



Boston University Study Abroad London

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Politics Track - Internship Tutorial *Spring 2013*

Instructor Information

A. Name Dr Mohammad Nafissi

Aims

These tutorials aim to (a) ensure that you are thoroughly prepared for the internship's assignments, and (b) to provide a forum for discussing issues and questions that may arise in the course of your internships. Please note that your supervisors and colleagues do Not provide evaluations of your performance. Instead, we evaluate your own reflections on the internship as articulated with the help of appropriate sources in the three assignments outlined below. The University requires an academic grading based on the usual criteria although these will be applied with the particular nature of this course in mind. Presented at each of the three tutorials, each assignment grows in scope and weight. Thus the first two assignments may be seen as steps leading to the third as well as distinct exercises which are individually assessed. At each tutorial we will discuss at some length the objectives of the next piece of work in view of your own experience and suggestions.

If you wish to compile a portfolio of work from your placement, that is fine and should be helpful in terms of deepening your learning experience and preparations for the assignments, but it is not a requirement and will not be assessed. Remember that attendance is mandatory, and **10%** of the final grade will be awarded for attendance and participation at the tutorials. Ideally, you should be able to draw as appropriate on the knowledge gained in the British Political Institutions course (or other pertinent courses) in completing your assignments. However, what many of you are asked to do in the course of the internships cannot be anticipated fully in advance or directly related to the issues explored in BPI. This is of course taken into account when evaluating your work for this course. Moreover, much of what you do may be of a 'practical' nature and significant issues may arise through interpersonal aspects of your internship. Such experiences, and the skills developed through them will serve you in whichever career(s) you choose, and should therefore be considered and evaluated in your assignments.

Assignments

Assignment 1: at the second meeting, each student will give a brief presentation, introducing the organisation they work for and the nature of their work personally, together with any other relevant information. The presentation should be about five minutes long and will be assessed on a **pass/fail basis**. After the presentations at the second tutorial, there will be a discussion of related issues and other questions arising from the internships.

This assignment counts as 10% of the final grade and is **due at the 2nd tutorial**.

Assignment 2: this will take the form of a paper, of not more than 1,500 words, analyzing and evaluating a specific project you have undertaken at work. The essay should describe the project in appropriate detail and critically assess it. Each student will need to have their choice approved by me. In the unlikely case that no appropriate project can be found, a separate arrangement will be decided. Such questions will be fully resolved by or at the second tutorial. Issues arising from the project papers and other aspects of the internship will be discussed at the last tutorial.

This assignment counts as 40% of the final grade and is **due at the 3rd tutorial**.

Assignment 3: the final paper will take the form of a 2,000-word essay critically and constructively assessing the placement experience. The paper will be written as a clearly structured essay or report with **appropriate headings and sub-headings, references and a bibliography**. This assignment will be discussed further during the second tutorial and with concrete reference to your experience of the internship. However, the following guideline should be of help in focusing your attention on some key issues from the outset as well as indicate the general aims of this assignment:

The aim of this is to analyse and draw some conclusions about the organisation's role and its achievement, or non-achievement of objectives. Your account should include descriptive, critical, and constructive dimensions. Comparative discussion of your current internship with previous pertinent experiences, should you have them, too, is welcome. The conclusions may draw on factual material, quotes from interviews with co-workers, and the output of the organization as well as the *British Politics* textbook, other academic sources, political party and other websites, and mass media as appropriate.

The paper should address (but need not be limited to) the following:

1. *Summary* of the work done by you and the organisation during your placement.
2. *Contextualize* your placement through analysis of pertinent current events.
3. Discussion of any aspect of the *British Political Institutions* that you may have further explored in any form during the internship.
4. The *strengths* and *weaknesses* of the organisation.
5. Put yourself in the role of consultant. What *recommendations* would you make to the organisation?
6. Present your *personal conclusions* about the placement in terms of what you have learned and accomplished.

This mark received for this assignment counts as 50% of the final grade. **Deadline: Monday 22nd April, 12noon, to be handed in to the Student Affairs Office.**

Grading

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria, attendance requirements and policies on plagiarism: <http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester>

Attendance Policy

Classes

All Boston University London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, and field trip in order to fulfill the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme.

Authorised Absence:

Students who expect to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorized Absence Approval Form 10 working days in advance of the class date (except in the case of absence due to illness, for which students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor's note as soon as possible). **Please note: Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Form does not guarantee an authorised absence**

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:

- Illness, supported by a local London doctor's note (submitted with Authorised Absence Approval Form).
- Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor)
- Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).

The Directors will only in the most extreme cases (for example, death in close family) allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.

Unauthorised Absence:

Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a **4% grade penalty** to their final grade for the course whose class was missed. This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a 'Fail' in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

Lateness

Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Any student with irregular class attendance (more than two late arrivals to class) will require a meeting with the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have his/her final grade penalised.

Tutorials

Tutorial 1: Wednesday 13th February

General overview and discussion of the internships and the assignments.

Tutorial 2: Monday 18th March

Each student to present a short introductory paper, followed by discussion of issues raised. Details of the requirements for the project paper will also be discussed.

Tutorial 3: Monday 8th April

Submission of project papers followed by discussion of issues raised therein and other questions to do with the progress of the internships. The objectives of the final paper and related questions will also be discussed in this session.

Readings

The suggested readings and notes for British Political Institutions may be consulted as required. Evidently, the websites and other accessible sources of information related to placements

(including members of parliament, local councils, party headquarters and so forth) should also be consulted. Further sources may be suggested as appropriate.