

## AU students to present "Doctor Faustus"

3/29/01

The Alfred University Division of Performing Arts will present "Doctor Faustus" in four performances April 4-7, all at 8 p.m. in the C.D. Smith Theater, Miller Performing Arts Center. For tickets and reservations, call (607) 871-2828. One of the earliest tragedies written in English, "Doctor Faustus" is the story of a man of overriding vanity who makes a pact with the devil, trading temporal power and wealth for his eternal soul, said Becky Prophet, professor of theater and director of the production. "Only when the contract falls due does he realize his grave error," she said. Christopher Marlowe wrote his play sometime between 1588 and his untimely death at the age of 29, in 1593. Those few short years are notable for the English defeat of the Spanish Armada, rising English confidence as a world power, and the arrival of William Shakespeare on London's literary scene. "Doctor Faustus" does not try to reflect or explain any of these events. Instead, the play focuses on the grave danger of overreaching ambition. Faustus, a character from German legend, is the ultimate figure of brilliance felled by arrogance. A learned doctor of philosophy, Faustus seeks greater powers and more recognition. He succumbs to the seductions of magic. The tragedy lies in watching him move from confidence in his education and intellect to the horror of his irrevocable error in making a pact with the devil. All hope must be abandoned. Prophet said the play's great power doesn't lie in the disasters and calamities in the lives around Faustus but in the demonstration of human inability to turn aside from evil, once the course is set. The AU production is set in 1928 Germany, but it could just as easily be set in the present time, Prophet said. Scenery, costumes, and lighting are designed by Associate Professor Mike Dempsey; sound is by AU senior Earl Stephens; and fantasy props are created by senior Callie Hastings. Stage manager is Carley Franklin. The 26-member student cast includes Joe Miller and Danielle DiPillo in leading roles. Other members of the cast are Chagmion Antoine, Hannah Patterson, Emily Tucker, Kevin McGee, Clinton Powell, Sarah Haggett, Julia Shapiro, Ryan Elliott, Jason Shattuck, Angela Tiago; Also, Kristin Grillo, Steve Gordon, Vanessa Stipkovits, Sarah Thomas, Zachary Wickham, Gretchen Northacker, Adam Shain, Alvaro Valentin, Chris Quinn, Nick Prymak; Also, Joshua First, Chanel Huston, and Tara Rosado.