

Academic Opportunities and Support Services Directory

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ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Berks Community Television

A number of television and video production courses are offered each year in partnership with Berks Community Television (BCTV). The courses include COM 251 Broadcasting and Electronic Media; COM 352 Video Production; and COM 452 Television Production. To take advantage of this partnership, some class meetings may be held at the BCTV facility at 645 Penn Street in Reading. Please contact Dr. Jodi Radosh in the English and Communication Department for more information.

Consortium Classes

Alvernia University is a member of the Higher Education Council of Berks County. The other members of this council are Albright University, Kutztown University, Penn State Berks, and Reading Area Community College. Full-time undergraduate students have the opportunity to cross register for one course each regular semester at any one of the other consortium colleges and they are billed through Alvernia. Classes taken through the consortium appear on transcripts as graded courses and are calculated into the GPA. The student must go to the Registrar's Office at Alvernia University to start the process. Alvernia billing policies apply.

Graduate Opportunities at Alvernia University

Alvernia University offers seven master's degrees: Master in Business Administration, Master of Education, Master of Arts in two programs: Liberal Studies and Community Counseling, Master of Science in Nursing, and Master of Science in Occupational Therapy. For the M.B.A., M.A., M.Ed., and M.S.N. students have the opportunity to take six graduate credits during their senior year if these graduate credits are beyond and in addition to all their undergraduate degree requirements. Alvernia University also offers a Ph.D. program in Leadership. For more information on the M.B.A., M.A., M.Ed., M.S.N., and Ph.D. graduate programs, call the Graduate Center at 610-796-8228. For more information on the M.S.O.T. program see the Occupational Therapy section of this catalog.

Graduate Partnerships with Other Institutions

Alvernia University has an affiliation agreement with Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Erie, Pennsylvania. Alvernia University offers a unique opportunity for students to enter into the Early Acceptance Programs for the LECOM School of Dental Medicine, LECOM Medical College, and LECOM School of Pharmacy. Specific guidelines and requirements are available from the Admissions Office, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, and the Chairperson of Math and Sciences.

Alvernia University also provides access to Marywood University's Master of Social Work on the campus and students have the opportunity to complete this degree largely on Alvernia's campus. See the Director for the Marywood University program for further details.

Honors Program

The purpose of the Honors Program at Alvernia University is to assist students of outstanding intellectual promise and high motivation who are seeking increased challenge at the undergraduate level and/or who are interested in future graduate or professional study. The program is designed to recognize and encourage academic excellence, to stimulate students to work at their own pace, and to facilitate the exchange of ideas and information among students and faculty with varied interests in different disciplines.

The Honors Program offers students the opportunity to challenge themselves through innovative and imaginative curricula. Students are encouraged to excel academically, to prepare for graduate and professional school, and to participate in leadership and service opportunities. The program provides co-curricular activities, service opportunities, and intellectual and social support, adding significant dimension to the student's academic program.

Honor Students are:

- Students with SAT scores of 1300 or higher, a high school grade point average (GPA) of 3.5, or enter the program upon entrance to the University.
- Students who achieve a GPA of 3.3 or higher in their coursework at Alvernia, or who transfer in having attained a 3.3 GPA at another institution, may petition the Honors Director for entrance to the program or may be invited to join following a faculty recommendation to the Director. For entrance, the student is required to meet with the Director, submit proof of his or her current GPA, and submit a statement of interest. Additional materials, such as transcripts or letters of recommendation, may be required.

Honors students must complete a number of requirements in order to graduate from the Honors Program and receive the distinction on the student's transcript. See Honors Distinction in the Academic Information section of this catalog. Accepted Honors students may have up to 3 credits of overload charges waived in the semester in which they are enrolled in a designated Honors course.

Independent Study

Independent study is available for students above freshman standing (30+ credits) with the approval of the chairperson of the department and the academic Dean in which the course is offered. The material in independent study courses may not duplicate any course regularly offered in the curriculum

of the university. Students work as independently as possible under the direction of a faculty member and usually present their work at a departmental seminar.

- 375 Independent Study: Prerequisite: at least sophomore standing (30+ credits).
- 475 Independent Study: Prerequisite: senior standing (90+ credits)

Institute of the Arts

Alvernia University has partnered with the Institute of the Arts located in Wyomissing to allow full-time undergraduate students the opportunity to take a number of classes at the institute for credit. Students may take one elective credit each semester on a pass/fail basis. The courses being offered are published in advance of each semester. These courses may include painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, dance, piano, music, and ceramics. Students are expected to attend each class meeting at the institute even if the institute's calendar does not match Alvernia's. These courses are considered free electives and may not be used to fulfill any fine arts area, including the foundation courses, Area II, or minor requirements. Students begin the registration process at the Registrar's Office. Registration over 17 credits requires an overload fee.

