

“INTERNSHIP COURSE”

Boston University

COM CM 471/CAS EC 497/COM FT 493/4 /CFA DR 582E/COM FT 953/4

Los Angeles Internship Program

SYLLABUS

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.”

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

The internship or 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 you must take the commitment very seriously, and consider carefully 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 till the end of the term. If you feel unhappy in the situation for whatever reason, let the BU LA staff know. They will consult with you and try to remedy the situation. They will probably advise you to 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 (sexual harassment, etc) then the staff will of course make sure you are safe and work with you to find a new internship.

N.B.: Each student is responsible for making their own travel arrangements to the various field sites that are set up as part of the learning experience for this course.

If you have questions or comments related to this syllabus or to the course please contact the instructor by way of email: proflinsman@gmail.com

Grading:

Your grade shall consist of the following:

A) General internship attendance and follow through (including turning in contracts on time, journals on time, acting professional during your work, etc): 10%

B) Academic Work (Internship Journals and Final Paper): 20% + 25% = 45%

C) Internship Supervisor's Evaluation: 45%

* If you don't perform at your internship at a satisfactory level (this includes not showing up when you say you'll show up) or drop out of a committed employment agreement, **your grade will be lowered**, and you run the risk of not being able to graduate.

Grading chart: 95-100 =A, 91-94=A-, 88-90=B+, 84-87=B, 80-83=B-, 77-79=C+, 73-76=C, 70-72=C-, 65-69=D, 64 and below=F.

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

1) **Journal:** Write up your daily experiences in a small book. Take notes during your lunch hour or breaks. This would 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 every two weeks to the Program Manager <buinla@gmail.com> who will monitor your progress. 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 you should write about your search process.

IMPORTANT – SUBMITTING YOUR INTERNSHIP JOURNALS:

- Attach your journals as WORD (.doc) documents (if this is a problem, then send your journal as a .txt or an .rtf document).
- BE SURE to put your name at the top of the document. Any journals we receive without a name will be counted as LATE, and will cost you points against your final grade.
- Don't count on your (or our) server to get your document in on time. Anticipate delays, breakdowns, etc—submit your journals EARLY—you can include whatever happened on a Friday in the following submission.
- Proper label of the attachment: NAME, JOURNAL #
- When your journal is received; you will get a BLANK return message (unless there is a needed comment/correction). This means your document was received. IF YOU GET NO RETURN MESSAGE it means your document did NOT get received.

Internship Research Paper: Your final academic report is due two days after the last day of class—Don't wait until that day to write it. Work on this document throughout your internship.

The Internship paper is the primary academic component of your internship experience. The evaluation of your paper allows a grade to be assigned for academic credit to be granted. 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, cited correctly from learned sources using footnotes or a works cited page, and it should be complete. 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 at least 6-8 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 by either by the Resident Director (Prof. Linsman) or the lead instructor of your program track.

TOPIC POSSIBILITIES: The paper is to be about the company or industry at which you worked. The subject matter should be an observation you have personally made about your internship company, supported by independent research. Here are some possible topics:

- A) How does the company that employed me work in the industry?
- B) What makes the company I worked at special (a unique organization)?
- C) What did I learn about this industry by working at this employer?

Keep in mind that this observation can be about something that struck you as either positive or negative about your internship company. 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 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 attribute that is the subject of your observation: where its roots are in your company and why it strikes you as noteworthy.

-At least a small comparative section that places this attribute into the context of "accepted practices and principles" in the general field. This is the research section of your paper. Your research can come from one or more of the special entertainment industry libraries unique to Los Angeles (the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences library; the UCLA or USC Cinema library, etc.), interview with company employees, trade magazines, or other published works.

-Closing personal statement: What you learned through this experience; whether the internship sparked interest in this or another area of the 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:

- Was the assignment completed; 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/research? Are there several sources properly cited?*
- 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.

*If you choose to do research by interviewing company employees, be sure to cite these as well, and be prepared with appropriate questions so as not to waste these people's time.

CAUTIONARY NOTES

Please also note that repeated absences or routine tardiness will have an adverse effect on your grade. Furthermore, a minimum level of internship hours 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

Plagiarism is the act of representing someone else's creative and/or academic work as your own, in full or in part. It can be an act of commission, in which one intentionally appropriates the words, pictures or ideas of another, or it can be an act of omission, in which one fails to acknowledge/document/give credit to the source, creator and/or the copyright owner of those words, pictures or ideas. Any fabrication of materials, quotes, or sources, other than that created in a work of fiction, is also plagiarism.

Plagiarism is the most serious academic offense that you can commit and can result in probation, suspension or expulsion.

JOURNAL EXAMPLES

Tuesday, March 27th

Steve was in FL today 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 an embarrassing mistake today. With these voicemails, it is real tough to make out who the person is because they say it so fast and because I am largely unfamiliar with the people calling it's a guessing game. 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"(yes a mix between Sarah and Erin!). 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, go figure.) The way Steve handled 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.

