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# Internships in Florence

**COURSE DESIGNATOR** FLOR 3009

**Language of Instruction** English

**NUMBER OF CREDITS** 3 credits

**Contact Hours** 26 hours

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The internship is a culminating experience that provides students with the opportunity to observe professionals in practice, complete projects/tasks that are mutually beneficial to the student and the organization, and put learned knowledge and skills into practice. In addition, the experience allows students to practice their specific education background and prepare for future employment in various settings. Internship is an intellectual and emotional experience; students will combine learning from placement experience with course reading, exercises, and discussions.

## INSTRUCTOR

Tamara Evans

## COURSE GOAL

The Florence internship course is designed to provide students with the opportunity to become more knowledgeable regarding the local culture, organizational cultures, and Italian business environment. It also offers students the unique opportunity to master team-work, and communicate in Italian or/and English depending on the site. Students are expected to make a valuable contribution to the internship site through the completion of major projects or tasks.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the internship, students will:

- Have a broader overview of Italian working environment
- Be able to apply concepts they had read about in textbooks, and learned in classroom into practice in a real-world of professional intercultural setting.
- Be able to combine theories, ideas, and concepts with specific experience gained during the internship
- Be able to present and apply new knowledge, skills, abilities, and other competences necessary to serve effectively in a professional setting
- Be able to adequately adjust their communication approach, overcome language barrier, and improve their linguistic skills
- Be able to understand the dynamics of an organization's culture through observing and reflecting on how decisions are made, how work is structured, how power is distributed, and how employees interact.
- Be able to deal with cultural difference in professional settings.

## METHODOLOGY

Each student is expected to do 10-12 hours of work per week at the internship site, and also regularly attend a 2-hour class per week at ACCENT. Class sessions are designed as seminars and forum for discussion. The seminars provide an opportunity for you to share experience and what you have learned, exchange ideas, share information, and discuss problems you are facing and concerns you might have in mutually supportive place. Every week you will be assigned a reading for group discussion. Each student is expected to participate and respond appropriately to questions.

Each weekly session has at least two or more of the following elements:

- Discussion of what worked and not worked at work site for each student during the past week
- Review of current events and impact on organizations
- Discussion of assigned reading
- Analyzing short case studies.
- Videos showing different issues reinforcing relevant topics.

## COURSE PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for the course.

## REQUIRED READING/MATERIALS

There is no textbook required for this course.

### List of readings included in the reader

H. Frederick Sweitzer, Mary A. King, *The Successful Internship*, Brooks/Cole, 2009. Chapters 1, 3, 4, 7

John Mole, *Mind your Manners: Managing Business Cultures in the New Global Europe*, London 2003, Introduction, pp. 1-52

Other reading materials (articles, newspaper reports, and the like) will be distributed when appropriate.

## GRADING

### Class participation and attendance 10%

This course requires that you participate in class discussions. This means that you contribute to class discussions by relating your experiences, asking questions, and making comments appropriate to the topics being discussed. Students will be assigned readings which will be discussed during a given class period. In order for the discussions to be meaningful, each student must come to class fully prepared to discuss the assigned reading and make meaningful comments. Since participation plays a role in your final grade, it is essential that you have not only read the assignment, but have drawn conclusions of your own from the reading. You will present those conclusions during class discussions.

All students begin the term with a **C+** grade for participation. Contribution to class discussion will raise this grade. Habitual absence from class and disrupting class (i.e., talking, text-messaging, etc.) will reduce this grade.

### Internship Weekly Journals 30%

Weekly journals are required as part of your internship learning experience. The weekly journals should be in the range of two pages explaining what you did, learned and observed during the past week. Your journal should not be just a listing of duties performed. You should use the journal as a reflection tool. You should write down your thoughts and feelings as well as any interesting personal observations.

A detailed journal will assist you at the end of the semester by documenting information on the organization, your internship objectives, and activities at the site. Keeping track of your activities and any other information will assist you in writing up your final portfolio, as you might otherwise forget much of what you did

The Weekly Journal should be typed at the end of each week and submitted no later than 12 pm every Monday. Late submission will negatively affect your weekly journal grade.

