

BOSTON UNIVERSITY INTERNSHIP SYLLABUS

INTRODUCTION

The internship is one of your four required academic courses. In addition to performing a job in a Dublin workplace, you must meet a number of academic requirements to successfully complete the course. Your internship grade will be assessed based on four criteria: Portfolio, Project, Supervisor's Evaluation, and Attendance & Participation. They are weighted as follows:

Portfolio	35%
Project	30%
Supervisor's Evaluation	25%
Attendance and Participation	10%

The work you perform on site should be viewed as academic fieldwork for the Portfolio and Project you submit; while your job performance, attendance, and attitude are important, it is your written academic work and attendance and participation at meetings that accounts for 75% of the course grade. Attendance at internships is monitored and required. It is unacceptable to take time off from your internship in order to travel, even if arrangements are made with your supervisor. As with all of your courses, unexcused absences from the internship will result in a lower final grade, and in extreme instances, failure of the course.

The Portfolio and Project provide a comprehensive record of your experience and a scholarly examination of the professional field. While the assignments are derived from your workplace experience, they must be academically sound in terms of organisation, presentation and content. All research materials should be properly attributed where appropriate by footnote and bibliography. Taken as a whole, the Portfolio and Project will be graded on content and presentation, and judged on standard academic principles. All questions of an academic nature (e.g. acceptable topics for the project, concerns about grades, specific questions about portfolio entries and supporting materials) are best addressed by the Academic Supervisor, Professor Farrel Corcoran. Any questions or concerns about anything that happens *at work* should be directed to the EUSA (European Study Abroad) Director for Ireland, Rebecca Woolf.

During the placement period, Rebecca Woolf may visit your host organisation. If she does, these meetings will take approximately 20-30 minutes, and consist of an informal discussion involving both the on-site supervisor and the intern. Please note: you or your supervisor may request a site visit at any point during the internship.

Rebecca has on-campus office hours every Friday (during the internship period) from 12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m in CG35, Henry Grattan Building, DCU (next door to the program offices). Rebecca is also available by phone and appointment **ANYTIME**.

A series of small-group internship meetings will be held weekly with Professor Corcoran and Rebecca Woolf on Fridays from 11:00 a.m – 12:00 noon. Please note attendance at one of these meetings is required.

THE PORTFOLIO (35%)

The Portfolio is a record of your activities at work, combined with informed observation and analysis of the workplace and the field you're placed in. It is key to the learning process while on placement, and helps structure the internship experience so that you can select a theme for your Project. Demonstrating the process of learning at the internship is as important as what you learn about the organisation and culture.

The Portfolio must offer analyses of the cultural significance of your internship experience. It should contextualise observations about the interpersonal workings and structure of the host organisation, and should demonstrate your thorough understanding of the company and the professional field of which it is part. You should describe your on-site activities, discuss how your work contributes to the company, and evaluate how your internship has contributed to your personal and professional growth as well as to your understanding of Ireland. Reading company literature, observation, and interviewing/chatting with colleagues are all appropriate methods of learning about your host organisation.

Where possible, attach copies of company literature to an appendix at the back of your Portfolio. PR releases, company reports, department reports, meeting notes, and/or literature from the professional field are all appropriate - include anything that would help the reader to gain a more complete understanding of the company. Samples of your own work in the internship should be included if possible. You may also include articles about the company that appear in newspapers, magazines and trade journals, photographs of the workplace and colleagues, and company products, if they will fit into the Portfolio. Each entry should be identified, dated, and explained. **Please note that it is your responsibility to gain permission from your supervisor before attaching company materials to your Portfolio. Some documents are confidential and designed for internal use only, and you must respect your company's policies. Assure your supervisor that any documents used are for educational purposes and will be kept confidential; the grader will only review them in order to grade your Portfolio.*

The first entry in your Portfolio must be an Introduction to your internship and your personal Objectives.

- Give an overview of the professional field your company is part of, explain where your organisation fits into the general scheme, and describe the organisation and the department you are working in.
- Outline the company's management structure, and describe the roles of the people in your department.
- Define the aims and objectives of your organisation, and of your department.
- State your personal objectives (on the separate sheets provided) for the placement. What do you hope to learn from the internship, and why?

You will need to keep a weekly record of your internship. Date each entry as you write. You will be graded both on content and presentation, so spelling, grammar and neatness all count. Unreadable portfolios will be handed back without a grade. It is up to you whether you write daily or weekly, though each week should amount to two pages in total.

In your notes, include observations about how your organisation functions (or malfunctions) that will help you later, when you write your Analysis and Conclusions.

Your final portfolio entry should be "Analysis and Conclusions". This entry must cover (but is not limited to) the following points:

1. Summarise the work done by you and the organisation during your internship (on the separate Summary form). Be specific.
2. Compare the Irish workplace to its American counterpart, based on your experience and/or coursework in the field. Do cultural differences account for differences in style or job performance?
3. What did you perceive as the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation?
4. Put yourself in the role of consultant. What recommendations would you make to the organisation?
5. What are your personal conclusions about the internship, in terms of what you learned or accomplished? Refer to your personal objectives in the first week (Introduction) of the Portfolio.

