Building a career that makes a difference

UC Davis Extension addresses industry need for professional fundraisers with online Fundraising and Development training program

Davis, Calif. – With charitable giving in the U.S. at an all-time high and projected to increase by another 4.9 percent in 2016, nonprofits struggle to hire qualified fundraising professionals to successfully connect with donors. To address this gap in the job market, UC Davis Extension has launched a new online program in Fundraising and Development. Created and taught by senior members of the award-winning UC Davis development staff, the program provides students with a hands-on, comprehensive overview of the fundraising field and the skills to succeed as a development officer.

“This program is unique because it’s taught by practitioners – people who are working in the industry each and every day,” said Shaun B. Keister, vice chancellor for Development and Alumni Relations at UC Davis and senior advisor for the Fundraising and Development program. “Because of that, people who go through this program are going to have a very modern lens on what is happening in the development profession, which I think will give them a great start as they transition into development careers.”

Fundraising is an increasingly attractive alternative for college graduates and working professionals, particularly salespeople, who are searching for a career path that aligns with their values. The average professional fundraiser in the U.S. earned $75,913 in 2014, with 63 percent reporting an increase in salary over the previous year. And, as Keister points out, “The great thing about working in this field is that you get to go to work every day knowing you’re making a difference and knowing you’re having an impact.”

UC Davis Extension’s new program is designed to provide convenient, high-quality education to students who desire a career in fundraising and for professionals already working in the field who want to advance their careers.

The program consists of four courses that can be completed in less than nine months. Students can opt to complete the program’s four courses and receive the Professional Concentration designation, or they can take only the individual courses that meet their needs.

Classes feature a mix of online lecture, peer interaction, virtual discussion, and real-world learning activities that advance job skills and train students to become development officers. At the end of the
program, students will have a clear understanding of modern fundraising and development concepts and the expertise to put them into practice, including:

- An understanding of fundraising terminology and the development lifecycle
- How to identify and develop prospects and cultivate major donors
- Training for developing annual giving campaigns
- Principal and major gift and planned giving strategies
- Career opportunities for development officers

Hands-on assignments cover an array of real-world deliverables, such as creating a case for support, writing major gifts solicitation and foundation proposal letters, developing a planned-giving “ask,” and a prospect identification exercise. These assignments combine to give students a portfolio to share with employers.

UC Davis Extension is holding free information sessions to give potential students an opportunity to learn more about fundraising as a career choice and how the Fundraising and Development program can help them reach their goals:

- March 1, 11:00 a.m.–noon (webinar)
- March 1, 5:30-7:00 p.m. (Sutter Square Galleria, 2901 K Street, Sacramento)

Students who attend one of the sessions will receive a $100 discount off of their first class enrollment.

For more information about UC Davis Extension Fundraising and Development program, visit https://extension.ucdavis.edu/subject-areas/fundraising-and-development or contact Elizabeth Price at (530) 757-8895 (emprice@ucdavis.edu).

UC Davis Extension, the continuing and professional education division of UC Davis, has been an internationally recognized leader in educational outreach for individuals, organizations and communities for more than 50 years. With 62,000 annual enrollments in classroom and online university-level courses, UC Davis Extension serves lifelong learners in the growing Sacramento region, all 50 states and more than 100 countries. For more information about UC Davis Extension and its programs, visit http://extension.ucdavis.edu.

###