



# Department of General Business

## GENERALLY SPEAKING

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### **GBU Student Interns at Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce**

Internships are a great way to transition from the classroom environment to the world of work. Lorene “Sunshine” Dearman, from Nacogdoches, had the opportunity to intern with the Nacogdoches County Chamber of Commerce in fall 2007. Sunshine is currently a senior General Business major with an emphasis in corporate communication and a minor in creative writing. She obtained her internship with the help of Dr. Debbie DuFrene, department chair, and was excited at the possibility after talking with fellow classmates who had interned with the Chamber.

Sunshine says she enjoyed learning more about the Chamber’s activities and its efforts to bring new businesses to town and encourage local businesses to interact with each other. She has a greater appreciation for how this combined effort creates a “business-to-business” connection between new and existing Chamber members.



*Sunshine Dearman,  
GBU Senior,  
interned with the  
Nacogdoches  
County Chamber of  
Commerce.*

A typical day on the job involved answering questions from the community, greeting visitors with information, and preparing mail-outs for Chamber events. Sunshine also had the opportunity to put her writing skills to work in preparing several articles for the local newspaper. The Chamber also benefited from the skills Sunshine brought to the job. Her supervisor at the Chamber, Kelly Daniel, said of Sunshine, “She is confident, has a positive attitude, and is a very good communicator!”  
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### **A European Experience for GBU Students**

SFA business students had the opportunity to go on a memorable trip to Europe in summer 2007. Students enrolled in Dr. Keaton Grubbs’ Business Law: Europe and the World Court course were able to enjoy a real European experience as part of their class.

The trip included visits to points of interest in Switzerland, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, including the World Trade Organization, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the International Chamber of Commerce, and the United States Embassy in Paris. They also visited the European Parliament, the European Commission, the International Court of Justice, and the Permanent Court of Arbitration.  
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*GBU students and faculty at the European Union  
Parliament in Brussels, Belgium.*

## General Business Prepares Students for Workplace Ethics

Ethics, or more specifically the lack of ethics, is a popular topic in the business world today. Professors in the Department of General Business at SFA have been working diligently to make sure our students are not the ones who will be highlighted in the news for ethics scandals in the future. According to Dr. Beth Brice, instructor of GBU 325—Business, Ethics & Society, “The question is not if the students will be faced with an ethical dilemma, the question is when.”

Recently, the course title of GBU 325 was changed to reflect the heightened coverage of ethics, and the time committed to discussion of ethics was increased. Although there will be more changes to come, this change is a step in the right direction in preparing students for ethical behavior in the workplace. Dr. Brice, Marcus Cox, and Henry Dunn, all General Business faculty members, have heightened the coverage given to ethics in the GBU 325 classes. They believe that during the student’s college experience is a prime time to emphasize how important ethics will be in their careers. Graduates will most certainly be faced with an ethical dilemma themselves or will know of others involved in dilemmas at their workplaces. Students need to learn how to deal with questionable situations and be prepared for the consequences of their decisions.

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## Did you know?

- 90% of companies from 30 countries studied in a recent survey reported that their corporate value statement includes ethics principles.
- 81% of surveyed executives believe management can stimulate ethical behavior.
- 70% of US employers have implemented ethics training, an increase of 14% from 2003.

In her classes, Dr. Brice uses Lockheed Martin’s Ethics Quick Quiz, which gives a person a few questions to think about when in an ethical predicament. These questions include, “How will it look in the newspaper?” and “How would I feel if my family, friends, and neighbors knew what I was doing?” Answering these questions will help the individual decide if the action being considered is advised. General Business faculty help students to see the significance and impact of chosen actions on themselves and others and how to be prepared when ethical dilemmas present themselves. In addition to GBU 325, ethics is covered in various other courses in the department.



*Dr. Beth Brice, coordinator of GBU 325, where ethics is emphasized.*

### *GBU Student Interns...continued from page 1*

Sunshine expressed appreciation to the Chamber for helping her learn how a successful business runs and how to effectively represent one’s self to the community. She learned first hand that communication is indeed a key component to success. She says her business communication classes, along with her other business courses, helped her tremendously in accomplishing the assigned tasks. Reflecting on her academic experiences, Sunshine expressed thanks to her General Business professors for each adding a different perspective that has provided her with great preparation for the work world that awaits her in a few short months.

## Alumni Back in Nac

The Department of General Business is proud of the accomplishments of our featured alumni, Jeff and Jenny (Watts) Davis. Jeff says he came to SFA, then traveled to Birmingham, Alabama, for a short time, just to end up right back here on campus! He simply could not resist this East Texas town in the pines.

Jeff Davis came to SFA from Clear Lake, Texas, as a freshman hoping to be a “walk-on” for the SFA basketball team. He began his pursuit of a General Business degree, which he obtained in 2002. Perhaps his greatest accomplishment at SFA was meeting his future wife, Jennifer Watts, from Keller, Texas, while she was also pursuing her General Business degree which she completed in 2003. Following their marriage, they moved together to Birmingham, Alabama, where Jeff attended the University of Alabama at Birmingham and received his MBA in 2005.

