

ACADEMIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM COURSE SYLLABUS

Lecturer: Dr Seán Harrington
Office Hours: By Appointment
Email: sjharr@bu.edu

Program Director: Catherine Kehoe
EUSA – European Study Abroad
Email: catherine.kehoe@eusainternships.org

Course Credits:4

Hub Units1 BU Hub Unit – Individual in the Community

Credits applicable to the following internship course codes:

CAS AH 505Art and Architecture
CAS EC 497Business/Economics
CAS IR 451/ PO 401Politics
CAS IR 455/ PO 405International Organisation
CAS PO 403Comparative Law
CAS PS 495Health and Human Services
COM CM 471Advertising/Public Relations/Marketing
COM FT 493/494Film and Television
COM JO 411Journalism
SHA HF 390Hospitality Administration
SAR HS 410Human Psychology

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Taken in tandem with a work placement, the course allows students to gain a greater understanding of workplace culture in Ireland. It provides a framework to explore and reflect on the professional and cultural practices observed in the internship. The course and placement form an intercultural learning experience in which students can examine socio-cultural differences, beliefs and values while immersed in a diverse organisational and professional community. Through class sessions and assignments, students address the ways in which culture informs both work and learning. This course fulfils a single unit in the following BU Hub area: *The Individual in Community*.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

HUB Area: The Individual in the Community

1. Students will analyse at least one of the dimensions of their experience in an Irish workplace – historical, racial, socio-economic, political, gender, linguistic, religious or cultural. They will interrogate how these inform and impact on their own worldviews and beliefs as well as those of other individuals and societies.
2. Students will participate respectfully in different employment communities such as workforce, professional associations and attendant political, social and cultural structures. In addition, they will participate in campus, citywide, national and international groups and reflect on the issues relevant to these communities.

Academic Internship: Learning Outcomes

1. Hand in hand with the Dublin Program academic courses and drawing on classroom acquired skills, students will demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of Irish culture and society and they will be expected to apply that knowledge and understanding to the professional context of their internship site with its specific mission, challenges, culture and constraints.
2. In tandem with the above, students will develop a cross cultural perspective and the ability to experience people and events through the lens of Irish culture. In this manner they will build a sensitivity to, and engagement with, ambiguity and a diversity of philosophical approaches. Moreover, they will learn to reflect on their own home culture, to build civic mindedness and to consider what they can learn about themselves and their place in a global world.
3. Students will gain an understanding of workplace dynamics and professional expectations. They will explore what they can bring to this professional environment, drawing on their own resources, skills and life experiences to contribute to the workplace goals.
4. Alongside that, they will build proficiency in a range of business and industrial skills appropriate to their internship setting. These will include key professional competencies – critical thinking, teamwork, professionalism, oral, digital and written communications. This process will allow students to refine and clarify their personal and career goals.
5. Students will analyse what makes the host organisation flourish – or not. They will consider its place, both nationally and globally, in its field of endeavour. They will identify how it operates in its community and in the broader market and comment on the issues and challenges it faces in pursuit of its mission.
6. Students are expected to reflect critically on their contribution to the host organisation within the context of their overall experience in Ireland.

Plagiarism

Each student is responsible for reading the Boston University statement on plagiarism, available on the Academic Conduct Code. Students should be aware that the penalty for plagiarising or cheating in a Boston University program includes "...expulsion from the program or the University or such other penalty as may be recommended by the Committee on Student Academic Conduct, subject to approval by the Dean." The Academic Conduct Code can be viewed in its entirety here:

<http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/>

Grading

Grading for the course will be weighed as follows:

▪ Attendance, Review and Evaluation	25%
▪ Reflective Diary	25%
▪ Written Research Project	50%

Attendance, Review and Evaluation

Attendance (10%), under this heading, refers in the first instance to attendance as required at the internship site proper. 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 the academic transcript.

Attendance also covers attendance at, and participation in, the required orientation and workshop sessions or at any meeting that may be requested.