Internships/Practicums/Cooperatives

Practicum field experience is available to students reaching sophomore standing (30+ credits). Students who want to participate in additional practice beyond those pre-determined by a program must obtain permission from the appropriate chairperson. The program of activities in a practicum is controlled by the university in cooperation with the agency involved. The activities include hours of participation, supervision and required assignments. Grades, withdrawals and incomplete work in practice are governed by the regulations in effect at Alvernia for regular classroom courses. Contact Career Services and the Student Success Office for more details.

Instructional Delivery Methods and Definitions

Traditional or Web-Enhanced: A course that is essentially classroom-based, using face-to-face meetings. Little or no learning takes place over the Internet. The content is delivered orally or in writing. Web-based technology (such as accessing syllabi online, posting to a "Learning Management System" (LMS) (e.g., *Blackboard*, *Moodle*, etc.), blogs, reading posted articles, etc.) would only be used to facilitate and enhance classroom instruction. Less than 30% of course content is delivered in an online format.

Blended: A course using some online technology for delivery of instruction over the Internet. The content is delivered using a portion of classroom-based, face-to-face meetings, and a portion of online delivered instruction. The online instruction is measurable delivery of course material over the Internet, in combination with course material presented in the classroom. A "blended"

course uses the institution's online Learning Management System (LMS) (e.g., *Blackboard*, *Moodle*, etc.) to access class sessions, material and discussion, between 30 and 75% of the class instruction time.

Online: A course where most or all of the content is delivered online, and where learning takes place almost entirely online. The content is delivered using the institution's Learning Management System (LMS) (e.g., *Blackboard*, *Moodle*, etc.) to access class sessions, content, material, and discussion. Little or no classroom instruction takes place, with greater than 75% of the content delivery occurring over the Internet.

Web-enhanced, blended, and online delivery are conducted through both synchronous and asynchronous tools. Synchronous classroom instruction and discussion are conducted "live" (real-time) through some type of audio and/or video conferencing system. This delivery takes place by broadcasting classroom instruction in real-time to a remote location. Students may be in class at one Alvernia campus location while the instructor is teaching, lecturing, etc., from another Alvernia campus location. Students participating from the remote sites are engaged in "real-time" interaction with the instructor and the other students attending the class. Students who are unable to attend or wish to review a recorded synchronous classroom session may later retrieve the session (i.e., asynchronously) if the audio and/or video sessions are archived.

Asynchronous instruction involves course material that is available for access according to some timeframe established for the course. Asynchronous instruction can be connected to a schedule, or accessed on demand in a student-determined, self-paced format. Instruction is typically delivered through the institution's Learning Management System (e.g., *Blackboard*, *Moodle*, etc.). Additional online resources, tools and activities may also be integrated to either enhance a classroom-based course, or provide additional options for online delivery.

To assist the instructor and the students, a librarian and embedded technologist are available with each blended and online course to help answer questions pertaining to online resources and technical issues.

Minimum Technology Requirements:

Windows/PC

Windows XP or Seven

2 Gb RAM

Microsoft IE 5.0 or higher (JAVA enabled)

High Speed Internet (Dialup not preferred)

Sound Card with headset microphone

Macintosh

Mac OSX 10.2 or higher

2 Gb RAM

Apple Safari 1.2 or higher (JAVA enabled)

High Speed Internet (Dialup not preferred)

Sound Card with Headset microphone

Online Consortium Policy

Alvernia University is a charter member of the Online Consortium of Independent Colleges and Universities (OCICU), which offers a wide variety of online courses from accredited educational institutions. A limited amount of Alvernia coursework may be completed through the online consortium. Classes taken through the consortium must have approval of the department chair or program director of the content area most closely allied to the course. The OCICU course offerings are published in advance of each semester. Students interested in OCICU offerings must speak with an academic advisor for additional information and complete an OCICU Course Approval Form.

Special Topics Courses

In addition to the courses in this catalog, the class schedules may also include “Special Topics” courses. These special interest courses may be available in any discipline and at any level. Special topics courses are identified by the number “90,” such as BUS 390, COM 290, or HIS 190. Number of credits may vary. Descriptions of Special Topic courses are available online in Self Service “Find Course Sections.”

