

# “INTERNSHIP COURSE FALL 2015 SYLLABUS”

## Boston University Los Angeles Programs

**Course Numbers:** COM FT 493E/494E HW, COM FT 953E/954E HW, COM CM 471E HW, COM CM 809E HW, CAS EC 497E HW, CFA DR 582E

### Contact Info

Associate Professor Bill Linsman: 323.571.4535 / proflinsman@gmail.com

Assistant Director Clare Le: 323.571.4535 / ClareG@bu.edu

The BULA Office is located at 5700 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 675, Los Angeles, CA 90036.

Office hours with Assoc. Prof. Bill Linsman and Clare Le are available with an advance APPOINTMENT.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION (8/20/15)

The objective of this class:

To introduce students to industry environments via internships at sites where they will see the work of industry professionals and participate “in the business.” Students must work at their internship(s) on average a minimum of 20 hours total every week during the semester in order to receive 4.0 academic credits.

**An internship and your participation in this program is a SERIOUS commitment.**

The internships you work at here are important to you, Boston University, and your employer. The company you commit to considers you a representative of BU, and they are counting on you to work for them on the days and at the times agreed upon, and to perform whatever the assigned duties with a good attitude.

Therefore, take the commitment very seriously, and carefully consider your selection before you commit.

Think of your internship as you would a class in school. If you are a responsible person and start with company X, Y or Z, and don't like the company once you've started, you don't just “quit”. You need to continue with that commitment until the end of the term. If you feel unhappy in the situation for whatever reason, let the BULA staff know. They will consult with you and try to remedy the situation. They will probably advise that you discuss your concerns with your supervisor. In rare instances, they will intercede and communicate with your supervisor on your behalf. If you have a legitimate concern (such as sexual harassment), then the staff will of course make sure you are safe and work with you to find a new internship.

**N.B.:** Mandatory field trips will be made with provided professional transportation suppliers. Most of these excursions will take place within the greater Los Angeles area. The provided transport will return, after the field trip, to the same place as departure. In most cases this will be the Tower 44 at Park La Brea. You will be responsible for arriving at the correct departure point at the time designated. We highly recommend you use this transport for the mandatory field trips, but if you choose to transport yourself be aware you are responsible for your safety and your possessions. Your on-time attendance at all mandatory field trips will be part of your final grade.

If you have questions or comments related to this syllabus or to the course, contact proflinsman@gmail.com.

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## Grading:

Your grade shall consist of the following:

A) General internship attendance and follow through, acting professionally during your work, etc.): **4%**

- Missed event = minus 1 point

**Events:** Students are required to attend the Getty Center trip. *In addition*, BULA will host 2-3 *more required events* (TBA). If a student misses any required events, then (s)he may be able make them up with an alternative non-BU event in order to avoid losing points.

All **non-BULA** events must be approved, via email, by Assistant Director Clare Le. Following the non-BU event, students must email a 1-page double-spaced review or reflection of the experience. Types of events include (but are not limited to):

- Professional industry panels
- Approved networking events
- “Cultural” film/TV screenings (e.g. Paley Fest, retrospectives at The Egyptian, etc.)

B) Academic Work: Internship Journals (**21%**) and Final Internship Paper (**25%**) = 46%

- Late Journal = minus 1 point per day past the submission deadline
- Missing Journal (*more than 5 days late*) = minus 7 points
- Late Final Paper = minus 3 points per day past submission deadline
- Missing Final Internship Paper (*more than 5 days late*) = minus 25 points (an “F”)

C) Internship Supervisor’s Evaluation: **50%**

- Untimely departure from an internship: (minus 5 points from final overall Internship Course grade)
- Internship Contract(s): Late (minus 1 point) or Missing (minus 2 points)

\* If you don’t perform at your internship at a satisfactory level or drop out of a committed employment agreement – even if you’ve only worked there for a short time – **your grade will be lowered.**

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**Grading Chart:** 93-100 = A, 90-92.99 = A-, 87-89.99 = B+, 83-86.99 = B, 80-82.99 = B-, 77-79.99 = C+, 73-76.99 = C, 70-72.99 = C-, 60-69.99 = D, 0-59.99 = F