5% of the mark is assigned to completing EUSA's midterm review in a timely and satisfactory manner.

5% of the mark is assigned to completing EUSA's end-placement review before the last day of the placement.

The remaining 5% under this heading will take cognisance of the placement supervisor's final assessment. During the internship, the supervisor will evaluate the quality of day-to-day work performance. Criteria include 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.

Reflective Diary

Students are expected to maintain a reflective double entry diary in which they record their observations and impressions on a weekly basis on the right hand page of each dated entry. The page opposite will be for subsequent reflection. It is expected that such entries demonstrate a degree of self-assessment and awareness particularly in relation to transcultural awareness, their growth as a colleague and as

contributing in their workplace. It is an opportunity to enumerate and reflect on the skills they are acquiring and to outline the chances they are finding to learn about the world of work.

Students will be introduced to maintaining their diary at a workshop following their Academic Orientation. They will be invited to set personal and professional goals for themselves and to formulate and record strategies towards those ends.

When, in the second half of the semester, they embark on the internship proper, students should continue, on a weekly basis, to document and reflect upon their personal adjustment and growth and on their professional and intercultural experiences.

At the conclusion of the internship students should reflectively review their entries and write a concise conclusion. The conclusion will focus on the outcomes of their experiences, how they have evolved, what kind of professional they aspire to be and how their experiences will impact on future professional or personal choices. Diaries will be submitted during a wrap-up workshop.

Research Project

This project will take the form of a research essay of no less than 3,000 words and should be submitted in hard copy on the final day of the program. Students should retain an electronic copy. This paper is for the eyes of the BU grader only so students should feel free to comment in a forthright manner.

Arguments and conclusions should be supported by no fewer than eight substantial citations from a variety of different sources. Students may draw on non-confidential placement specific sources – web site, annual reports, promotional material, personal interviews etc. – as well as journals, newspapers and books. A cover page should show the student's name, the placement, the title and a word count. Full referencing is a marking criterion and originality of thought, theoretical insight and clear exposition will contribute to awarding a high grade.

This paper aims to describe the most important elements of the internship experience. It may include comparative study with other similar companies/organisations in Ireland, in the USA or in the wider world.

The paper must address each of the following aspects:

1. Students should outline their own background, motivation and initial goals for embarking on this internship.
2. This section should offer an overview of the organisation, touching on its history, mission and structure and how these translate into its goals and objectives. Students should outline briefly the tasks and responsibilities assigned to them and their contribution to their placement.
3. Here the student is expected to illustrate an insider's understanding of the organisation, outlining how it operates internally and in its market and civil context. It should offer an analysis of the company's strengths and weaknesses and an appreciation of the opportunities open to it and the threats it faces.

4. The student will reflect on his/her understanding and experience of cultural difference at play in their workplace and should offer specific examples. They should also draw on their prior classroom learning when exploring the human on-the-job relationships.
5. In conclusion students will locate their internship experience within the framework of their own professional aspirations, noting how they have acquired knowledge, understanding and skills and how their experience will clarify their career goals and impact on their future professional and personal choice.

Course Structure

Week 1

- Academic Orientation, setting the scene for the overall program and introducing the connection between the class based Contemporary Irish Culture course and the internship due to begin in a matter of weeks.
- All Class EUSA presentation

Week 2 - 6

- Academic classes

Week 7

- Academic Internship Orientation meeting.
- Core academic exams

Week 8

- Mid Semester Break

Week 9

- Internships begin – Monday to Thursday
- Academic elective courses continue – Friday morning

Week 10

- Internship review meetings (with Seán Harrington)

Week 12

- EUSA midterm review due.

