



UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

100 O'Shaughnessy Hall
Notre Dame, Indiana
46556-5639 USA

tel (574) 631-7085
fax (574) 631-7743
web al.nd.edu

Dear Students,

Welcome to your junior or sophomore year in the College of Arts and Letters. I am writing to you at this important stage in your undergraduate career to encourage you to make the most of your experience as a student at Notre Dame—and to start work *now* on achieving your post-graduation goals.

The most useful advice I can offer about college is simple. Study something you love. College is short; life is (hopefully) long. Don't waste this remarkable opportunity, provided by your family and Notre Dame's benefactors, on a subject that doesn't fascinate you, that doesn't lure you to spend late nights in the library, studio, or lab.

The next most useful advice I can offer is also simple. Think about your future today. As an Arts and Letters student, you are already developing the analytical, creative, and communication skills sought by employers in the academy, the arts, business, government, industry, law, medicine, and nonprofits. The ability to communicate clearly, think critically, and solve complex problems, the capacity to draw on a breadth of knowledge while also focusing on the details, the savvy to appreciate difference, complexity, and even ambiguity, and the desire to continue learning are intellectual habits integral to the life of the mind and essential to any successful career.

I am confident that when you compete for employment or post-graduate positions, you will demonstrate that you are as capable as any other student in the country. **But you must plan ahead.** If students in Arts and Letters make one mistake about career development, it is not giving enough attention while still in school to the many opportunities they have to continue their studies or gain employment after college.

Talk to your professors and advisors. Ask them not only about courses but also about internships and post-graduate opportunities. Your professors have office hours. Visit them regularly.

Visit the Career Center in Flanner Hall as soon as possible. Call (574) 631-5200 for an appointment. Researching career choices takes much longer than most students think—and interviews, much like demanding classes, require careful preparation.

Research graduate, law, business, and medical schools. Discuss your ideas and questions with professors, advisors, and the staff of the Career Center.

Think about service options after graduation. The staff at the Center for Social Concerns is ready to help you explore the possibilities. Call (574) 631-5293 or visit socialconcerns.nd.edu.

Investigate summer internships. These internships, as well as career-related summer jobs, are increasingly advantageous in qualifying for better post-graduate positions. They also represent an ideal bridge between the intrinsic value of a liberal arts education and the importance of finding a meaningful vocation. To support summer work experiences, the College recently created the Rogers Summer Internship Program to provide stipends that can cover expenses incurred during the summer. For information, go to <http://careercenter.nd.edu/for-undergrads/internships/funding-and-housing/global-internship-initiative/rogers-summer-internship-program>.

Learn and practice proper interviewing techniques. To distinguish yourself among similarly qualified applicants, take advantage of the center's interview resources at <http://careercenter.nd.edu>. You can even have yourself taped doing a practice interview. Over the past three summers, Arts and Letters students received more than 500 internships, of which many were paid internships and more than 40 were international.

Conduct independent research. Use the resources of the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), administered by the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts (ISLA) in 101 O'Shaughnessy Hall. Students at any level—not only seniors—may apply for funding once they develop a project for independent research under the guidance of a faculty member. Go to <http://isla.nd.edu/for-undergraduate-students> for more information.

Notre Dame's many institutes and centers—notably the Kellogg Institute for International Studies, the Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies, the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, and the Nanovic Institute for European Studies—also support undergraduate research, often with programs that link research to study abroad during the summer or school year. A first step to investigate additional opportunities for individual research programs is to visit the College of Arts and Letters resources page (<http://al.nd.edu/research/>) and the home pages of the various institutes and centers.

Advance your foreign language study. One characteristic of many successful students—and one mark of a cosmopolitan citizen—is the ability to read and speak a foreign language. To take your language and cultural competency to the next level, apply for a Summer Language Abroad (SLA) Grant administered by the Center for the Study of Languages and Cultures. The center provides up to \$5,500 for foreign language study abroad or, when appropriate, intensive language study in a program within the United States. Go to <http://cslc.nd.edu/grants> for more details.

Cap your undergraduate studies with a senior thesis or culminating project. You may not now know what senior thesis topics make sense, but do realize that planning a senior thesis, especially if you are abroad during one or both semesters junior year, takes foresight. (See <http://al.nd.edu/research/the-senior-thesis>.) As you begin study in your major, you might consider working with a faculty advisor and

applying for funding from UROP. If appropriate, explore ways to publish your work. And certainly consider participating in the Undergraduate Scholars Conference, a year-end research conference where students from across the University—approximately 90 from the College—present their work.

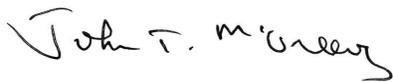
Consider applying for national and international scholarships, such as the Fulbright, Marshall, Rhodes, or Truman scholarships. The best time to ask the Office of Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Fellowships about these programs is during your sophomore or junior years. The office is located in 233 Geddes Hall as part of the Center for Undergraduate Scholarly Engagement (CUSE). Call (574) 631-0372 or go to <http://nd.edu/~fellows> for more information. One of the main purposes of CUSE (<http://cuse.nd.edu/>) is to guide students through the application process for such national fellowships, increasing students' competitiveness and success.

Finally, attend "What's Next? Week" this October 4, 6, and 7, 2010. This series of events—all of which take place in LaFortune Ballroom starting at 6:30 p.m.—will feature information on getting into graduate and professional schools; on the kinds of contributions Arts and Letters graduates make in the world; on finding internships, fellowships, research opportunities, and funding; and on landing a job or internship. You can get more information in the Career Center or the Office for Undergraduate Studies on the first floor of O'Shaughnessy.

I encourage you to take advantage of all these ideas—and everything offered by this College and this University. I promise to work with the University, the Career Center, the Arts and Letters Advisory Council, and the Alumni Association to help provide you with excellent opportunities for internships, jobs, and scholarships, but I cannot emphasize enough that you must prepare for, and work toward, these goals.

Pursue your highest aspirations. You can, and you will, achieve much if you plan purposefully and proceed confidently.

Sincerely,



John T. McGreevy
I.A. O'Shaughnessy Dean

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A copy of this letter is available online at <http://al.nd.edu/majors>.