

**International Relations 399R Syllabus
10630
Internship Credit
Spring/Summer 2008
Prof. Kerk Phillips**

Objectives

Credit for internships is granted in order to help students accomplish three important goals: (1) to enhance and build upon study in the discipline; (2) to help build skills useful for future coursework and, eventually, professional life; and, (3) to encourage students to explore career possibilities and enhance their prospects for future employment.

The purpose of the course assignments are to help you meet the above objectives in addition to any personal ones that you may have. It is very important that you understand and accept the concept that credit and grades for internships are based upon knowledge and skill acquisition, not just job performance. The course work for this class is designed to help measure what you have learned in the internship and, thus, is the principal vehicle for determining your grade for the credit. All assignments will be as closely related as possible to your internship.

Success in this course will depend upon your strong performance in each of the following areas. First, it is necessary to be reflective about your experience in the internship and be able to link what you are observing to theories, concepts or principles studied in previous courses. In this sense the internship becomes a laboratory in which you test those things you have only examined abstractly in on-campus classes. Second, you must be able to think and write analytically, not just descriptively, about your experience. Students whose writing is only descriptive should expect to receive no more than a C grade for the course. Third, you must be able to communicate your thoughts effectively according to the norms and conventions for upper-division college writing. This means that all of your assignments must be well written and free of mechanical or style errors. Students whose writing does not conform to the standards for good writing should expect to receive no more than a B grade for the course. Fourth, much of the course work requires you to be self-directed, it is important that you keep track of deadlines and submit the assignments on time. The assignment schedule is intended to have you examine and reflect on various aspects of the experience at key times in the internship. The effectiveness of the assignments is diminished if they are submitted late. Finally, you must be a hard working, reliable, competent staff member for your experience provider (employer). While most of your grade will be based on the written assignments you submit. A poor work performance, failing to keep commitments or violating your experience provider's rules will result in a poor grade for the credit.

Grading

This course is letter graded. Because some of the assignments are submitted after grades are due, you may initially receive a T grade for the course. This is a neutral grade that will not effect your grade point average. Shortly after the deadline for submitting all of your work, the letter grade for the course will be posted to your transcript. Should you fail to complete the required work by the deadline indicated in the assignment schedule a grade change will be submitted based upon the work received up to that point. *Students planning to graduate at the end of the semester will need to complete all assignments by the last day of finals if they wish to have their grades submitted in time to meet the university deadlines for graduation.*

One note of caution, students completing internships for credit occasionally misunderstand the importance of the reports and written work in determining their final grade. Usually this misunderstanding is due to assuming mistakenly that the credit will be an "easy A," resulting from just having performed well in the internship. Avoid this error and remember that your supervisor's evaluation counts for only a portion of the final grade. The academic work you submit is a major vehicle for evaluating what you have learned and for determining your grade. These papers and reports must be well written and will be rigorously graded. Unless your academic work is of a superior quality, just having worked hard in the internship will not guarantee you a satisfactory outcome for the course.

The grades will be weighted as follows, depending on the number of credit hours you take:

1 Credit Hour

- Weekly Emails = 10%
- Mid-internship Self-assessment = 15%
- Portfolio (6 entries) = 35%
- Final Supervisor Evaluation = 40%

2 Credit Hours

- Weekly Emails = 10%
- Mid-internship Self-assessment = 15%
- Opinion Article = 10%
- Portfolio (9 entries) = 30%
- Final Supervisor Evaluation = 35%

3 Credit Hours

- Weekly Emails = 10%
- Opinion Articles = 20%
- Mid-internship Self-assessment = 10%
- Portfolio (12 entries) = 30%
- Final Supervisor Evaluation = 30%

5 Credit Hours

- Weekly Emails = 5%
- Opinion Articles = 10%
- Mid-internship Self-assessment = 10%
- Field Notes = 10%
- Research Design = 15%
- Portfolio = 25%
- Final Supervisor Evaluation = 25%

6 Credit Hours

- Weekly Emails = 5%
- Opinion Articles = 10%
- Research Design = 15%

- Field Notes = 10%
- Mid-internship Self-assessment = 5%
- Organization Analysis = 5%
- Portfolio = 25%
- Final Supervisor Evaluation = 25%

9 Credit Hours

- Weekly Emails = 5%
- Opinion Articles = 5%
- Research Design = 10%
- Field Notes = 5%
- Mid-internship Self-assessment = 5%
- Organization Analysis = 5%
- Research Paper = 20%
- Portfolio = 20%
- Final Supervisor Evaluation = 25%

Assignments

All of these assignments should be correlated as closely as possible with your internship. The opinion piece you write should have something to do with issues you are learning about in your internship, for example. Or perhaps should focus on the good that your organization can do in the world, or problems it faces in carrying out its mission. The research design should be related to things you are learning about in your internship, or that you want to know more about. And so forth.