Week 15

- Final Day at placement – Thursday
- Submission of written work

Readings

1. Aycaan, Z and Kanungo, R.N. *Organizations and Management in Cross-cultural Context*, Sage, 2014
2. Brislin, R. *Working with Cultural Differences; Dealing Effectively with Diversity in the Workplace*, Greenwood, 2008
3. Carr, S. C. *Globalization and Culture at Work; Exploring their Combined Glocality*, Springer, 2005
4. Coyle, D. *The Culture Code*, Cornerstone, 2019
5. Farrugia, D. *Spaces of Youth; Work, Citizenship and Culture in a Global Context*, Routledge, 2018
6. Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., Minkov, M. *Cultures and Organizations; Software of the Mind*, McGraw Hill, 2010
7. Kreber, C. *Educating for Civic-Mindedness*, Routledge 2016
8. Meyer, E. *The Culture Map; Breaking through the invisible Boundaries of Global Business*, Hachette, 2014
9. Mills, A. J., Helm, J. C., Bratton, J. & Forshaw, C. *Organizational Behaviour in a Global Context*, Univ. of Toronto, 2006
10. O'Hara-Devereaux, M., Johansen, R. *Globalwork; Bridging Distance, Culture and Time*, Jossey-Bass, 1994
11. Storti, C. *The Art of Crossing Cultures*, Intercultural Press, 2001
12. Sweitzer, H. F. and King, M. A. *The Successful Internship*, Cengage Learning 2016

Internship Rules and Regulations

- If your host organisation keeps irregular working hours and they ask you to deviate from the Monday – Thursday schedule, you must inform EUSA, who in turn will inform the BU Program office at DCU. The internship requirement is four full days on site per week.
- If you become ill and are unable to go to work, you **MUST** phone both your on-the-job supervisor and the EUSA office, who in turn will inform the BU Program office at DCU. Leave messages on answering machines if no one is available to take your call at either work or at EUSA.
- You may not request time off for vacations, visitors or early departure – the only acceptable request for early departure is to get to an elective class on time.
- Your internship is a four-credit course; the work you do on-site is academic fieldwork for your assignments.
- Your internship must be unpaid; if you accept payment of any sort, you are violating the terms of your visitor's stamp for Ireland, and you risk failing the internship course. Accepting farewell thank-you gifts (including book tokens and store vouchers) is fine.
- You are required to engage in the Internship Troubleshooting Code should you have any concerns about your internship. Non-engagement with this process – whether by accident or design – will result in an 'F' grade being returned for the Internship Course.

For the Internship Troubleshooting Code – please see over →

Internship Troubleshooting Code

You need to give your internship at least two weeks before deciding whether you like it or not. Put it this way: if you ran a company would you give the most important tasks to a new intern on day one? Or would you wait until you had 'sussed' them out in terms of ability and aptitude before gradually increasing their responsibilities? You need to be realistic: in every job people 'suss' you out on the first few days to see how much you're willing to 'muck-in' and get involved at a low level before being involved in more meaningful work. You might not like this, but that's how the real world operates. It's your responsibility to make this process work – engage and demonstrate that you're willing to 'muck-in' and over the weeks your responsibilities will increase, particularly if you build a good rapport with your colleagues and volunteer for work and ask to be included in meetings.

If, however, you have concerns about your internship there is a mandatory process that you **MUST** follow. Failure to do so may reflect badly on you as a worker, may indicate an unwillingness to engage in established processes and may indicate a lack of cultural awareness / maturity. If you do have concerns, there is a responsibility on you to act professionally and maturely. You need to engage with the process to make it work for you. It is a tried and trusted process – so use it! The process is as follows:

Step 1

Talk to your supervisor about your concerns – most, if not all, are open to making your experience as valuable as possible

Step 2

Phone your placement advisor at EUSA – they are there to make sure you have as valuable an experience as possible

Step 3

Request a meeting with your EUSA placement advisor to discuss your concerns

Step 4

Resolution – this is arrived at through the above process, i.e. everyone concerned discussing the concerns and working out a suitable solution

There are a number of occasions wherein BU and EUSA check in with you to see how your internship is going. These include phone contact on week one of the internship, an all-class meeting with EUSA personnel to check in and see how things are going, an electronic mid-point review and the internship review meeting with BU's academic director.

