? Our friend's mother works for FEMA, so I called her and said, 'Need any help?' to which she replied, 'As much as we can get.' So we started making plans."* The helicopter was loaded onto a truck, and Chet drove himself to New Orleans to meet up with the helicopter. Chet piloted the helicopter, with the assistance of professional rescue crew, picked up several people who were stranded on the roof of a building.



Men's Glee Club

Academic Clubs

With approximately 300 undergraduate clubs from which to choose, School of Arts & Sciences students can engage in community service, explore new activities, renew old interests, discover our vibrant city, and meet like-minded students from across the disciplines. Many Arts & Sciences departments host student clubs and chapters of national and international societies that pertain to the department's focus, such as the **Undergraduate Economics Society**, **American Chemical Society**, **Psi Chi**, **Panther Psychology**, and **Papercut Literary Magazine**. Choices of

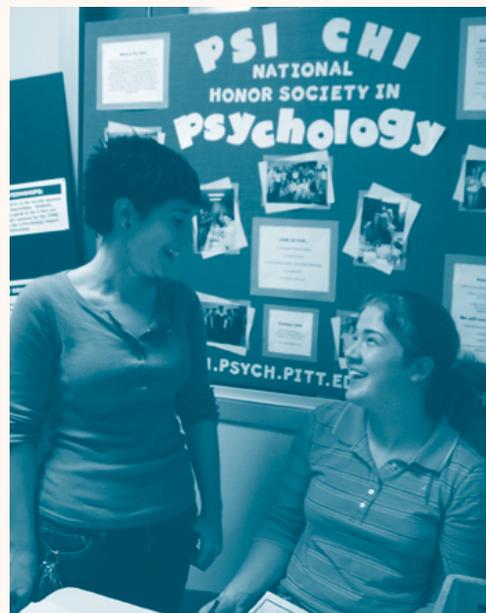
academic honorary societies and organizations range from **Beta Beta Beta** to **Sigma Alpha Lambda**, providing an arena for students to find peers engaged in their area of interest. Honorary societies offer opportunities for students to develop their skills in leadership and service, such as tutoring other students and volunteering in the community.

Student organizations such as the **Pitt African Drum Ensemble**, the **Men's Glee Club**, and the **Women's Chorale Ensemble** provide settings outside the classroom that allow musically-inclined students to showcase their talent. Athletic clubs, including both **men's and women's ice hockey**, **soccer**, **lacrosse**, **martial arts**, and **rugby**, supply an outlet for sports-minded students. And those with a more diverse turn of mind will find pleasure in groups such as the **Quechua Club**, **Tomfoolery** (a student-run improvisation group), and the **Medieval Interest Club**.

To find out more about the organizations and clubs that undergraduates can participate in, visit the Student Organization Resource Center's Website at

www.sorc.pitt.edu. Click on **Student Organizations** to access a searchable database of student organizations.

Any student may create a student organization. To operate officially on University property, the organization must be registered with the Student Organization Resource Center (www.sorc.pitt.edu). For guidelines and online registration form, visit their registration page at www.sorc.pitt.edu/register/index.html.



Psi Chi Club

Pitt Jazz Ensemble



Each fall, the student **Pitt Jazz Ensemble** gets the opportunity to learn from and perform with jazz greats such as Clark Terry, James Spalding (shown here), and James Moody at the Pitt Jazz Seminar. The Pitt Jazz Seminar, open to the public, involves world-renowned musicians sharing their talents and stories in an intimate setting where people ask them questions and hear directly from them about their lives as professional musicians. Our students and these living legends join musical forces onstage at the annual

and often sold-out Pitt Jazz Seminar concert, held at Carnegie Music Hall. The seminar and performances, along with the stewardship of jazz musician and Professor Nathan Davis, are a testament to the value and mentorship that students receive from participating in one of our many music ensembles, which are open to students from across the disciplines. Along with many other student and faculty musical performances, this year saw the 35th annual Pitt Jazz Seminar and Concert.

“Internships provide a pre-professional experience that students just can’t get in a class. By being in a real working environment, students can get a feel for what a given field is all about, what skills it requires, and what kind of working environment it provides. Also, many firms now use their internship programs as a main point of recruiting for future hires. Students can leave Pitt with a job offer from their former internship site.”

**- Vanessa Sterling
OEL Academic Internship Coordinator**

Each year, over 500 students complete an academic internship, thereby gaining key experience to help them discover and learn about potential career paths or additional fields of study. An academic

Internships

internship is a monitored on-site work

experience that connects the School of Arts & Sciences classroom learning with practical experience in the workplace. Academic internships provide students with the ability to directly learn the many aspects of an industry while earning between one and three credits, and students may use up to 12 credits of internship credits towards graduation.

