

## COMM 397 & MCOM 397: Internship in Communication & Media Studies Course Syllabus

### Instructor Contact Information

Internship Coordinator: Jacqueline S. Bruscella, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: *varies by semester*

### Course Description

This course is designed to provide the student with an internship experience related to their academic and career interests. This experience allows the students to apply, in the professional setting, the theory, principles and practice learned in the classroom and to extend and develop this learning by performing or closely observing performances of roles to which they have tentative or definite career commitments. Internships must be approved by the Internship Coordinator, the Department Chair, and the Dean of the School of Liberal Arts.

### Pre-Requisites

Student must be of Jr./Sr. standing and have at least a 2.0 GPA both in major and overall.

### Learning Objectives

An internship is an opportunity for students to gain practical experience in their chosen field of study. Typically, a student will find an organization in an area closely related to their university studies or future career interests and work for them for a limited period of time under the supervision of an internship supervisor. In an internship, a student will provide meaningful work to a company while receiving guidance, feedback, and career mentorship from their respective employers. That said, learning objectives vary from internship to internship, depending on the student's area of academic study and professional interest.

Examples of Learning Objectives may include:

- Cultivate an understanding of industry trends and practices.
- Strengthen verbal and written interpersonal communication skills.
- Learn to participate effectively as a team member and build a strong professional network.
- Understand, observe, and practice the ethical standards of the internship site.
- Develop transferable skills for future employment opportunities and be able to thoughtfully reflect on those skills.
- Develop leadership and project management skills.

Please note, as part of the *SUNY College of Oneonta Undergraduate Internship Application & Learning Agreement*, students are required to create their own learning goals unique to their internship experience. Students are encouraged to consult their Faculty Advisor, the Internship

Coordinator, and their Internship Site Supervisors while crafting their goals. Keep in mind, the most effective goals are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-Focused, Time-bound).

### Course Expectations and Policies

- ✓ **Competent Communication:** This is a course in communication, first and foremost. Thus, messages and displays of competent and professional communication matter at all times; whether that is communication between student and internship coordinator, or communication between student and site supervisor and coworkers at the internship site. Messages characterized as competent are ethical, polite, inclusive, and respectful. They are also free of spelling, formatting, and grammatical errors. I recommend highly that you read and revise each and every related course and internship assignment, email, and message before submitting or pressing “send.” Remember, you are no longer only representing yourself, but the Department of Communication and Media *and* the State University of New York College at Oneonta.
  
- ✓ **Terms and Conditions:** The student is expected to abide by the terms and conditions as put forth by the *College Undergraduate Internship Application*.
  - The College cannot guarantee that every student who applies will be approved for an internship.
  - Faculty members, the student’s immediate family, or employees of the student’s immediate family may not serve as on-site internship supervisors.
  - Students enrolled in an approved SUNY Oneonta internship are liable for Oneonta tuition and fees.
  - A maximum of 16 internship credits may be applied toward the undergraduate degree.
  - Credit is granted for successful completion of course requirements, fulfillment of course learning outcomes, and a minimum of 40 hours of internship activity per 1 credit.
  - Eligible students may register for a maximum of 15 credits of internship during the fall or spring terms; a maximum of 12 credits during the summer and a maximum of 4 credits may be earned during the winter term.
  - The SUNY Oneonta Internship Learning Agreement must be submitted for approval to the academic department concurrently with the Internship Application form.
  
- ✓ **Grading Policy:** All grades will be assigned as Pass/Fail. Students are required to fulfill two requirements in order to earn a “passing” grade for the internship course: (1) Submit a weekly log to Blackboard by the dates indicated in the course syllabus and (2) Submit a final reflection paper to Blackboard by the dates indicated in the course syllabus.

Please note: Site supervisors are required to submit to me an “Intern Performance Evaluation,” which generally does not impact a student’s grade. However, in the rare occasion that a students’ performance does not meet, or is below agreed upon expectations, a further discussion about the student’s grade might be warranted.

## Course Assignments and Academic Requirements:

**(1) Weekly Log & Discussion Questions:** You are required submit responses to the following questions in the appropriate Blackboard Dropbox each week of your internship by SUNDAY AT 11:59 PM. The weekly work log simply outlines your internship activities and perceptions of your tasks and assignments. The discussion questions are aimed at having you reflect on your internship experience while it is ongoing. See course policies, above, in regards to competent communication: these logs should be proof-read, coherent, and complete, as well as indicative of upper-division coursework.

### **WEEK 1:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- Describe in detail the type of business or organization where you are interning.
- What expected/unexpected tasks does this business or organization have you doing?

### **Week 2:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- What would a general organizational outline of this business or organization look like?
- How many people work there, who reports to whom, and how does your department fit into the whole?
- Do you have a clear picture of the chain of command of your organization from the top down?

### **Week 3:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- List and describe three personal goals you have going into this internship experience.
- What do you hope to get out of this experience?
- Why do you think each of these goals are important?

### **Week 4:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- Provide a job description for the person who is your on-site supervisor for this internship. What is it that he or she does? How does this person fit into the general organizational pattern of the business?
- Describe your relationship with your on-site supervisor.