NOTE: YOU, the student, are responsible for turning things in on time without any reminders from me, and for asking me for exam questions a week before the exams are due. Please note all due dates below. I will penalize late papers and exams even though I have forgotten about them too and have not reminded you of upcoming deadlines. It is your job to be pro-active in meeting deadlines. I will adjust deadlines if you ask me ahead of time with good reason.

Weekly E-mails

Each Friday you must e-mail the faculty director (and CC a copy to the student facilitator). The faculty director will sometimes respond to each e-mail and will ask questions meant to engage and encourage you to make connections and think more analytically. Your e-mail should follow this rubric:

- Discuss your internship duties.
- Discuss what projects relating to the internship you have completed during the week.
- Explain what deadlines (from your research schedule) you have completed or are working on.
- Discuss what you are doing to move your assignments forward.
- Ask any questions regarding your research and coursework.
- Provide some analysis: why do things work the way they do in your office? Why do things work the way they do in the part of the world that your office is attempting to maintain or change or research? Identify interesting issues or puzzles related to your

work and comment on them. Be curious, explore, relate to your previous course work, be intellectually engaged.

You may also include any personal comments about fun activities or trips; however, it is not required and should in no way take up the bulk of your e-mail.

Opinion Articles

You should write two persuasive opinion pieces of about 1,000 words each. These are of the sort that might be published as an “op-ed” in a newspaper. Address the general public and make a case for something. Use both logic and evidence, though the logic will obviously be less-developed and more informal than in a research paper and the evidence will be less systematic. Write engagingly and with great economy; try to say a lot in few words. It would be great if you could tie the opinion piece to things you are working on in your internship.

Research Design

In this 5-8-page paper you should identify a clear and important question you want to find an answer to, explain why this question is important, summarize what specialists know about the question and its answers, identify a range of possible answers to the question and why those answers all possibly make sense, and identify *specific* sources you will consult to find out the answer to the question. Please also see “Research Design Paper” below for more information on what makes a good research design.

To write a good research design requires that you know a lot about your topic. You need to do a lot of initial research. One purpose of a design is to understand what is well-known about a topic and what is not, thereby identifying areas for further research, which you will then carry out. The research design allows you to summarize what has gone before (well-known existing theories and information) and lay out your own path of further exploration. NOTE that I am talking about a design to do original research, not a design to just go out and read existing secondary sources. You must read those secondary sources before you write the research design in order to figure out what original research needs to be done.

Mid-internship Assessment

When you have completed one half of your internship, complete the mid-internship assessment and e-mail it to the faculty director. Write a two to three page paper that addresses each of the following points:

- What are you doing well in your internship?
- In what ways do you need to improve in the internship?
- Are you satisfied with your work assignments? Why or why not?
- Describe your relationship with your work supervisor or co-workers. Is there anything you need to do to improve those relationships?
- Briefly summarize the knowledge and skills you have gained or improved since beginning the internship.
- How has the experience challenged the assumptions you had prior to the beginning of the internship about working for this or similar organizations?

- If there are any problems (i.e. relationships, work assignments, other issues) with the internship, what have you done to resolve them? Are there any left unresolved?
- So far, what have you done for your own personal research? What problems have you come across? What do you still need to do to be able to write your final paper?

You are not limited to the questions listed above and you may address other issues concerning your internship experience thus far.

Organization Analysis

Write a five to seven page paper in which you examine and evaluate the office or organization in which you are working. The paper must address each of the following.

- Describe the mission and goals of the organization. Why is or why isn't it successful in accomplishing its mission?
- Include an organizational chart which outlines office/organization hierarchy and briefly describes the duties of the staff. Be sure to identify where interns or your position fits into the chart.
- Describe and evaluate the decision making process in the organization, including both formal and informal processes. The formal process is that which is outlined in its official documents (e.g. charter or constitution) that describe who has authority to make decisions. Informal processes are those that are not outlined in any official manner, but either have influence on the formal process or are, in reality, the way in which decisions are reached. For example, the administrative assistant to a department head may not have any authority in the organization structure but is the gatekeeper on information submitted to his or her boss. Thus, the assistant controls which issues will be considered and, to a certain extent, the outcome of deliberations on those issues.
- Describe the qualities in its employees that are valued by the organization. Do you feel the reward structure (to the extent you are aware of it) helps to promote the organization's mission? Why or why not?
- What one recommendation would you make to improve the organization's performance. Why do you think it would improve the performance? Be practical in your recommendation taking into account the resources and constraints of the organization. Why do you think your recommendation has not already been tried or adopted.
- Indicate two principles or concepts taught in one of your previous courses that are relevant to this organization. Describe what new knowledge or understanding you have about those principles or concepts as a result of observing the work of this organization.