This process is there to enable you to have the best experience possible. Most of all, it is **MANDATORY** and applies to all students. It is not acceptable to engage in behaviour that is contrary to this troubleshooting code and your grade will be negatively affected if you do so.

So engage with the process and make sure you have the best experience possible.

Internship Review Meeting

The Internship Review Meeting is an opportunity for you to discuss and share your internship experience with the internship coursework grader.

Each student has approximately five minutes to give a synopsis of their internship so that there is some time left for questions and discussion.

Your contribution should be informal but structured **around some though not all** of the below topics.

Your Internship:

- What does your organization do?
- Who is your supervisor and what is the hierarchy of employees?
- Who are your coworkers? What kind of background do they come from?
- What is the work ethic like?
- What are the social interactions between coworkers like?
- How does the organization assess its success? What would you change to improve its effectiveness?
- What is morale like in your organization? What would you change to improve morale?
- How are you contributing to your organization? What are you learning?
- What has been the most surprising element on a professional level? Cultural? Personal?

These are also the issues that you should be addressing / recording on a weekly basis for your internship assessments. In addressing these questions, you should make an effort to make comparisons to the US or other countries when possible.

Dublin Internship Program

**This form is emailed to you so that you can type it up.
You must follow the template provided.**

1 PAGE INTERNSHIP SUMMARY FORM

NAME:

HOST ORGANISATION:

DEPARTMENT (if applicable):

SUPERVISOR:

SUMMARY OF ORGANISATION YOU ARE WORKING FOR:

SUMMARY OF YOUR ROLE, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

OTHER COMMENTS THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO FUTURE INTERNS:

Briefing Note on Internships

- The Internship is an **academic course**: it is not on-the-job training, although it will give you the opportunity to up-skill in many different ways – socially and professionally.
- It is intended to give you a **taste of work-life** in the sector in which you are placed and an opportunity to experience cultural differences in an Irish setting .
- As you're in a new cultural setting, you'll need to demonstrate **cultural intelligence** as well as professionalism. You need to remember you're in a foreign country – we do things differently here – not necessarily better or worse – just differently.
- Accept that there will be **cultural differences** that you will have to adjust to – the speed of speech, non-metropolitan accents, time management, telephone mannerisms, slagging, office politics and gossip, the sometimes 'slack' non-hierarchical nature of the Irish workplace and the way different employee levels all mix together socially. Again, all these are not necessarily good or bad – just different to what you may be used to.
- Accept that there will be **challenges** – physical, intellectual, emotional – in the internship phase and plan accordingly. The Internship is a taste of real life and commuting early in the morning, being the newbie, constantly introducing yourself to new people, and working fulltime can be very demanding. Try to keep positive about being in a different environment, having new experiences and being able to build up your skills and resumé and make contacts for the future.
- As an intern you may or may not have a **specific role**, but you will be expected to help out with tasks on a day-to-day basis. One of the best things you can do is simply talk to people – get to know who they are and what they do. If you're invited by your colleagues on a tea or coffee break, go with them and talk to them.
- While you will have a Supervisor in the host organisation your learning experience depends very much on your own **initiative and positive attitude**. Talk to people: you're the newbie – you'll need to display maturity, openness, independence and self-motivation.
- Learning by **observation** and shadowing is just as valuable as learning by doing – though admittedly maybe not as much fun. Don't be shy – ask whether you can observe and shadow at meetings and rounds etc. Supervisors are open to these suggestions.
- Internships are as much about **finding out** what you do not want to do career-wise as they are confirming what you do want to do.
- '**Busy work**' is a fact of life for EVERY job and EVERY job goes through busy and quiet cycles – there is no escaping these facts, now or in the future.

Remember – it's the totality of the entire experience – not one good or bad day – that will ultimately define your internship experience.

Engage and Enjoy!