As well as academic internships through the Office of Experiential Learning, there are also academic internships offered by departments, and paid internships (not for academic credit) offered by various companies or organizations.

“Students can actually begin doing internships before they have declared their majors, which can help them decide what they want to major in. And once a student selects a major, that student still must decide which aspect of a field they want to pursue professionally, be it graduate school or work in industry. So, internships service a number of purposes beyond just getting a job. It makes their academic work as undergraduates more relevant and meaningful for them.”

**- Peggy Heely, EdD
Director, Office of Experiential Learning**

Prerequisites for an internship through the Office of Experiential Learning include the completion of at least 36 credits, a minimum of a 2.25 GPA, and the completion of an Academic Internship Learning Agreement. Prerequisites for internships through other departments vary; the specifics may be located on the departmental Web sites. For paid internships, prerequisites may be defined by the sponsoring company or organization. Students often start their internship query by visiting with the academic internship staff in the Office of Experiential Learning (OEL), B4 Thaw Hall. Students can also visit Career Services in 224 William Pitt Union, particularly if they are looking for paid internships, or they may speak with their advisor about additional opportunities. Both the OEL and Career Services list internship opportunities on Panther TRACS, a database that students may access by contacting Career Services, www.careers.pitt.edu or (412) 648-7130.

Dates to Remember

January 4

- Last day to register for spring term classes
- Classes begin

January 16

- Dr. Martin Luther King’s birthday (University closed)

January 17

- Spring term add/drop ends
- Last day to declare a major and register for fall term classes with new department

January 20

- Transfer student social for transfer students admitted during spring term

February 20

- Summer session registration begins
- Summer session add/drop begins

February 24

- Honors Convocation

March 5-12

- Spring recess for students (no classes)

March 10

- Spring holiday (University closed)



-Thank you to all who joined us for the Freshman Family Weekend reception in the Academic Resource Center! It was a pleasure to meet you all, share your experiences, and answer questions.

-Over 1300 freshmen attended the Experiential Learning Fair to find out about internships, research, study abroad, and undergraduate teaching as important components to the A&S education. Special thanks go to senior Erin Gray, coordinator of 140 student panel presentations.



-This year’s annual Faculty-Student Psychology Reception, held on October 12, was a meeting of the minds and a sharing of research and interests. Faculty and students gave poster presentations, and scholarship awards were given to Kristen Carreira, Gina Matteson, and Brittney Uffner.

-Congratulations to our **Dean’s Stars**, those students who achieved a 4.0 this term! Eligible students will receive a letter with a \$50 Book Center gift certificate in late January.

University of Pittsburgh
School of Arts & Sciences
Undergraduate Studies
140 Thackery Hall
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Pittsburgh, PA
Permit No. 511



**SPECIAL
ANNOUNCEMENT:**

Justin Chalker, a senior majoring in history and philosophy of science and chemistry, was named a Rhodes Scholar. A student of the most high distinction and winner of national awards and scholarships, Justin is one of 32 Rhodes Scholars selected from 903 applicants. To view a complete article, please visit www.post-gazette.com/pg/pp/05325/610033.stm.

Professor Light



On October 14, **Professor Richard Light** of Harvard University addressed Pitt faculty, staff, and students at the Fifth Annual School of Arts & Sciences Advising Symposium. In his

presentations throughout the day, Professor Light shared his practical insights from over 15 years of data-gathering about the undergraduate experiences on over 20 American campuses. Professor Light's Teaching Excellence Colloquium presentation, *"How Do Faculty Know When They are Achieving Good Outcomes with Students?"* addressed questions his research group has been asking for years, such as:

- *Why are certain faculty members truly memorable?*
- *What exactly do they do?*
- *How do we know this from measuring student outcomes?*
- *What can faculty members do, specifically, to enhance students' learning and engagement with their academic work?*
- *What measurable outcomes can tell us when we are succeeding?*

Professor Light presented a series of specific, concrete, and actionable steps to assist faculty, staff, and students in our shared commitment to provide a valuable and high quality undergraduate experience. He spent hours sharing data-filled insights into why study groups and time management are critical to student success in college, why students value class debate and discussion over lectures, and what we can actually do about this to benefit our student body. The leadership of the School of Arts & Sciences is now poised with new information to make a greater difference with our students.

Professor Richard Light is the Walter H. Gale Professor of Education at Harvard University. With a PhD in Statistics, his work explores challenging problems in American higher education. He has published seven books, including *Making the Most of College*, which won the Stone Award for the best book on education in society. We are honored that Professor Light shared his work to benefit the Pitt undergraduate experience, and pleased that hundreds of faculty, staff, and student leaders attended the Advising Symposium to hear about his important research.