

# PEER TO PEER

## THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES ACADEMIC STUDENT NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2010



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

HOW TO TALK TO A FACULTY ADVISOR

PEER ADVISOR WORKSHOP

SPOTLIGHT: OFFICE OF MERIT AWARDS

ALTERNATIVE BREAKS

### STUDENT FAQ OF THE MONTH:

- **What/who is my faculty advisor?**
- **Academic advising is two tiered in CAS. All freshmen and sophomores meet with their assigned academic advisor. However once students declare a major they are assigned a faculty advisor within their new department. For some departments, such as literature, one professor acts as the faculty advisor for all students. So if you do not know who your faculty advisor is, be sure to check with your major department. In CAS, once students select their major, they should see their faculty advisor for all major related issues and registration clearance each semester.**

## HOW TO TALK TO A FACULTY ADVISOR

Approaching faculty can be a little intimidating, we know, so we have some tips to make it easier. All faculty want you to be successful in your academics, so you are always welcome to stop by during office hours or make an appointment. Faculty members set aside this time for your questions about courses or degrees in their field.

What is a faculty advisor? When a student in the College of Arts and Sciences declares a major, he/she is assigned a faculty advisor in that department. In conjunction with your regular

academic advisor, the faculty advisor can answer specific questions and give guidance about his/her field of study. You can think of them as the gatekeepers of your discipline.

Talking to a faculty advisor can also be beneficial if you are still undecided and considering many different options. You can make an appointment with a faculty advisor in each of the departments of interest to ask questions about the major and what career opportunities are in their field.

Now that you have decided to make an appointment, here are some questions to get you started:

- How did you decide on your discipline?
- Why should I study this discipline?
- What can I do post-graduation with a degree in this discipline?
- What kinds of internships or research opportunities are available in this field?

## PEER ADVISOR WORKSHOP: IT'S A MAJOR EVENT!



Did you ever wish you had more resources to help make that important decision of choosing a major? Well, we have got the tools you need to make that decision!

Announcing the first ever, **Peer Advisor Workshop: It's a MAJOR event!** We know choosing a major can be challenging, so this workshop will lay out all our tips and tricks for making the final decision (or at least get you one step closer!).

Mark your calendars! On **March 25th** from **6:30-8pm**, in the **Perch**, located on the top floor of Centennial Hall, we will be giving an interactive work-

shop featuring the tools of our trade. We will show you how to use your DARS, take you on a general catalog scavenger hunt, and much more. All to help you pick the perfect major!

During the workshop the folks at the Perch will be providing **FREE beverages**. **FREE food** will also be provided along with the **chance to win prizes!** But space is limited to only 30 students, so register early! This workshop is open to all on campus residents.

If you want to attend, **RSVP by 5pm on March 22** by contacting us at:

[CASPeerAdvisors@american.edu](mailto:CASPeerAdvisors@american.edu). In the email, please include your name, AU ID number, and an email address where you can be reached for confirmation and updates.

Come join the fun and gain some new perspective on majors just in time for Summer and Fall 2010 registration.

Watch your AU email for more information!



## RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT: OFFICE OF MERIT AWARDS

The Office of Merit Awards is the place to go if you have questions about anything and everything related to merit-based scholarships. Their goal is to assist students in competing for top scholarships and fellowships.

Scholarships and fellowships take many forms and are intended to help students take their education to the next level; such as to study abroad or to complete post-baccalaureate studies.

While most awards are for post-graduation, students are encouraged to start the applications early to ensure they make the best impression and present a complete package.

According to the Office of Merit Awards website: "Advisors in the Office of Merit Awards help students to identify appropriate opportunities and partner with faculty to assist with the application process. Merit Awards staff also advertise scholarship op-

portunities campus-wide and organize special events and workshops."

For more information about the Office of Merit Awards, visit their website at: [www.american.edu/careercenter/meritawards](http://www.american.edu/careercenter/meritawards). To make an appointment with a trained Merit Awards advisor call: (202) 885-1854.

The Office of Merit Awards is located in **McKinley**, room **209**. Stop by or make an appointment to see how they can help you!

*Looking for Scholarships?*

*Check out the Office of Merit Awards directory of over 500 scholarships!*

*Just follow the link from the merit awards homepage.*



## ALTERNATIVE BREAKS: WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR SPRING BREAK?

The Alternative Break program is a student based extra-curricular learning program. Student leaders work with the Community Service Center to plan and organize service-centered trips during school breaks.

These trips are wonderful opportunities for all students to help out local and global communities and gain valuable learning experiences.

The goal of the Alternative Break

program is to foster students' introspection about their roles in a larger community.

Alternative Breaks are fantastic ways to spend that extra time during spring, summer, or winter break, learning and changing your community for the better.

Trip costs vary by time and location, but all students are welcome to apply for a travel grant through the Community Service Center.

The upcoming trips are:

- India: Tibetan Diaspora Seeking Peace
- Israel and the West Bank: Two State Solution
- Nepal: Dali Rights and Gender Stratification
- Mexico: Community Based Learning Program

For more information, visit the Community Service Center located in MGC 273.

**"From summer, to spring, to winter, Alternative Breaks can create positive change in local communities!"**  
-Alternative Break office.

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- 3/5: Last day to drop a course, no refund provided.
- 3/7-3/14: Spring break no classes, University offices open Monday - Friday.
- 3/20: **Robyn Rafferty Mathias Student Research Conference** in Katzen Arts Center. Registration begins at 8:30 am.
- 3/25: **Peer advisor workshop: It's a MAJOR event!** 6:30-8 pm in the Perch (located in south side dorms). RSVP now!
- 3/27: English Competency Exam. See Literature department for more information.
- 3/29: Fall 2010 & summer registration begins. Remember to meet with your advisor before your registration date for clearance.