Providentially, Jeff and Jenny attended SFA’s 2005 Homecoming festivities where Jeff spoke with Jim Jeter, then associate vice president for alumni affairs, who mentioned that there was an opening in the Alumni Association office. Jeff was soon offered the position and accepted the title of director of development. Jeff has recently been promoted to interim director of alumni affairs. His position involves dealing with the fundraising and scholarship aspects of the Alumni Association.

Jenny also is employed on campus, serving as the assistant director for Career Services where she helps students to prepare for their future careers. She organizes career days and job fairs for both students and alumni to attend.



When asked how his General Business degree has helped him in his career, Jeff said it has given him tremendous confidence in many areas of business, along with a broader perspective as compared to focusing on one specific area of business. He particularly believes that his business communication course with Dr. Debbie DuFrene helped him, along with Dr. Tim Clipson’s executive communication class. Jenny had a similar thought when asked how her General Business degree has helped her by saying it “gave me a wide variety of skills that help me to be versatile in my career. Whether it is communicating with students or employers, marketing events, or using management skills as a supervisor, I feel that I am prepared to take on each task with confidence.”

Jeff loves being back here at SFA so that he can interact with the students and alums. He said that the “passion of SFA comes out when working with the students,” and “believing in what you do” really makes his job special. We applaud your success, Jeff and Jenny, and are grateful to have you back here at SFA.



*Jeff Davis, SFA General Business Alum '02, currently serving as Interim Director of Alumni Affairs*

*Jennifer Watts Davis, SFA General Business Alum '03, Assistant Director for Career Services*



*European Experience... continued from page 1*

According to Dr. Grubbs, associate professor in the Department of General Business, the students do their studying in the classroom, and then are able to tour the actual institutions which “makes it come to life” for them. Dr. Grubbs says he enjoys getting to know the students on a personal, individual basis and is excited to hear travel course students say, “I could live here!” He said that it really helps to broaden students’ perspectives to see all of the opportunities available to them.



*SFA GBU Students at Lake Geneva in Switzerland*

The students also were able to enjoy some tourist stops including the Olympic museum, Zermatt Mountain, Chillon Castle, the Eiffel Tower, a Swiss winery, and a diamond factory in Amsterdam. Students in attendance were Ashley Adkins, Joe Barone, Brittany Glazner, Samantha Hall, Hall Henderson IV, Ashley Lawson, Mark Shackelford, Kim Smith, Audrey Thomas, and Camry Wilkinson. SFA faculty included: Marcus Cox, Dr. Mitch Crocker and Sheila Crocker, Dr. Florence Elliott-Howard, Dr. Keaton Grubbs, Dean Violet Rogers, and Dr. Aileen Smith.

## **Business Communication Faculty Travels to Washington**

Business communication faculty in the department recently attended the Association for Business Communication Annual Convention in Washington D.C. The three-day international meeting held in October explored how business creates responsible relationships with enterprises, government, and communities. Speakers from six continents and nineteen countries discussed their research on a variety of topics including best practices in business communication, communicating through crisis and change management, corporate social responsibility and ethics, and cross cultural communication. Other sessions focused on teaching strategies, curriculum development, and assessment of learning outcomes in business communication.

### **How Can You Get Involved?**

- Would you drop us a line to let us know where you are working and what you are doing professionally? Current students enjoy knowing the types of jobs they might be holding after graduation. Email us at: [ddufrene@sfasu.edu](mailto:ddufrene@sfasu.edu)
- Are you planning a trip to SFA or the Nacogdoches area? If so, please consider serving as a guest speaker in one or more classes to share your knowledge and experiences with current students.
- Do you know of a job or internship opportunity in your company or organization that an SFA Lumberjack might fill? Please notify the department of any job openings, and we will be sure to spread the word for you by informing soon-to-be graduates of your available position. Let’s keep it in the family! Axe ‘em Jacks!
- Would you like to have a part in the success of the Department of General Business? Gifts of any size help promote student and faculty activities. Visit the following link and specify your gift for the Department of General Business: [www.sfasu.edu/giving](http://www.sfasu.edu/giving)

Department faculty who attended and presented conference sessions were Judi Biss, Dr. Marsha Bayless, Dr. Debbie DuFrene, Dr. Susan Jennings, Dr. Betty Johnson, and Dr. Ann Wilson. A highlight of their trip was a personal tour of the U.S. Capitol, including the House of Representatives Chamber, guided by legislative staff members from U.S. Representative Louie Gohmert’s office.

*Dr. DuFrene, Dr. Jennings, Judi Biss, and Dr. Bayless at the statue of Stephen F. Austin in the U.S. Capitol*