Study Abroad

Alvernia University encourages students to broaden their academic experience by taking advantage of referral for study through several study abroad programs. Programs range from summer internships to full semester sessions. To find out more about study abroad opportunities, contact the Study Abroad Coordinator at 610-790-1982.

The Washington Center

Alvernia students have an opportunity to earn college credit by spending a semester in Washington, D.C., where they serve as interns in a congressional office, government agency, major corporation, newspaper or news network, agencies devoted to legal affairs, international relations, or business and economics. They also may intern with one of several non-profit groups dealing with the environment, women’s issues, the arts, education, science, or labor relations among others. Participants are customarily juniors or seniors who have achieved grade point averages of 2.5 or better and who have the endorsement of the appropriate academic area. In addition to their internship, students select one seminar dealing with the arts and humanities, communication, public policy, the

legal system, business, and government. Interested students should see the Dean of Arts & Sciences.

Academic Support Services

Academic Advising

At Alvernia University, faculty members serve as student advisors. Support is also available for international students, students looking for a minor or considering a change of major, and Alvernia's nontraditional/adult learners.

ADA Accommodations

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans With Disabilities Act and Amendments (ADAAA), the university offers accommodations to students with documented learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Disability Services Coordinator, preferably prior to the beginning of each semester, to initiate the accommodation process and to notify instructors as soon as possible so accommodations can be determined early in the semester. Academic accommodations are not retroactive. Students needing assistance should contact the Disability Services Coordinator, in BH 1102 or by phone (610-568-1499).

Information Technology

The **Information Technology Department** at Alvernia University manages and supports university systems including email and network accounts, Blackboard and other learning management systems, myAlvernia portal, multi-media and classroom technology, and other campus systems.

Support is available via the Alvernia University 24-hour Service Desk which can be reached at **610-927-2008** (855-402-3828 toll-free) or helpdesk@alvernia.edu.

Information Technology consists of the following support areas:

Administrative Computing

Francis Hall Room 243

Support for myAlvernia, Self-Service, and campus administrative system.

Educational Technology

Franco Library Room 204

Support for Blackboard and other learning systems, classroom technology, and multi-media equipment.

Information Technology – Networking and Desktop Support

Franco Library 2nd Floor/Upland Center First Floor

Support for university-owned computers and network infrastructure

Support for email and network logins.

Note that labs for student use are available in the Upland Center, Bernardine Hall, and the Library. Wireless access to the Internet is available in the Commons, Library, Bernardine Hall lobby, the Student Center, the Physical Education Center, the Upland Center, and residence halls.

International Student Program

Each year Alvernia University hosts individuals from various countries either as a one-year exchange student or as a student seeking a degree. The University Life Division is responsible for coordinating academic support and campus life orientation for international students once they arrive on campus. The University Life Division also provides support for international students in their acclimation to American culture through individual meetings, group gatherings, programs and trips. Alvernia University fully complies with the USA Patriot Act and the record keeping and reporting requirements of the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). You may obtain further information on these acts and Alvernia's policy from the office of the Vice President of University Life (610-796-8211).

Library

The Dr. Frank A. Franco Library Learning Center provides resources and services to support students both on and off campus. The virtual library is open 24/7 at <http://www.alvernia.edu/library>. In addition to a large print collection, the library offers access to over 90,000 academic journals and over 22,000 eBooks. Virtual access off campus is available to all enrolled students.

Students may check out books and AV materials with their ID cards and will find class reserve material for reading or viewing at the Circulation Desk. Copy machines and a public FAX are also available in the building. For materials not available in print or electronically, students may request an Interlibrary Loan. Forms can be found on the website as well as in the library.

In the Stairway Mini-Café students can find comfortable seating for enjoying a hot drink, get a snack from the vending machine, read the newspaper or a magazine, or study. The Browsing Room with its collection of popular fiction and non-fiction as well as comfortable furniture and interesting displays is also a welcoming place. Students may check out a movie from a growing collection containing both classic and current films.

Wireless throughout, the Franco Library Learning Center is a welcoming environment for quiet study or group collaboration. Laptops are available for checkout, and students may use them anywhere in the building. Group study rooms may be reserved for two-hour time periods. Rooms are equipped with a variety of technology options, such as large screen dual-boot iMAC computers capable of running the Windows or MAC operating system, a media:scape collaborative technology unit with dual monitors, and video viewing equipment.