Weekly journal Guidelines:

- weekly journals should be sent as an e-mail attachment
- e-mail subject heading should include journal week number, your name and surname
- it should not be more than 2 pages double spaced, font 10
- at the top of the journal place your name, dates you worked, number of hours worked for that week, and the total of hours worked from the start of the internship placement

. Your journal should include, but not be limited to the following:

- A discussion of the week's major responsibilities, accomplishments, and progress (i.e., what have you done this week, including tasks or projects you have completed)
- Discuss any lessons you have learned this week that have advanced your understanding of Italian business practice or have made an impact on you professionally.
- Your response to the weekly reflection questions. These topics vary each week and are relevant to your role as an intern. Weekly reflection questions will be provided during the semester.

### Internship Presentation 20%

At the end of the internship program you will have an opportunity to share your internship experience with a defense committee and fellow interns. The defense committee consists of the course instructor and other academics and administrative members at ACCENT. Your PowerPoint presentation will be graded by all members of the defense committee.

Prepare your PowerPoint presentation in a way that a general audience from outside the field can understand well. The presentation should be within 15-20 minutes and include the content of your internship placement and learning outcomes. Further information regarding the presentation and grading will be provided during the semester.

**Internship Portfolio 20%**

By the end of the semester, each student is required to complete an internship portfolio.

Please plan ahead and start with this as soon as you start your internship (take photos, keep samples of your work). The portfolio requires research and interviews with your site supervisor or other professionals at your internship.

A typed hard copy (2,500 words) is due on the last day of class. Use the following portfolio guideline to help you write your portfolio, which is a reflection of your experience:

- Cover Page (your name, semester, internship site, and faculty supervisor name)
- Table of contents
- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Structure of the organisation
- Role and duties performed in Internship
- Interview of site supervisor or a senior colleague (Conduct an informational interview with an individual at your host organization or your site supervisor to learn more about his/her career journey)
- Organization’s position and importance in Italian culture
- Selection of work samples or other artifacts. Choose artifacts that reflect what you did as well as what you learned during your internship.
- Evidence of networking
- Updated/revised resume reflecting your current internship experience
- Sample of cover letter
- Copy of up to date/ current/ revised Learning Plan
- Site supervisor evaluation of work (mid-term and final)
- Completed work log form signed by site supervisor
- Internship learning goals form
- Conclusion
- Appendix

**Site supervisor evaluations 20%**

There will be a mid-term and final assessment of the student’s performance by a site supervisor. The assessment is based on site supervisor’s interaction with the student as well as feedback received from other staff that has had contact with the student. The mid-term evaluation will not affect the student’s grade, but will help to strengthen and support the student throughout the rest of their internship. However, the final site supervisor assessment will count toward 20% of student’s final grade.

**CRITERIA FOR GRADING AND GRADING STANDARDS**

<b>Grading Rubric</b>		
A	93-100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90-92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87-89	
B	83-86	
B-	80-82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77-79	
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
D+	67-69	

D	60-66	
F	0-59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

Summary of how grades are weighted:

Participation	10%
Site supervisor evaluation	20%
Weekly journals	30%
Internship presentation	20%
Internship portfolio	20%
Overall Grade	100%

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### WEEK 1

- Course Overview & Introduction
- Internships in Florence as work and as cultural experience. “Preparing for an interview”
- Workshop
- Learning objectives: In order to get a better sense of where you would like to complete your internship, you may need to spend some time thinking and writing about who you are, what motivates you, what your goals are and where you see yourself in the near future.
- Learning Objectives are simple statements of what you intend to accomplish during your placement.. They should be specific and they should be measurable.
- All placements are intended to enhance your university education through real-life experience. Please write at least five learning objectives you intend to accomplish during this placement. Take into consideration the nature of your placement, new skills that can be gained, work habits that can be established, the time and resources available, as well as your personal career goals..
- Remember, your objectives should be clear, concise, specific and measurable.
- E. Bird, Internship in Italy: Why They Are Important, How to Land Them
- [http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0503/internships\\_in\\_italy.shtml](http://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0503/internships_in_italy.shtml)

### WEEK 2

#### Workshop

- Learning objectives & Work Plan: according to your own needs and resources and that of the organization, you will develop a set of learning objectives together with your site supervisor. A final draft must be submitted in writing within the first two weeks of the internship. The completed form of Learning objectives & work plans is to be included in the final internship portfolio.

