

Internship/Seminar in International Affairs Spring 2008

The International Affairs Program offers students the opportunity to integrate theoretical concepts related to politics and international affairs with practical experience in international organizations. The purpose of the course is to allow students to explore the realm of international organization, and the career possibilities that are before them. Students doing local internships will be required to attend BI-weekly seminars. There will be written assignments for these seminars. Students will be eligible for six (6) credit hours.

For Local Internships

There will be seven seminar meetings of the class. Each student will also have a personal conference with the instructor and will organize a meeting to be attended by herself/himself, the placement supervisor, and the instructor. The times for these meetings will be arranged to accommodate students' class and internship placement schedules.

The seminar meetings will be structured toward allowing students to share their experiences and to assist them in integrating experience into theory. The personal conference with the instructor will focus on a review of each student's journal and proposed research. The meeting attended by the student, placement supervisor and instructor will review the intern's duties and the structure for supervision.

Each student will work for a minimum of ten and a maximum of twenty hours per week at an internship placement. These hours are to be divided between tasks for the placement, and independent research and interviews to determine the role of the office. Approved placements have all agreed to provide interns with an intellectually challenging primary task. In addition, each student will receive regularly scheduled direct supervision, will be exposed to other aspects of the functioning of the office/institution, and will be involved in discussion with other individuals concerning the relationship between the intern's duties and the overall effort of the organization.

Students should be conscious of the fact that an internship is different from an employment situation or donating your time as a volunteer. In an employment situation you have contracted to perform defined tasks in return for remuneration. As a volunteer your primary objective is to further the goals of the organization or individual to whom you are giving your services. An internship is an educational experience. In the selection of a placement, the negotiation of tasks, and the manner in which you approach the completion of tasks, "learning" should be your primary objective.

Interns should provide a benefit to the host institution. As a result, students are expected to maintain their commitments to their host organization and to complete their duties promptly and efficiently. At the same time, while you are on your placement you should be reflective and analytical. Be active rather than passive. Ask questions politely and at appropriate times. When you meet or hear of people of interest, follow up and make appointments to talk in greater depth later. Take full advantage of the opportunities your internship presents. Most importantly, always ask yourself the theoretical significance of what you are experiencing.

Students are also reminded that while on their placement you are representing the University of Colorado and the International Affairs Program. You are expected to dress and act appropriately. You are not to use your position for personal political advantage or to advance a personal political agenda.

Finally, while you are on your internship, enjoy yourself. Both work and learning should be enjoyable experiences.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Instructor: Vicki Hunter
Office: Ketchum 5D
Phone: Office: 492-1493
Home: 447-1790 (Please do not call after 9:00 p.m.)
Office Hours: Tuesdays immediately after class and by appt.
E-mail: ashv@colorado.edu

Each student is required to read at least two books selected with the approval of the instructor. Scholarly articles may be substituted for these optional books at the rate of five articles per book. You should consult the SOCIAL SCIENCES INDEX or ask the assistance of a librarian in locating scholarly articles relevant to your internship. This reading should focus on the topic of your final paper. This means doing some research on your own. You should also consult your supervisor for any ideas they might have.

The major purpose of the readings is to provide a framework for organizing and orienting the students' learning experience. To this end, the books should provide a general discussion of institutions such as that where a student is placed. Thus, a student interning at Amnesty International would want to read about human rights organizations in general rather than specifically about Amnesty International.

A secondary purpose of reading is to supplement the student's knowledge of the institution where they are placed. To this end, a history of the office, group, or agency might be appropriate. This secondary purpose, though, should not detract from the major purpose of the readings.

Students should seek the advice of the instructor in choosing reading material. Students are also encouraged to seek the advice of placement supervisors and other professors in the International Affairs program.

COURSE MEETINGS:

1. January 15
Topic: Introduction: How to make a successful internship

Discussion :(A) Syllabus

- (B) Planning a successful internship
- (C) Times and dates for future seminar meetings
- (D) First paper assignment--what is a 'prospectus'?
- (E) What is an international organization?
- (F) Contracts

2. **January 29**
Topic: The Structure of the Internship

Discussion: Internship Assignments: Each student is to bring to class a written statement of their duties as an intern to share with the rest of the class. Students should also write any questions they have in regard to negotiating appropriate duties. These statements are to be typed. They will be turned in after class and graded "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory."

