

# Professional Internship Seminar

## Course Details

**Course Designator & Number: BLCA 3505**

**Number of Credits: 3**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**Contact Hours: 22.5 + 120 hours on placement site**

**Instructor: xxx**

## Course Description

This seminar-style course guides students in their professional internship experience at a local organization, business, or institution and connects their engagement in the workplace to in-class learning and reflection. Students will complete projects and tasks that contribute to the placement entity's goals by working in collaboration with their intern supervisor. As an intern, students will gain a cross-cultural perspective on professional settings in the host country while critically examining their own worldview. The course topics and assignments will deepen students' insights about themselves, professional expectations in the local context, and enable articulation of career skills outcomes to be successful in a global workplace.

## Course Objectives

From their participation in this course, students will:

- Gain a nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the local, regional, and global contexts in which they are studying and working.
- Analyze and understand their organization's cultural workplace dynamics including styles of communication, teamwork, and professionalism.
- Build and articulate professional and personal skills utilizing the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) career readiness competencies framework, learning to navigate cultural and other differences towards career development.

- Effectively convey the skills and experience gained from the study abroad experience to future employers through job search materials.
- Reflect on their goals and understanding of their chosen career field utilizing a global mindset.

## Methodology

### Requirements

Attendance: Internship course hours abide by the CET Attendance Policy, and work placement hours are tracked through student work logs. Students must complete all required internship placement site hours in order to earn credit for this course.

Withdrawal: Students may not withdraw from the internship placement or course, or transfer from a credit-bearing internship to a non-credit internship (where offered), unless there is a compelling medical, academic, or personal reason for them to do so. Permission to withdraw or transfer is subject to the approval of the Academic or Program Director.

Policy on Remote Internships: In-person work is the expectation. In the case of an extenuating circumstance (approved by the Academic or Program Director) and if the host organization allows, up to 20% of the internship hours can be completed remotely/virtually.

### Course Prerequisites

None

### Required Reading / Materials

*Readings may vary according to term and instructor, but the below is representative.*

- Barcelona City Hall Sustainability. Retrieved from [https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/turisme/sites/default/files/barcelona\\_en\\_xifres-en-web-2.pdf](https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/turisme/sites/default/files/barcelona_en_xifres-en-web-2.pdf) Barcelona in figures 2023. Barcelona Activa, Ajuntament de Barcelona. Main economic indicators of the Barcelona area.
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- British Council, Booz Allen Hamilton & Ipsos. Culture at Work: The value of intercultural skills in the workplace, 2013.
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- Dua, A., Ellingrud, K. Lazar, M., Luby, R. and Pemberton. S. *How does Gen Z see its place in the working world? With trepidation*. McKinsey & Company, October 2022.
- Farrugia, C. and Sanger, J. Gaining an Employment Edge: The Impact of Study Abroad on 21st Century Skills & Career Prospects in the United States, 2013-2016. *Skill Development & Career Impact*, pp. 12-19, 2017.
- Hofstede, G. *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 2005.
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- *How to Find the Comedy in a Messed-Up World* (with Maeve Higgins). Retrieved from [https://youtu.be/IdQ\\_3oRgdHQ?si=OY\\_4VKx7V85tlq70](https://youtu.be/IdQ_3oRgdHQ?si=OY_4VKx7V85tlq70)
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- Knight, R. How to Get the Most Out of an Informational Interview. *Harvard Business Review*, February 26, 2016. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2016/02/how-to-get-the-most-out-of-an-informational-interview?registration=success>
- Kolb A. *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Pearson Education, Inc., 2015.
- Llopis Cardona, Ana, Iris Hübscher, and Adrián Cabedo Nebot. 2024. *A Multimodal Approach to Catalan Pragmatic Markers: An Exploratory Study*. *Languages* 9: 125. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages9040125>
- Martela, A., Parkkonen, P. and Vataja, T. A Toolkit for Recognizing International Competencies for Students in Higher Education. *Finnish National Agency for Education*, 2019.
- Matherly, C. "Effective Marketing of International Experiences to Employers." In *Impact of Education Abroad on Career Development*. Vol. I. 9-10. Stamford, CT: AIFS, 2015.

- Melguizo, Celia and Royuela, Vicente. *What drives migration moves across urban areas in Spain? Evidence from the Great Recession*; Xarxa de Referència en Economia Aplicada; Retrieved from [XREAP2017-03.pdf](#)
- Miranda, D. 10 Management Styles of Effective Leaders. *Forbes Advisor*, April 27, 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/management-styles/>
- National Association of Colleges and Employers. Career Readiness: Competencies for a Career-Ready Workforce. March 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.naceweb.org/uploadedFiles/files/2021/resources/nace-career-readiness-competencies-revised-apr-2021.pdf>
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- Personal Branding. Retrieved from <https://brandyourself.com/definitive-guide-to-personal-branding>
- Pinola, M. The ROI of Studying Abroad Infographic. In *Why Studying Abroad is Worth the Expense*. Lifehacker, December 15, 2011. Retrieved from <https://www.coursehero.com/college-life/infographic-the-roi-of-studying-abroad/>
- Resume Samples. Retrieved from <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resume-samples>

- Sweitzer, H. and King, M. *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional, and Civic Development*, 2013.
- *The Culture Factor Group. Comparing Countries*. Retrieved from <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool>
- WorldMetrics, 2024; *Tourism In Spain Statistics Statistics: Market Data Report 2024*; <https://worldmetrics.org/tourism-in-spain-statistics/>

# Grading

## Grading Rubric

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
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 fully meet 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

