

# Student Success in the College of Humanities and Public Affairs

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It is possible to articulate or define student success efforts in CHPA in a variety of ways. First is funding streams. The Dean provides \$7,000 to each of the departments to assist student success activities that include



*CHPA students at the Model UN Conference*

such things as travel funding for student presentations at regional and national conferences, bringing in outside speakers, or arranging for students to participate in workshops or seminars. In addition, the college has established a \$15,000 scholarship fund to assist students in the cost of participating in college-sponsored Study Away programs. These programs include faculty-lead experiences in Jordan, Guatemala, Croatia, Turkey, Great Britain,



*Scott in Buenos Aires*

and the Netherlands. Each student can receive up to \$750 to help defray costs depending on financial need. Study Away programs have proven themselves to be an excellent means of promoting the university's cultural competence goal. To experience other cultures, discovering you are a foreigner for the first time, and to eat, work, and live with people who speak another language provides insights that can never be obtained in a classroom.

Student success is also a function of internship and externship opportunities created in cooperation with the Career Center (<http://careercenter.missouristate.edu/ExternshipProgramStudents.htm>). Each of our departments provides internships that give students the chance to work in their chosen or related field and gain real work experience. For example, the Religious Studies department created an internship in cooperation with KSMU radio as a reporter (<http://www.missouristate.edu/relst/Internship.htm>). In this capacity, the student researched, wrote



*KSMU Intern Samantha*

and presented stories. In the process, they obtained valuable job training and greater insight into how religion affects our lives. Our internship program in Jefferson City has been in place for many years allowing students the chance to work in the office of a Missouri State Representative or Senator and gain experience in the Missouri political process (see <http://blogs.missouristate.edu/polsci/2014/02/19/jefferson-city-interns-old-and-new-gather-for-dinner/>). During their semester in Jefferson City, they become a part of



*Jefferson City Interns*



*Dean Victor Matthews*

the legislative process and observe the atmosphere in which our laws and policies are made. Students who have successfully completed the internship are very positive about what they learned from the research opportunities provided by their professors and how it prepared them for their current job (<http://www.missouristate.edu/spotlights/?id=480>). A recent Sociology graduate, Gail O'Connor, stated that "I was able to learn first-hand how to collect, input, analyze and interpret data about the Springfield community."



*Miles in West Africa*

Yet another way in which CHPA contributes to student success is the opportunity to participate in student forums. Dr. Margaret Buckner in the Anthropology department has

organized a student conference for her students, which allows students from other disciplines to participate as well (<http://anthropology.missouristate.edu/Conference.htm>). Students present their



*Salome at the Sociology Fair*

topics and benefit from the questions and comments of the audience. In Sociology, Dr. Lisa Hall provides her SOC 150 students with the opportunity to create poster presentations that are displayed in the Strong Hall Atrium each semester, allowing interested parties to inquire about details outlined in their research. This provides the presenter an opportunity to exercise their speaking and critical thinking skills. After participating in the societal studies presentation, one student

stated, "I felt it really benefited me to be able to go out and get in touch with people from these social organizations. It helped me understand the social problem on more of a ground level than simply reading its definition in a book." Another example of student research is found in the annual Criminology Conference, which features both nationally known speakers and presentations by undergraduate and graduate students in CRM (<http://news.missouristate.edu/2014/03/19/annualcriminologyconference/>). The opportunity to listen to and network with these professionals, such as Dr. Michael Bourke, director of the behavioral analysis unit of the U. S. Marshals Service, who discussed "Online Sexual Predators and



*Criminology students at the ACJS conference in New York City*

their Prey," adds a real world dimension and energizes students to pursue their career path.



*History students at the PAT Conference*

While these examples do not exhaust our student success (see for instance the course transformation in HST 103 and HST 104 done by Dr. Eric Nelson that has significantly improved student learning outcomes), they do give you an idea that we are constantly working to improve our teaching methods and technology and to give our students the best possible educational experience, preparing them for success in the future.

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