Assignments: (A) Schedule personal conferences
(B) Contracts due

3. February 5
Topic: Personal conferences (Ketchum 5D)

Discussion: (A) Journals
(B) Discuss paper topics
(C) Schedule meeting with placement supervisor and instructor. (Tentative dates: 2/12, 2/13, 2/20, 2/21)

4. **February 19**
Topic: Paper Topics

Discussion: (A) First paper due
(B) Discuss papers

5. **March 4**
Topic: Ethical considerations

Discussion: Each student should bring a typed statement concerning an ethical question they have about their work environment. This could be about any number of issues such as sexual or racial discrimination, employee/supervisor relationships, etc. These statements will be turned in after the class and graded "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory".

Assignment: Schedule personal conferences

6. **March 18**
Topic: Visit to other internships

Discussion: (A) Journals (bring to class for me to look over)
(B) Visit to another internship (bring a typed statement of the visit; 1-2 paragraphs will be sufficient)
(C) Status of final paper

Assignment: Visit to another internship is to have been completed.

7. **April 15**
Topic: Movement toward completion

Discussion: Examples: Each student is to bring to class two examples of the way in which their office or institution affects who wins and loses in the international realm. One of these examples is to be of a group or individual that benefits from the existence of the institution. The second is to be of a group or individual that is disadvantaged by the existence of this office and why this is the case. These examples will be turned in after the class and graded "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory."

8. April 29

Topic: Analyzing the internships

Discussion: So how did it go? We will discuss your final thoughts on your internship experience.

Assignment: (A) **Final papers due**
(B) Final Evaluation due
(C) Copy of thank you note due

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS AND REQUIREMENTS:

1. MEETINGS

The first personal conference will take place in Ketchum 5D. In this conference, each student will finalize the time and place for a meeting between the student, the placement supervisor and the instructor. The second meeting will occur at the location of each student's placement.

2. CONTRACTS

You must fill out a contract with your supervisor as to your expected duties. This is required by the university for legal purposes so it is essential you get this done as soon as possible.

3. INITIAL PAPER

At the fourth class meeting, each student is expected to submit a five page typed paper. This paper should not discuss what you are doing on your internship or conclusions you have reached about the role it performs in the international system. It is to present an exploratory proposal (**prospectus**) for your further research this semester. What do you want to find out about your organization and its role in the international arena? In preparing for this paper think about the context in which you want to place your experience. What comparisons do you want to make? Are you going to look at whether your office is like other offices at the same level, similar offices at a different level, all international organizations, etc.? You should present specific questions you want to get answers to while you are there. Also, it should list the things you are going to need to do to answer these questions. (e.g. interviews, library research, data collection, etc.)

IMPORTANT: If you are trying to receive upper division category credit for this class, you **MUST** submit a justification letter with this paper. This letter should explain, in detail, how your research and internship substitute for the class you wish to get credit for. The letter should contain specific references to sources you will be using that overlap with the class to be substituted (you should try to obtain the course syllabus from the appropriate department).

Your initial paper may be derived from reading relevant chapters in an introductory text, from reading you have done from other courses, from reading your placement supervisor suggests, from your prior experience, or from your personal beliefs. Remember, though, that whenever you make an assertion of fact, you must provide a reference for that assertion. Again, your reference can be simply a conversation with a supervisor or a previous course, but you must still provide a citation. If you are unsure as to when or how to reference a paper, check at the bookstore or library. There are several simple manuals available. Include a working bibliography in your paper.

4. QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS, PROBLEMS, SUGGESTIONS, AND EXAMPLES:

Each student is responsible for developing, presenting, and discussing questions, statements, problems, and suggestions as described in the particular class meetings. These assignments are to be typed and submitted at the time of class meetings. Late assignments will not be accepted.

5. JOURNAL

Each student is required to keep a journal throughout this course. The purpose of the journal is to organize your experience, allow reflections, and chart changes in attitude. There must be an entry for each day of your placement. The entries should be in a spiral notebook maintained solely for this purpose. Your entries should consist of complete sentences with reasonable attention to correct usage, spelling, and punctuation.

Your journal entries may include some or all of the following:

- (A) Expectations: Each student should begin his/her journal with a two page summary of their expectations regarding their placement. This should include what sort of organization you expect to be present, what sort of interactions you think you will observe, and what sorts of people you expect to be present. This section should include both positive and negative.
- (B) A log: A log is a concise statement of what happened, who did it, and when it happened. This should include what you did. Your log should be precise, specific, and factual.
- (C) Perceptions: Perceptions go beyond a simple log; they note patterns of behavior and insights about what the things that occur mean. Perceptions also include hypotheses about the theoretical importance of events.
- (D) Feelings: Record your feelings about what is occurring, both to you and in your placement setting. Are you afraid, unsure, shocked, pleased, flattered, and why. What do you feel about the people and events you observe? Note any relationships between your feelings and the beliefs you are developing regarding the political role of your placement.
- (E) Fantasies: Use your journal to try on different roles in your internship. What would it be like to be the lead person, your supervisor, a client, an opponent, a supporter? What does this tell you about the political role of your placement?
- (F) Insight provoking quotes: Include the "quote of the day" that you found truly noteworthy.
- (G) Specialized vocabulary you have learned: Write down any specialized vocabulary used on your internship and what it means.
- (H) Yourself: One of the benefits of this course is that it allows you to examine yourself in a different setting. Focus part of your journal on yourself and your performance in the environment.