Assignments	Percentage of Grade
Preparation and participation	20%
Performance at internship placement (site supervisor feedback—15%; placement site hours completed—5%)	20%
Reflection assignments (6 @ 5% each)	30%
Resume and profile peer Review	5%
Final presentation	25%
<b>Final grade</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Assessment Details

Graded assignments include:

### Preparation & participation in class

- Students are expected to attend each class and to have read and be prepared to participate thoughtfully in class discussions. In-class contact hours include discussion, readings, student experience sharing and peer review, and guest lectures. Additionally, students are expected to attend individual check-in(s) with internship instructor/staff at least once during the term. The purpose of the meeting can include:
  - To focus the student's academic interests related to the internship
  - To assist the student in navigating challenges related to the internship
  - To provide guidance on course assignments

## Performance at internship placement

- Students are expected to:
  - Work regular weekly hours to achieve required placement site hours (weekly work schedule is negotiated between the student and the site supervisor)
  - Have their work log signed by their internship placement supervisor and submitted at the mid- and end points of the course. (Note: Students' commute to and from the internship site does not count toward work hours.)
  - Receive site supervisor feedback, to include professionalism, performance, and quality of work
  - Conduct themselves in an ethical, professional manner, to dress appropriately for the work environment, and to act respectfully and collegially towards co-workers and supervisors

## Written reflection assignments

- (350 words, approximately 1.5 pages, double-spaced). Drawing upon the student internship experience through analysis of ideas from the course readings and themes, cite at least two relevant course readings per written reflection. The content and topic details may vary, but include:
  - Goal-setting: Students reflect on what they hope to achieve from the internship experience, both professionally as well as personally. Incorporate learning goals that cultivate professional development and cultural competencies, drawing upon the relevant NACE career readiness competencies. Explain what steps they plan to take toward achieving their goals.
  - Cultural assessment: What kinds of cultural issues (differences, similarities) have students observed at their internship site? How are diversity and gender issues addressed where they work? What power dynamics have they observed? How many women are in top management positions? What is the mission statement of the organization? Consider an issue they have observed or are aware of in their organization – how would they propose to solve it? How is the “culture” at their internship different than anticipated?
  - Organizational chart: Describe the particular organization. Where is the student's unit/department located in the chart? Who works there? What are the educational, professional, and skills backgrounds of the people who work in that area?
  - Management and leadership styles: How are decisions made? What is the management style of leaders in the organization? What is the leadership

style of the student's supervisor? What recommendations would students have to enhance communication within their unit/department?

- o Future trends: What are future trends in the student's field? Read 2-3 articles from journals, trade publications, and internet sources that pertain to the internship. How does this information on the future trends in their field compare with their experience at the internship? (At least 3 sources must be cited.)
- o Who am I? Multicultural complexity in a local context: How has Spain become what it is today? How has immigration and tourism contributed to become a modern Spain? Use your internship placement as a case to explain the direct or indirect role that tourism and migration has within the organization and across Spain, and specifically Barcelona. How does this compare with your own experience or knowledge of your home country or location you grew up in? What are your recommendations for lessons learned?

### **Professional resume & profile**

- Utilizing the resources from the course and through independent research, students will create and peer review an updated resume and online profile to effectively incorporate the professional internship experience.

### **Final presentation**

- Roughly 10-15 minutes in length, including appropriate references.
- Students present their internship placement as a case study, discussing their tasks and responsibilities, insights, challenges, and lessons learned. They will also reflect on how the internship has contributed to their professional, academic, and personal goals.
- Connect experience and analyze through three themes covered in the course, including self-reflection on at least one NACE career readiness competency from initial goal-setting exercise.
- Must include content gleaned from an informational interview with an on-site staff person (cited appropriately).

# Course Content

## Unit 1

### Internship Orientation

- Placements overview
- Required forms (agreement, work log, evaluation)
- Preparing for first meeting at placement
- Student responsibilities
- Discussion of student expectations

## Unit 2

### Internship & Career-integrated Learning

- Definitions
- Relation to the international internship experience
- Introduction to the NACE Career Readiness Competencies
  1. Career and self-development
  2. Communication
  3. Critical thinking
  4. Equity and inclusion
  5. Leadership
  6. Professionalism
  7. Teamwork
  8. Technology

## Unit 3

### Introduction to the Professional Internship

- Introduction to the workplace in the local context
- Examining overlapping contexts: the local, the regional, the global
- Overview of the relationship between the public sector, private sector, and non-governmental organizations in the host country.
- Appropriate use of technology/social media and sharing information about the internship site and local community
- Cultivating awareness of self and other: journaling, field notes, reflection pieces as part of the experiential learning process
- Setting professional and personal goals

## Unit 4

### Culture & Communication in the Workplace

- Overview of etiquette, hierarchies, gender, generational differences, and other social structures that define the workplace culture in the host country
- Examine how students' host culture communicates based on its value system
- Business culture in the host country

## Unit 5

### Leadership in the Workplace

- Overview and analysis of leadership/management styles
- Leadership in the host culture context
- Use of organizational charts

## Unit 6

### How to Promote Yourself Professionally

- How to articulate the value of the international internship experience on resume and express in the student's personal brand profile
- Unpacking the informational interview and networking
- Cultural elements to job search in the local context, including role of resume and how it may differ from the US context

## Unit 7

### Multicultures within Spain

- History and politics to become a multicultural country with own identity
- Identity: Nationalism and migration
- Tourism and business
- The architectural shape in the multicultural city of Barcelona

## Topic 8

### Final Presentations & Reflections

# Policies

## Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

## University of Minnesota Policies & 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. This information can be found [on the Learning Abroad Center website](#).