Elita came to me today to put together another presentation about ACIE LAW (star for Texas A&M). I was so pumped because he is actually one player that I have followed all year. AND I get to meet him next week. This internship just keeps getting better!

What I learned:

Today 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.

Monday, April 2nd

Today was your average day at COMPANY, with a few observations made though. I was given the somewhat hefty task of finding out what tax incentives for production exist in Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria and Germany. I was surprised to find out that many producers hail Hungary as the country with the best incentive to produce in as a whole. I guess when comparing international incentives to US incentives one has to focus on the US on a State by State basis rather than the country as a whole because there can be huge variations. This made me start to really think about how different and more powerful the US is in terms of the entertainment industry. It really is all about the US when it comes to successful production and countries try to follow the US lead by creating these incentive programs. Also, nowhere else do you see such varying incentive programs within one country.

What I learned:

The entertainment industry is a powerful business globally. I think growing up in America and almost never leaving, I have taken the industry for granted. It has such an influence on all of our lives I think we sometimes forget it really is a separate and individual business. Doing this global daily research has been a blessing in disguise because not only have I learned about the business side of the industry; I have discovered the “Americanness” of it all. It’s really surprising because one would expect to make these discoveries while abroad in another country but I have made them while domestic AND have had the opportunity to gain exposure to this industry when had I not gone here, I would probably never see.

An additional observation that I have made is that this business/finance/real estate side of the industry is just like that of any other industry. Yeah you deal with studios and such but its no different than dealing with office buildings. I myself find it very hard to find a passion for this work. For me, it comes down to loving the day to day tasks of a job and I just don’t think I could with a job like this. It seems to be too much about “the money”, which is fine it needs to be because it is finance related, but I think I have learned that I would rather do something I love and happen to get paid for it. Either way, I am glad I learned this about myself.

Tuesday, April 3rd

So I came into COMPANY today expecting to have the rough draft of my deck looked at and worked on and to have lunch with Matt (as he told me he wanted to last week). When I got in though, it was quite a different story. When I walked in, I saw matt in his office looking over exerted and hyper at the same time. When he saw me he told me he would have to cancel lunch because he was up all night completing the deck. He said “there are minor league decks, and then there are big league decks my friend.” He hadn’t STOPPED working for 48 hours. Insane. I thought the all nighters would end with SMG and Core but obviously not. After seeing the deck I realized a couple of things. One, to make such a good presentation you really need to know ALL about the situation, this can be seen by my presentation, all the effort that went into this draft, and the complete lack of quality when compared to Matt’s; he simply knew more about what was going on and what direction to go in. Also, a presentation of this type is far more informal and wordy than the ones we are used to in SMG. It was also made for a lot more general of an audience than an SMG’er would be used to. All in all, though, I was impressed to see Matt’s passion and energy. It seems to me that is why he is good at his job, energy.

I was disappointed to learn that I would not play a significant role in the presentation. I dedicated a good amount of home time to it and didn’t exactly like to see it go away like that. It made me think about why Matt was reaching out to me (much like a few others have done but with little concrete result). It can’t be because he is in need of the skill, it obvious that he has plenty of that. It could be a time thing; people may feel strapped for time and want to

have some insurance with relation to getting a certain project done. It could also be that they want to give a younger person the chance to get some first hand experience. Whatever it is, I am glad for the little work I get to do.

Tuesday, April 10th

I consider today to be a big stepping stone for me as an assistant at COMPANY. One of the reasons I am not given huge tasks there is because of the fact that I am not paid for what I do and I am not here all week. I understand this and am comfortable with this (although I'd love to dedicate more time). This is why I was pleasantly surprised when Steve gave me a task that an agent would perform today. My job was to contact the ad agency of a specific product, inquire about getting an athlete endorsement, and get the information of the right person to contact and schedule a time to discuss opportunities.

As small of a task as this was compared to what Steve does all day, I still felt real good that Steve thought to give me the task. I think he realizes that I am coming close to the end of my time there (although today he did ask me about staying the summer) and wants to squeeze in some experience toward the end here.

Steve also gave me some pilot shows to take home and watch so I could give my opinion on them. I like that Steve sees that I am in the demographic of the shows and that I might be valuable when comes to a decision on pitching them or not. He could also be strapped for time and needs *someone* to watch them. Either way I am happy to do it.

What I learned...

I have noticed many different styles of organization within the agency. Some people live and die by the electronic database system when keeping in contact with clients and associates. Still others don't prefer to use it at all but lives more in the "moment" of the deal and conversation at that time only to worry about calling back (or have the assistant worry) when the heat of the moment is over. After seeing this, I truly believe it is all about habit. The disorganized agents could easily become as organized as anybody but often fail to because they are either too stubborn to change what they have done for years, or have such a sporadic routine that it is tough to form new and constructive habits. Either way, the information systems here have enough of a presence to make a big difference in output. This is something I did not think was true about agencies before coming here.