Your journal should be confidential. It is to be shared only with your instructor. You should learn to unobtrusively make notes for your journal throughout the day. You should set aside a particular time after each day's work on the internship to complete your journal. Do not wait until the next day. You will lose too much insight.

6. VISIT TO ANOTHER INTERNSHIP

Each student is expected to visit at least one other student's internship placement during the semester. You should select the placement for this visit on the basis of its ability to provide an alternative view of an international organization, i.e. if your internship is with a human rights groups, you might want to visit a governmental agency.

The specifics of your visit and your reflections on it are to be typed and handed in to me by the assigned class day listed in the schedule.

7. FINAL PAPER

The following paper requirements are based on the writing of a general paper to meet the basic requirements of this class. If you are substituting this class for a particular category, your paper will be much more specific and should utilize sources from the particular class you are substituting. If this is the case, the specific information that relates to your own internship may be written separately from the category paper; this should be about 2-3 pages. In addition, if you are requesting area credit make sure your paper covers your geographic area. PLEASE NOTE SOMEWHERE ON YOUR PAPER WHAT TYPE OF CREDIT YOU ARE REQUESTING.

At the conclusion of the course, each student will submit a major analytical paper. Analysis is the act of examining or dividing something for the purpose of determining its essential purposes. How does your experience measure up to your expectations? Compare your actual "findings" (your experiences at the internship, your research) with your expectations stated in your first paper. To what degree does your experience reinforce, modify, or contradict the theory expressed in

the literature you have read. Be careful and thorough. Don't make statements in your final paper that are stronger than your experience will support. Also, to as great a degree as possible, support each statement you make with specific evidence or examples. Don't say, "A conversation with my supervisor leads me to believe." Give the specific statements she or he made and why they led you to your conclusion.

This paper should tell me about the organization where you did your internship. What type of organization is it and what is its history? What were your duties there? What does the literature say about this type of organization and the political role it plays? What did you seek to examine? How did you go about doing this? Who did you talk to and why? What events and actions did you observe? What conclusions did you reach and specifically what led you to those conclusions? What does this tell me about the political role of the organization?

To orient the analysis in your final paper, focus on how the international system would be different if your institution didn't exist. How does the operation of your placement affect who gets what, when, and how in the international arena? How does it affect who wins and who loses? Don't just talk about how things operate at your internship. Tell me about what that means in terms of who is better or worse off in society. What does your experience tell us about the international political system and how it operates?

Given the length of the final paper (approx. 12 pages), think about how you wish to present your ideas. It may be helpful to provide an introduction and table of contents to orient the reader. Divide the paper into subsections with section headings. Tell the reader what you are going to tell him, tell him, and then tell him what you told him.

Finally, as an appendix, your paper should include a sample of any product from your duties as an intern, e.g. reports, etc.

The major portion of this paper should be your analysis of who benefits and loses from the operation in your office. This should not be a one or two paragraph conclusion.

8. EVALUATION

With the final paper, each student will submit an evaluation of her/his internship placement. (1-2 pages) This evaluation should focus on what your duties were, whether you believe it was a good learning experience, whether you were adequately supervised, and whether you would recommend this placement to future interns. These evaluations should be separate from your final paper so as they can be collected and used by future students.

9. THANK YOU LETTERS

Each student is expected to write thank-you letters to individuals who played significant roles assisting the intern during her/his placement. Copies of these letters are to be attached to the final paper.

10. GRADING:

The instructor sincerely hopes that each student finds her/his internship placement to be an enjoyable and beneficial learning experience. At the same time, it is crucial to note the academic evaluation in this course is separate from any benefits gained from the participatory experience itself. Grading will be solely the responsibility of the instructor. The grade will be determined by academic performance.

The initial paper will contribute 20 percent of the final grade. The questions, suggestions, etc., submitted at the seminars will contribute 20 percent of the final grade. Your journal will count for 10 percent of the final grade. Since these projects are to be the basis of seminar discussions, late material will not be accepted. The final paper will contribute 40 percent of the final grade. Class participation will count for 10 percent.