The Library Learning Commons on the first floor of the building brings together students and librarians in a rich learning environment. This flexible study area offers café-style booths, comfortable seats on casters for mobility, an ADA-accessible workstation, mobile white boards, and a charging station for mobile devices. In the Bonaventure Reading Room, students will find a variety of resources, chairs, and tables for individual study or for group work. Poetry readings and other special events are often held in the Bonaventure Room.

The library staff includes professional librarians who are dedicated to encouraging learning and student success. Students may contact librarians in person, by phone, instant message, or by email. Librarians also teach information literacy classes and workshops and are available to students and faculty to assist with research, specific assignments, or major projects.

Library Hours:

Monday through Thursday: 7:30 a.m. to Midnight

Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Sunday: Noon to Midnight

Library Website: <http://www.alvernia.edu/library>

Registrar

The Registrar, located in Francis Hall, plans the master course schedule, handles course registration and scheduling of all day students, maintains academic records, issues transcripts, and confirms eligibility to receive degrees. The following services are available in the Registrar's Office: questions regarding academic records, letters of enrollment verification, schedule changes (add/drop), permission forms for directed or independent study, and forms for Academic Overload, Repeat/Delete, Change of Address, Change of Major, Graduation Application, Transcript Request and Community Service.

The Educational Planning Center

The Educational Planning Center located in Bernardine Hall and supervised by the Associate Dean of Students, offers students a variety of academic services designed to help them achieve and maintain academic success while at Alvernia University. The center houses the Learning Center, the Freshman Foundations

Program, Study Abroad, and Career Development, and provides advising support and assistance to those students who are in the process of selecting a major, and coordinates the First-Year Seminar and freshman experience programming. The center also provides accommodations for students who have special needs, such as a learning disability or a physical disability.

First Year Experience

First Year Experience coordinates programming and support for first year students, including the First-Year Seminar (a required course that emphasizes the role and value of the liberal arts core, led by a faculty director), the development of successful strategies and habits for academic success and educational planning, and freshman year advising. First Year Experience also coordinates advising for students who are in the process of selecting a major. Through individual advising, access to information and resources, workshops, and a credit-bearing course, students learn about themselves and the full range of academic options available to them.

The Learning Center

The Learning Center offers a range of services that help students advance academically. The center provides tutoring in individual courses on a one-to-one basis. Services are available to all students, and arrangements can be made by calling 610-568-1494 or by registering for appointments via the Alvernia website. The Learning Center offers tutoring assistance in subjects across the curriculum including, but not limited to: math, anatomy and physiology, science, business, and foreign languages. Students may also receive assistance with all phases of the writing process from deciding on a topic through revision of rough drafts to MLA/APA documentation styles. Several workshops and academic coaching sessions are also offered to help students become and stay academically successful. Trained Peer Tutors and Graduate Assistants are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays. Summer hours — Monday through Friday: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A list of graduate tutors is available upon request.

Freshman Foundations Program

Freshman Foundations is a one year support program for Alvernia freshmen who, based on their admission profile, demonstrate that they have the potential to succeed in college but also that they need added support. Support comes primarily through regular academic advising and focused attention to study skills. Some students, depending on the results of placement exams, may be required to take developmental courses in reading, writing, and/or math. Students enjoy full membership in the Alvernia community.

Study Abroad Coordinator

Alvernia Students may study abroad in a variety of programs in England, Ireland, Italy, South Africa, and Spain. Program options are available for most majors. Internships abroad are also available for many majors in Dublin and London. Financial aid can be applied to the study abroad semester. Students interested in studying abroad should inquire with the Study Abroad Coordinator to learn specifics regarding eligibility and program details. Students are advised to inquire at least six months to one year in advance of their planned semester abroad.

Application deadlines depend upon the program, and range from March 1 through April 20 for fall programs, or July 15 through October 1 for spring programs. Summer study abroad is also available. Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 and a good disciplinary record to be eligible for study abroad. Website: www.alvernia.edu/studyabroad

Career Development

Located in Bernardine Hall, The Office of Career Development is designed to assist students in all phases of career decision-making and career planning. Resources and staff are available to aid in major and career exploration, career assessment, career counseling, and job, internship and graduate school searches. Additional services in interview preparation, resume critique, and networking are available. The center houses a career resource library and online services. Career Development is also home to the Genesis Program, which provides a network of services and support to first-year students who are deciding on a major. The Career Development Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., and evenings by appointment. Please contact Career Development at 610-790-2878 or career.services@alvernia.edu for more information or to schedule an appointment.