**Week 5:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- Now that you have had a few weeks to settle in, list and describe all the major tasks and projects you have been working on for the past few weeks; this may or may not be different from the daily email log. What are the major projects to which you have been assigned?
- What is your general reaction to these tasks? Do you like doing them? Do you feel qualified to do them? What is difficult about them?

**Week 6:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- As you look around the business or organization where you are interning, are there other jobs you feel are interesting but have not been able to try? What do you find interesting about those jobs?
- Who is your mentor? This person may be different than your on-site supervisor or it may be the same person. Describe your relationship with your mentor. What have you learned from this person?

**Week 7:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- What is the most significant work challenge you have been able to overcome?
- What skills did you use to overcome that challenge?
- What has been the reaction of people around you regarding your ability to solve a problem?

**Week 8:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- Describe one other person in the business or organization with whom you have worked or interacted with.
- What is their general view of this business or organization? Are they happy working there? Why or why not?

**Week 9:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- How does your internship experience compare with the expectations you had prior to starting it? Did any aspects of the training process surprise you?
- What experiences have been better than you expected, and which have been worse than you expected?

**Week 10:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- What tasks have you done at this internship that relate to SUNY Oneonta courses you have taken? What aspect of the work you are engaged in or have observed should be incorporated into our departmental curriculum?
- Are there courses you wish you had taken that would have better prepared you to succeed during this internship? Which ones? Why?

**Week 11:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- Do you feel that you have had any impact on the organization or business where you are interning? Have you been able to see the effect of any of the jobs or tasks you have done while there? If yes, explain how. If no, explain why not.
- What are your thoughts about the role you have been asked to play in this organization or business? Do you feel good about it, or is there something you would change?

**Week 12:**

- List and describe, in full detail, all of your activities each day this week. Submit a substantial report. Has anything happened this week that is difficult or enjoyable? Brand new? Routine?
- Do you wish you had taken a different internship? Why?
- Would you recommend this internship experience to someone else? Why or why not?

*If your internship extends beyond twelve weeks, just answer question #1 (weekly log) for the remaining weeks.*

## (2) Final Reflection Paper

Now that your internship is complete or the end is in sight, it's time to reflect on your work experience. This paper is not a research or term paper; it should be viewed as an honest and open reflection of your professional experience.

To begin, reread your weekly logs submitted throughout the course of the internship. They should provide you with a mental road map of where you started and how far you have come. Pick out high points and lows, challenges met, and tasks completed. What are some things that will “stick with you” as you move forward in your career? Be honest. Don't complain about short falls at the work site to detract from some inability to cope with trying situations. Instead, look to improve and formulate a professional advancement plan.

Below are some things you may consider when reflecting on your experience. Feel free to use these questions as a starting point for your paper:

- What are some areas that you want to explore and develop further as you work to set yourself apart in your field?
- Did you achieve the goals you set for yourself at the beginning of this internship? Why or why not?
- Provide some examples of collaboration in a professional environment. What projects did you see at the work site that required a team effort to efficiently complete or advance? Did this experience resonate with any of the group projects you have worked on through your coursework in the Department?
- Explain your position on the overall value of this internship. This is perhaps the most important part of the paper, because it requires you to think about and put into words the underlying concepts that worked or did not work in this internship.
- Would you recommend this internship to other students? Why or why not?

Your reflection paper should be spell-checked, grammatically correct, and organized in clear and connected paragraphs. This paper should be 3-4 pages, double-spaced. Final submissions are due on the **last day of classes each semester** in the appropriate Blackboard Dropbox. This paper is required in order for you to receive a passing grade for your internship.

## Site Supervisor's Internship Evaluation Form

Communication & Media Internship Program  
SUNY Oneonta Oneonta, NY 13820

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Term: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Name and Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Site Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe the major activities of your intern below (any additional comments on back):

Please use the following rating (1-5) to assess your intern in the performance of his or her responsibilities:

**5 – Exceptional:** Far exceeds expectations    **4 – Very Good:** Consistently above expectations

**3 – Competent:** meets expectations    **2 – Improvement Needed:** Below expectations

**1 – N/A:** The opportunity to act on this objective did not arise.

\_\_\_ ATTITUDE: gets along with others; cooperates

\_\_\_ ACCEPTS DIRECTION: accepts criticism and suggestions

\_\_\_ INDUSTRIOUSNESS: diligence; persistence in carrying out tasks

\_\_\_ APTITUDE: natural talent and skill; ability to learn

\_\_\_ CREATIVITY: originality in work resourcefulness

\_\_\_ DEPENDABILITY: attendance punctuality: follows through on assignments

\_\_\_ JUDGMENT: decision-making ability

\_\_\_ VERBAL COMMUNICATION: clear oral expression of ideas

\_\_\_ WRITTEN COMMUNICATION: expresses ideas clearly on paper

\_\_\_ OVERALL PERFORMANCE: based on all characteristics

\_\_\_\_\_  
Work Supervisor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

We encourage you to discuss this evaluation with your intern. Please return this form to:

**Communication & Media Internship Coordinator**

**SUNY Oneonta, IRC B11A**

**Fax (607) 436-2420**

**E-mail: [Jacqueline.Bruscella@oneonta.edu](mailto:Jacqueline.Bruscella@oneonta.edu)**