You must complete two pages per week in your Portfolio, Times font, double-spaced, 1" margins. Your name should be affixed to the spine of the binder. Your final submission should be 18-25 pages long; it is important to decide what content is most relevant, and to edit your notes. Portfolios that are longer or shorter than the assigned guidelines will be marked down accordingly.

The Portfolio must be typed, so plan to type your weekly entries on a regular basis. Your Portfolio should be presented in the 2-ring binder loaned to you for the semester, using dividers to mark off each week and section. Please do not use plastic sleeves to separate pages.

Create your Portfolio methodically and regularly. Don't throw something together just before the submission dates – it will not earn a good grade. Keep your Portfolio confidential. Some of your observations may be critical of individuals or practices in the workplace, or include information that is confidential to your firm, so don't leave it lying around for others to read.

Portfolios are due to CG34, the BU program office, on the last Thursday of the semester. **The Portfolio, completed Objectives form, and Summary form should be submitted together.**

THE PROJECT (30%)

In consultation with Professor Corcoran, all interns select a theme or topic for the Project. The Project is an academic essay or report, and the topic should be determined by an interest developed as a result of your internship experience. Your focused observations are supported by academic research, largely using the resources available at your workplace (including interviews with key personnel).

The topic should be relevant to the organisation and/or industry in which you are working. It may explore a problem that arises for your department during the internship, or a decision that the organisation has taken which reflects on the nature of the host organisation and the way in which it operates.

- It may analyse how current events (such as economic growth, a current or threatened strike, or a Tribunal) have affected or may affect the organisation.
- It may focus on an issue, such as ethnic diversity, Irish identity, the Irish health system, etc., and how your organisation helps to contribute to, construct, respond to or analyse that issue.
- You may compare the company's methods and practices with the rest of the industry within Ireland, explore its role as part of an international corporation, or compare its methods and practices to those of similar organisations in the United States.
- It may examine an area of your academic major that you were unfamiliar with before starting your internship.
- The Project should be about something that interests you, so consider relevant themes/issues/questions that you want to research and address.

The Project is a scholarly essay or report that relates specifically to your internship, not a first-person stream-of-consciousness account of your internship; it is not an extension of your portfolio. As most of your time is spent in the workplace, most of your research materials should be in-house. However, you should back up the workplace-based materials with academic sources including books, professional journals and periodicals. Interviews with your colleagues are also acceptable forms of research, and must be properly cited in your bibliography. Be sure to footnote and properly cite all sources, including interviews; a bibliography is part of the required work.

If presented as written work, the Project should be an 8-10 page essay or report, Times font, double-spaced, 1" margins. Where appropriate, approval may be granted for submission in other forms (visual and/or aural), with supporting written work. It is due to CG34, the BU program office, mid-way through the internship/latter part of the semester.

SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION (25%)

During the internship, your supervisor at the work-placement will evaluate the quality of your day-to-day work performance. At the conclusion of the placement period, he or she will be asked to complete a two page written evaluation of your progress and on-site performance. Criteria include your understanding of the organisation's operations and functions; interpersonal communication skills; competence in work undertaken for the organisation; adaptability in responding to the assignment of tasks; professionalism in terms of punctuality, reliability, appropriateness of dress sense, etc.; attitude; attendance; and progress over the placement. Please note that the Academic Supervisor reserves the right to adjust the work supervisor's evaluation if, after consulting with Rebecca Woolf, he thinks it does not reflect the true performance and effort of the student during the internship.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (10%)

Each student is required to attend an internship feedback seminar over the course of the semester. The Attendance and Participation grade applies both to the Internship seminars and your contribution/attendance at your internship.

You must also complete two forms - Internship Objectives and Internship Summary.

The Objectives form has two sections – one to be completed prior to the start of the internship, and one at the end of the placement period. The purpose of the Objectives is to get you thinking about your goals before beginning the internship, and to assess your success in achieving them at the end of the placement. It can be used as a goal-setting tool with your on-site supervisor.

The Summary is to be completed at the end of the internship, and is used to describe your internship to future students who may be interested in your host organisation.

The fully completed Objectives and the Summary are due for submission on the last Thursday of the semester with your Portfolio.

A schedule for the seminars will be provided in your Internship Pack.

Please note that failure to complete either form or to attend any required meetings will negatively affect your course grade.

RETURN OF GRADED WORK

Please note that your graded Project will be returned to you prior to Departure Day (if submitted by the deadline), but your Portfolio will not be. **If you wish to have your graded Portfolio returned to you, it is necessary to supply a self-addressed stamped envelope with the correct postage.** Otherwise, your marked Portfolio will remain in Dublin, though your course grade will be returned to Boston regardless of whether or not you have your Portfolio sent.