Field Notes

The idea here is to learn and summarize information in small pieces that could later be woven together into a greater whole in the form of a report or a paper. Each field note should be 1-2 pages, single spaced. Each field note should consist of a summary of what you learned from a particular research source. That source could be a secondary source such as a book or a scholarly journal article, an interview, a dataset, a group of documents, a set of speeches, etc. The source should shed light on your research question and should be rich enough to justify a page or two of

notes. Carefully document your source, including everything you might possibly need to know about it in the future for a bibliography or for retracing your steps after your source grows cold.

Research Paper

Write a 10-15 page research paper on an issue related to your internship. Ideally this paper will grow out of one or more of the work assignments in your internship. This paper is not simply a “term paper” in which you summarize well-known existing information about a topic from a variety of sources. Rather, it is a *research* paper in which you attempt to collect and analyze original, highly contested, or relatively less well-known information. Your analysis should build on others who have answered similar questions but should go beyond them in some way. The paper should emphasize primary source research (e.g. interviews with relevant knowledgeable people or data you collect as part of the internship). Discuss the paper's topic with your work supervisor and see what he or she is willing to do to help you gain access to the data needed to complete the paper. Hopefully the paper will be something that you could also leave with your experience provider. The final draft of this paper is due approximately two weeks after the conclusion of the internship by the date indicated in the assignment schedule.

Portfolio

Over the course of your internship you will increase your skills and knowledge in a variety of areas. Documenting this growth can be both rewarding and interesting, particularly in the months and years after the internship when you will want to have some tangible evidence of your experience. A portfolio is a good way to document your work and illustrate your knowledge and skill development.

A good portfolio can contain a variety of entries, including correspondence (both memoranda and letters), reports written for your supervisor or other staff in the organization, notes on meetings or projects, or other general observations from your experience. Include anything that you feel demonstrates your skill or knowledge acquisition in the internship. Be careful not to include anything that might be considered confidential unless you have your work supervisor's permission to do so.

Entry cover page. Each entry in the portfolio must include a typed cover page with a section (paragraph) addressing each of the following...

- an explanation of the entry,
- the skills (e.g. writing, interpersonal, computer, analytical, research, quantitative, etc.) and/or knowledge that you have gained or improved as a result of working on this entry, and
- any questions raised or ideas for future investigation (either during the internship or later) that have come to you as a result of having worked on this entry. If possible, in this section state a concept, principle, etc. from your previous on-campus course work that relates to the entry.

Give thoughtful attention to your response to the third section. Your answer to this question is significant and will be used to evaluate whether or not you are reflective about your work and its relevance to previous course work in the discipline.

The cover pages should be written over the course of the internship at the same time the portfolio entries are completed. It is less effective (and strongly discouraged) if you write them all at the end of the internship just prior to submitting your portfolio.

Internship summary paper. At the beginning of the portfolio include an internship summary paper in which you describe...

- knowledge you gained of institutions, processes, concepts related to previous study;
- skills you improved or acquired;
- understanding of career possibilities you acquired; and
- your personal growth from the experience.

Reference the entries in your portfolio as evidence of your development in the above areas. This paper need not be long, but should be of sufficient length to show that you have been reflective about your experience and to explain why the internship was meaningful for you and how it enhanced your education. You may wish to share a copy of this paper with your work supervisor.

Format. Assemble the portfolio in a three-ring binder and submit it to the Washington Seminar Faculty Advisor by the deadline indicated in the assignment schedule. The presentation should be professional and organized. Ten percent of the portfolio grade will be based on the quality of the presentation.

Grading Criteria. A portfolio deserving of an A grade will have at least 12 entries with well written, reflective cover pages and summary paper. It will be well organized and professionally presented. Portfolios that are lacking in any of the above qualities, but have reflective cover pages and summary paper will merit a B. Those that are merely descriptive or have few entries will receive only a C grade.

Supervisor Evaluation

This is a final evaluation of your job performance completed by your work supervisor. Guidelines that your supervisor should follow in completing the evaluation are found at the end of this syllabus. Be sure your supervisor has a copy of them. *Note: You are ultimately responsible to ensure that the completed final evaluation is submitted to the faculty director.*

Due Dates

Material is due on the Friday of each week listed. This schedule does not include the weekly emails, which are due each Friday. Some of these deadlines may not apply to you, depending on how many credit hours you are taking. For spring/summer 2008, week one ends on Friday, May 2.

Week 4. Opinion Article #1

Week 5. Research Design

Week 6. Three Field Notes

Week 7. Mid-internship self-assessment paper

Week 8. Opinion Article #2

Week 9. Three Field Notes

Week 10. Organization Analysis

Week 12. Three Field Notes

Two weeks after conclusion of internship. Research Paper, Portfolio, Final Supervisor
Evaluation