



Boston University International Programs
London

Boston University British Programmes
Public Relations Internship Tutorial
Spring 2011

Instructor Information

A. Name	Michael Heller
B. Days and Times	1 st Tutorial: Wednesday 9 February, 2-3.30pm 2 nd Tutorial: Group A: Monday 7 March, 6.15-7.45pm Group B: Wednesday 9 March, 6.15-7.45pm 3 rd Tutorial: Group A: Monday 28 March, 6.15-7.45pm Group B: Wednesday 30 March, 6.15-7.45pm
C. Location	Boston room (<i>1st session only</i>); thereafter, Alexander room (<i>Group A</i>) and Brompton room (<i>Group B</i>), 43 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4JU
D. BU Telephone	020 7244 6255
E. Email	[REDACTED]
F. Webpage	http://www.bu-london.co.uk/academic/LR
G. Office hours	By appointment

Aims and Objectives

- To prepare students for three pieces of assessment work required for their 4-credit internship course
- To provide in a seminar/tutorial setting an opportunity for students to meet and reflect on their internship experience in order to place this within an academic context
- To provide academic frameworks and exercises which will enable students to critically assess their internship and bridge this with their academic studies at BU-London

Assignments

Assignment 1 (20% of final grade): 1000-1,500 words

This assessment should contain three parts. Firstly it should contain a section on why the student is doing the internship, their aims and expectations. Within this context the internship should fit into the student's overall life/career strategies and plans – what they have done up until now and what they plan to do in the future. Following this, it will contain an introduction to the company which outlines, among other things, its history, activities, principle customers, competitors, strategies, workforce, organizational structure and corporate culture. To some extent these should be linked – for example, how does culture influence structure, how do these relate to clients? The student's position and responsibilities should finally be outlined and also the department/office/section where they are working.

Assignment 2 (30% of final grade): 1,500-2000 words

Either a placement project or a research paper.

Placement Project

Students should provide a structured outline of a project which they worked on during their internship. This should contain an overview of the project, its aims, purposes, success and where this fitted within the larger organization. The student's role within this project should also be given. An analysis and evaluation of the project should be provided. Students can use photos, realia and examples of their project, but this must be done in a structured manner with text explaining and contextualizing visual material.

Research Paper

This should focus on an aspect of the internship which relates to an academic area of discussion – e.g. Corporate Communications, Celebrity Endorsement, Corporate Responsibility, destination Marketing. It could focus, for example, on media or customers relations, development of corporate/product brand equity or be more theoretical in outlook and examine, for instance, the relationship between PR theory and practice. Students can either take a case study approach – looking at one specific example or case – or take a more general approach which relates aspects of the internship/organization to the chosen topic. In line with a research paper, there should be research question or questions, empirical evidence and a discussion. A careful blending of theory/praxis is vital here.

Assignment 3 (40% of final grade): 2,000-2,500 words

Analysis of the organization at which the student has interned plus reflective conclusions on the internship experience. This section should first critically evaluate the student's internship experience. How did they perform, what did they learn, did they achieve what they expected (why/why not?), how did this experience fit into their larger, overall plans? Next students should analytically compare their British working experience to a home working experience (e.g. a prior internship in the United States). In what ways was the British working environment different from that back home. To what degree can this be academically explained, and to what extent was it conditioned by the working environment and individual idiosyncrasies? Students should next relate their academic studies to their work experience, from both their core and elective courses. To what degree has what they have learnt in class help to explain their internship? It is here that students should blend theory with practice. Can PR theory, for example, contribute to an understanding of their internship, were PR strategies, operations and practices evident during the students' work experience, did the work experience enrich the student's understanding of PR and did what was learnt in class help to facilitate the internship? If not, how can this be explained? Students are expected here to use academic material from course books and other academic sources. Finally students should take on a consultancy role and provide, in an objective and critical manner, an outline of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and a list of recommendations to improve future operations.

Attendance (10% of final grade)

Attendance and participation at the Internship Tutorials.

Deadlines

Assignment 1 should be handed in **at the third tutorial on Monday 7 or Wednesday 9 March (depending upon your group)**, **assignment 2 on Monday 11 April** and **assignment 3 on Monday 18 April**. Assignment 1 will be handed directly to the professor, whereas assignments 2 and 3 should be handed in by **6pm to the Student Affairs Office**. They should be set out and referenced in line with college regulations.

Grading

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria, attendance requirements and policies on plagiarism:

<http://www.bu-london.co.uk/files/images/ACADEMICHANDBOOKSP11.pdf>

Tutorials

1st Tutorial:

- Overview of the course and assignments.
- Discussion of how to write an organizational overview.
- Discussion of how to write a job description.

2nd Tutorial:

- In groups students should discuss their jobs and projects which they are engaged in – outlining which project they will select for the assignment
- Discussion of structuring of assignment 2.
- Q&A over assignment 1.

3rd Tutorial:

- Criteria for assessing success of intern experience.
- Discussion of handouts on work and international culture. How can Hofstede, Trompenaar and Hall be integrated into assignment 3.
- Theory vs Praxis: discussion of relation of material taught in class to internship.
- Assessment of organization – what to focus on

Readings

Some readings may be posted on the course webpage:

<http://www.bu-london.co.uk/academic/LR> (you must log in to view these items)