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## Suggested Readings:

- Berger, Lauren. *All Work, No Pay*  
ISBN-10: 9781607741688
- Yerrick Martin, Jenny. *Breaking Into The Biz: The Insider's Guide to Launching An Entertainment Industry Career*  
ISBN-10: 1494341247

The academic portion of your final grade is the combination of these two components:

- 1) **Journal:** Write up your daily experience – submit approximately *one very short paragraph for every day that you work at your internship(s)*. Take notes during your lunch hour or breaks. Your notes should include details about your work assignments: new skills you've acquired, your employer's and your expectations and feelings about the work, your observations about the operations and personalities within the business, and any ideas for changes you might suggest, either to the internship or the business itself. Transcribe your daily notes and submit your journal via e-mail to **buinla@gmail.com**. Each journal should be formatted and submitted as indicated below and an example of a good journal is included at the end of this document. If you have not secured an internship by the first deadline, then please write about your internship search and application process.

Journal Submission Deadlines (papers due by 9:00am PST):

1. September 4
2. October 2
3. October 30

**IMPORTANT – SUBMITTING YOUR INTERNSHIP JOURNALS:**

- Email journal to **buinla@gmail.com**.
- Attach your journals in standard document formats (e.g. DOC, PDF, RTF).
- **WRITE YOUR NAME** at the **TOP** of the document and **IN THE FILE NAME**.
- Label each journal entry with the name of the company and the day of the week.
- When your journal is received, you will get an AUTO-RESPONSE return message. This means your document was received. If you do not get an auto-response, your journal may not have been received.

## 2) **Internship Paper:**

**DUE BY 9:00am PST on Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>**. Don't wait until that day to write it. Work on this document throughout your internship. Email papers to **proflinsman@gmail.com**.

The Internship paper is the primary academic component of your internship experience. While it derives from your experience, the paper must be academically sound, logical in its presentation, and reflective in content. Your paper must be well written, grammatically correct, and cited correctly from learned sources (when appropriate). We will be looking for context, clarity, logic, and sound analysis in your paper. Please *avoid stream of consciousness writing, poor grammar, and non-academic language (profanity, slang, and unexplained professional jargon)*. It should be 5-6 pages long (double-spaced, standard margins) and you should put as much effort into its contents and form as you would any paper for your school. The paper will be reviewed either by the Resident Director (Associate Professor Linsman) or an appropriate BULA faculty/administrator.

**TOPIC GUIDELINES:** The paper should be a reflection on your experience as an intern in Los Angeles. Describe the companies where you worked and how they fit into the media/entertainment industry. Are the companies good at what they do? What makes them unique (or not)? Describe your career goals and how your internships have affected your preferences. What have you learned about the industry and about yourself over the course of the semester?

Keep in mind that these observations can be about something that struck you as either positive or negative about your internship companies. Remember that no one at your internship will see your paper, unless you choose to share. Be open in your discussion.

Your internship paper should be analytical in nature, and should include:

-A brief overview of the activity where you conducted your internship, and a statement of where this particular activity fits in the field.

-A brief summary of what tasks you performed at the internship, and how you came to the observation you are choosing to write about.

-Background information concerning the subjects of your observations: where their roots are in your company and why it strikes you as noteworthy.

-Closing personal statement: What you learned through this experience; whether the internship sparked interest in this or another area of the media/entertainment business; note whether you would recommend a similar experience/internship for future student.

Grading of the internship final papers is based on four criteria:

- Assignment completion, length as assigned, timeliness, presentation. Is there organization and logic to the paper? Is there a topic sentence, support for claims, and a conclusion?
- Is there depth to the analysis?
- Was there a personal revelation or discovery? Were there problems in the subset of the industry that were discussed; suggestions made for improvement?
- Mechanics of the paper: grammar, spelling, syntax, clear communication, readability.