### WEEK 3

- Position yourself as a part of a new global trend, that of internship abroad
- Internships in Italy
- The Florentine January 30, 2014 <http://www.theflorentine.net/articles/article-view.asp?issuetocId=9092>
- H. Frederick Sweitzer, Mary A. King, *The Successful Internship*, Brooks/Cole, 2009, Ch 1, pp. 3-

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- The Internship Experience and Studying Abroad: <http://www.frontiersjournal.com/documents/RobertsFrontiersvol12.pdf>

#### WEEK 4

##### Discussion

- Fashion Industry Interns: Exploitation or Experience?
- The Guardian July 24, 2010: <http://www.theguardian.com/money/2010/jul/24/fashion-industry-interns>
- Italy today, an assessment. *The Economist* on Italy: <http://www.economist.com/node/18780831>

#### WEEK 5

##### Discussion

- Communication Styles & fun quiz on communication styles
- Handouts provided by the instructor

#### WEEK 6

##### Discussion

- INDIVIDUAL MEETING WITH STUDENTS TO REVIEW SITE SUPERVISOR MID-TERM EVALUATION

#### WEEK 7

Spring Break

#### WEEK 8

##### Discussion

- Geert Hofstede Dimensions of Culture (Italy)
- <http://geert-hofstede.com/italy.html>

#### WEEK 9

- Reviewing and evaluating your Internship site
- H. Frederick Sweitzer, Mary A. King, *The Successful Internship*, Brooks/Cole, 2009, Ch 7, Getting to Know the Placement Site, pp.132-156

#### WEEK 10

##### Discussion

- Business Cultures
- John Mole, *Mind your Manners: Managing Business Cultures in the New Global Europe*, London 2003, Introduction, pp. 1-52

## WEEK 11

Sicily Study Tour

## WEEK 12

### TAORMINA STUDY TOUR SUMMARY TO SHARE...

#### Discussion

Towards a successful conclusion.

Identify, reflect and analyze a critical incident that occurred at your internship. Describe the event with as much detail as you can recall.

- Identify your initial thoughts and feelings
- Analyze the event
  - Why do you think this happened?
  - What are the factors that lead to this incident?
  - Conclusions and implications
  - Identify 3 important things you have learned from this incident.
  - What alternate steps or measures you would take should a similar situation occur. please type 1-2 page summary to share with other students and faculty.

## WEEK 13

IN CLASS INTERNSHIP PRESENTATION

## WEEK 14

Internship summary to share.....

Please type your answers to the following questions.

1. List at least 3 things you accomplish *professionally* this semester in and outside of your internship?
2. List at least 3 things you *personally* accomplish this semester in and outside of your internship?
3. List at least 3 things you learned about Italian work environment and business practices this semester
4. What was tough about your internship?
5. What was exciting/stimulating about your internship?
6. What are your recommendations for other students who may intern at your site?

Based on your responses, please type a one page "Summary to Share" that other students and faculty can read regarding your reflection of the internship experience and your professional recommendations for future placements.

## WEEK 15

### PORTFOLIO DUE

- INDIVIDUAL MEETING WITH STUDENTS TO REVIEW SITE SUPERVISOR FINAL EVALUATION

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Regular attendance and punctuality are mandatory in order to earn full marks. The final grade will take into consideration preparation required for class (i.e. readings) and participation in class discussions. If you miss any meetings without an excused absence from the on-site director, your final grade will be dropped accordingly. In the case of absences, it is the student's responsibility to find out what information was given in class including any announcements made.

## **UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

### **SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY:**

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct and student needs. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.