

**ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP SYLLABUS
BU DUBLIN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
SPRING 2016**

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Introduction

The internship is an academic course based on independent inquiry guided by faculty direction. It allows students to gain insights into the workings of professional work environments. It allows students combine practical work experience with academic analysis. The written work – based on research, analysis and critical reflection – makes the internship an intellectually challenging experience.

You will have a supervisor in the host organisation but your learning experience depends very much on your own initiative and positive attitude. You will need to display maturity, independence and self-motivation.

Attendance at internships is mandatory and is monitored. Unexcused absences from the internship will result in a lower grade, and if persistent, failure of the course. Non-submission of the required written work results in an automatic Fail being returned on your academic transcript.

Students must meet a number of academic requirements to successfully complete the course. The overall grade is composed as follows:

Assignment 1 (Objectives)	15%	(1,000 words minimum / no maximum)
Assignment 2 (Research Paper)	40%	(2,000 – 2,500 words)
Assignment 3 (SWOT Analysis)	25%	(1,500 words minimum / no maximum)
Attendance & Review & Evaluation	20%	

Remember these are minimum word counts only. The more you engage with the assessments via critical thinking and reflection the better the grade you receive. It is strongly recommended that you keep a diary or journal (written or electronic) during your internship to enable you to complete the assignments required for the course.

All questions of an academic nature (written work) should be directed to Frank Byrne. All questions or concerns about placements and anything that happens at work should be directed to Janice Gaffey of EUSA (contact details are above).

EUSA representatives are available at their office downtown by phone and appointment ANYTIME. Please call 01 894 3184 to set up an appointment or email your EUSA Internship advisor. Someone from EUSA may visit your host organisation during the placement period. If they do, these meetings will take approximately 20 minutes, and may include 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.

Assignment 1 (Objectives) 15% (1,000 words minimum / no maximum)

The purpose of this assignment is to get you to prepare for your internship and engage with your supervisor. It aims to get you thinking about your goals and to assess your success in achieving them at the end of the placement. It requires you to reflect upon your entire internship experience from start to finish and to understand that what is important is the totality of this unique experience. The assignment has four sections:

Part one requires you to reflect on what it is that you want to get out of the internship. This requires thought and self-reflection. Objectives can range from investigating how the professional field operates differently from or similarly to the same professional field at home, from building computer skills to improving social skills, from improving networking skills to team building skills, from shadowing a professional in your chosen field to dealing with clients, and from confirming a career choice to trying out something new career wise.

Part two requires you to identify strategies for achieving these goals. Again, this requires thought and initiative. While you will have a supervisor in the host organisation your learning experience depends very much on your own initiative and positive attitude. You will need to display maturity, independence, initiative and self-motivation.

Part three requires you to re-visit your goals and strategies after your internship is finished and to critically reflect on your experience in achieving your goals.

Part four requires you to identify the transferrable skills and knowledge – both professional and academic – that you have acquired or improved on during your internship.

Assignment 2 (Research Paper) 40% (2,000 – 2,500 words)

You are required to write a 2,000 – 2,500 word academic paper on the professional field in which you are placed. You should use this exercise as a way to explore your professional field or to focus on a specific interest developed from your internship experience. You should talk to your supervisor about this paper – s/he may point you towards resources that may help you explore the field in greater detail. In consultation with your supervisor you could use down-time in your placement to conduct research for your paper using the resources that are available at your workplace, including interviews with key personnel.

For example, your paper might:

- Chart the evolution of or challenges faced by your host organisation and / or its professional field
- Compare your host organisation and / or professional field to international comparators
- Examine a topic that you were unfamiliar with before starting your placement

Your paper should not be a narrative description of what your host organisation does.

As most of your time is spent in the workplace, much of your research materials may be in-house. However, as it is an academic paper, you should back up workplace-based materials with academic sources such as books, professional journals and periodicals. Interviews with your colleagues are also acceptable forms of research. It is imperative that you respect workplace/client confidentiality. Be sure to footnote and properly cite all sources, including interviews; a bibliography is also required. Topics for your paper will be discussed during the Internship Seminars and via email.

Assignment 3 (SWOT Analysis) 25% (1,500 words minimum / no maximum) To be handed in during Internship review meeting.

This assignment should:

- 1) Summarise the main work done by you at the host organisation during your internship;
- 2) Compare the Irish workplace / discipline to its American counterpart, based on your experience and work in the field, e.g. differences in work practices, work ethic, etiquette, protocols etc;

- 3) Outline and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation.
- 4) What opportunities and threats does the organisation face?
- 5) Put yourself in the role of consultant – what recommendations would you make to the organisation?

Summary Form – 1 Page

This 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.

Attendance, Evaluation & Supervision 20% (4X5%)

Internship Review (5%): Each student is required to attend one internship review meeting with Frank Byrne on Fridays from 1.00 - 3.00 pm. Attendance at one of these meetings is mandatory. A schedule for the seminars is provided on the Loop; along with a document entitled 'Internship Review Meeting' that explains how you should prepare for this meeting. Failure to attend on your scheduled day will result in a loss of half the credit. Failure to attend at all will result in a forfeit of the entire credit. SWOT to be handed in at this meeting.

5% of the grade is assigned to your attendance at your internship. Unexplained or unexcused absences will be penalised.

This review will also take cognisance of your supervisor's evaluation (**5%**) of your placement. During the internship, your supervisor will evaluate the quality of your day-to-day work performance. Criteria include your understanding of the organisation's operations and functions, interpersonal communication skills, competence in work undertaken for the organization, adaptability in responding to the assignment of tasks, professionalism in terms of punctuality, reliability, appropriateness of dress sense, attitude, attendance at work, and progress over the placement.

Mid-Point Review (5%): EUSA will conduct a mid-point review of your internship via email. This is to check in with you and make sure things are going well. Students must reply to this email within five working days to receive the full credit. EUSA will supply the BU Program Office with a list of students who complete this exercise. Late responses – up to eight working days will be awarded half credit: thereafter zero credit will be applied.

Conventions & Submission Details

All work must be typed, Times 12 Font, 1.5 spaced, 1" margins. Include a **total word-count** at the end of each assignment. You may include as appendices any documents you created. You must not include generic company brochures. You must not include databases (even if you created them) as these are protected by privacy legislation. **Hand-in for written work will be 11.00 to 1.00 in CAG23 Fri 29th April.**

Return of Grades

Grades are usually returned to Boston University within two to three weeks after submission. BU will then upload the results on the Student Link. For non-BU students, BU will send the results to your home institution.

All students must retain an electronic copy of all written work submitted for assessment.

No internship course assessment work will be read by your internship placement colleagues or supervisor.