#### CAUTIONARY NOTES

Please also note that repeated absences or routine tardiness will have an adverse effect on your grade. Furthermore, a minimum level of **20 internship hours per week** is required in order to receive credit for this course. Completion of *all* assignments is a basic requirement of this course. Failure to complete any single component of the coursework— regardless of its value within the overall grading structure— will constitute a failure to complete the course as a whole and will result in an “F” for the course. Finally, failure to abide by departmental policy and other misconduct, including cases involving the suspicion of plagiarism, will result in a hearing before the Academic Affairs Committee.

#### BOSTON UNIVERSITY STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Any kind of academic misconduct (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will result in the filing of academic misconduct charges. Any suspicious act/material/ etc. will be investigated to the fullest extent possible and those found guilty will be punished accordingly. **BE SURE TO READ AND COMPLY WITH BOSTON UNIVERSITY'S UNIVERSAL ACADEMIC CONDUCT CODE.** It is available at: [bu.edu/academics](http://bu.edu/academics).

## JOURNAL EXAMPLE

**Sally Student**

### **ACME Productions – The Week of March 27**

Steve was in FL on Monday so I had to do work for him from the office. One thing I did do was log his voicemails into the online system. This was an interesting job because I actually got to listen to some people pitching ideas to him. Its funny how everybody thinks they have the next great idea or how everybody needs Steve to arrange something for him. I realize he is a very valuable man and does well.

I made one embarrassing mistake on Monday. On the voicemails, it is really tough to make out who the person is because they say it so fast. With one woman, I listened to her voicemail 8 times and for the life of me could not make out her name. I ended up logging her as “SARAN.” I received an email from Steve who was very angry that he called the company asking for that name. Of course, I don’t blame him for his anger. There was no way of me figuring out this woman’s name though (it ended up being Sharon). The way Steve handled it was interesting. At first he was angry, then after I replied explaining to him that I understand how important getting the name right is and how I will find ways to fix the problem, he proceeded to make a Boston Joke. He really has a skill at lightening a situation, which is why I think he has such a great job.

On Wednesday, Steve gave me a task that an agent would normally perform. I had to contact the ad agency of a specific product, inquire about getting an athlete endorsement, and schedule a time to speak with the contact person. As small of a task as it was, I felt really good that Steve trusted me enough to complete it. Steve also gave me some pilots to take home and watch so I could give my opinion on them. He recognizes that I’m in the demographic of the shows, so I might be valuable when it comes time to pitching them.

#### *What I learned:*

I realized that if I ever have an assistant who is new, I want to treat him/her the way Steve treats me. It really makes a difference to have the added confidence. Also, I see how important information databases are at agencies. Agents live and die based on their contacts and their ability to take and return important calls. Not everyone uses the databases to their full potential, and it really makes a difference in output.

### **Looney Pictures – The Week of March 27**

I came in Tuesday to a stack of scripts on my desk. I freaked out at first because I thought that I had to read all of them that day, which would be impossible. Luckily, I got an email from Jason telling me that I just had to read the top one and shred the rest. The script was ok, but I gave it a pass in my coverage, because the writer took a decent premise but didn’t really know what to do with it. After finishing the coverage I started a new script that’s a lot better, with really witty dialogue. I couldn’t finish it, though, because Jason asked me to work on a list of action directors for a new film they’re developing.

On Thursday I finished the script I had started before and then wrote coverage on it. The exciting news was that the writer was coming in for a meeting with Jason and Karen, the development exec. Karen hadn’t read the script, and Jason had only read the first act, so they used my coverage to familiarize themselves with the rest of the story. While it wasn’t the most amazing script in the world, it was much better than average, and I got to meet the writer and get him a drink. He seemed really nervous! I guess Hollywood filmmakers are just normal people too.

#### *What I learned:*

Film companies are constantly seeking out new talent, and development executives have to know everyone in the industry, from writers to actors and directors. Even when they’re not hiring for a specific project, it’s good for my bosses to meet with people to hear about what they’re working on and to discuss how they might work together in the future. Also, interns are really important! If I hadn’t read a script and written detailed coverage, my bosses would have been at a total loss when they met the writer. This would have been very embarrassing for everyone and would make our company look bad.