

Rutgers University, School of Management and Labor Relations

Internship in Labor Studies, 37:575:496

COURSE ACCESS: sakai.rutgers.edu

FALL 2016

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This is a highly detailed syllabus, so please read carefully and download a copy for your reference. In addition check the announcement tab in Sakai regularly for any updates on assignments.

Your first assignment is to meet with me by phone or in person to provide an update on plans for your internship. Depending on your internship start date and schedule, we will determine whether we need to create individualized deadlines for the assignments.

Course Overview:

This online course combines academic work with experiential learning in the internship placement. Internships can be arranged with a variety of host organizations, including labor unions, community organizations, government agencies and private industry. **A minimum of 120 hours** of substantive work in the placement setting is required. Students discuss and analyze their experiences through weekly writing assignments.

Each intern works under a site supervisor at the host organization. The role of the site supervisor is to oversee the student experience and provide structure and mentorship throughout the internship. Students should be both supported and challenged to take initiative and develop both professional and life-long learning skills. The site supervisor will complete a performance evaluation at the conclusion of the internship. If there is a problem with the internship, inform me immediately, so I can intervene or try to make arrangements for a different internship.

Learning Outcomes:

Through the internship and the online learning assignments, students should have the opportunity to:

- Observe, analyze and think critically about professional behavior and conditions, culture and systems within their work organizations and compare their experiences to their peers
- Apply theories and principles related to the field of Labor Studies and Employment Relations to understanding their experiences in the internship setting
- Gain practical work experience and develop skills relevant to their career goals under professional supervision and guidance

To integrate your academic and professional experience, you will complete brief readings and a number of written assignments relevant to analyzing your internship experience. *I encourage you to meet with me in person or by phone during your internship to discuss how the internship and the class are going. I will also email and/or call you during the semester if I have concerns or questions and be in touch with your internship supervisor at least twice during the semester.* The academic portion of this course is run on Sakai. Please feel free to call or email me directly.

Announcements

Please check for new announcements including updates on class assignments when you log onto Sakai.

Course Expectations and Grading

Your course grade will be based on the following:

- Two short papers minimum 1.5 to 2 pages (5 pts. each) – 10 %
- Five online discussion forums (5 pts each) – 25%
- Two longer papers: Cultural audit: 15 %; Final Reflection: 20 %
- Supervisor feedback and evaluations: 30%; Your internship supervisor will provide feedback on your work at mid-term and at the end of the semester. If your supervisors' feedback seems incomplete or unfair, I will weigh class assignments more heavily.

Graded papers with comments will be posted on the assignment page. Writing is a critical skill in a professional environment and an important part of this course. Although content is important, clear and grammatical expression of thoughts and ideas, good sentence and paragraph structure, and correct spelling constitute 10 –20 percent of your assignment grades. A paper or forum will *not* receive an "A" if the thoughts are not clearly expressed. Read and edit your work—no one writes great first drafts!

Assigned Papers

- Short Papers – Two short (1.5 – 2 page) papers are assigned
- Cultural Analysis of your Work Organization
- According to Edgar Schein in his 1992 book, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, culture is the most difficult organizational attribute to change, outlasting organizational products, services, founders and leadership and all other physical attributes of the organization. Schein is credited with coining the term "corporate culture." Complete a five to six page cultural analysis of your internship organization based on the information and instructions posted in the [resources] tab.
- Final Paper – see instructions for final assignment

Format for Papers

Please include your name, the assignment name (e.g. Paper 1), and the date at the top left side of the page. Journals and papers should follow standard rules of format: 12-pt Times New Roman or Calibri font, 1" margins, *double-spaced*.

References

Rules of academic integrity dictate that when you are referring to another source or even your own previous work, you must cite it. In other words, include in-text citations indicating the sources from which you are pulling your content. For instructions on citations format, see:

<http://citesource.trincoll.edu/apsa/apsa.html>

Online discussion forums

The five online discussion forums for this class will offer the opportunity to discuss and compare your internship experiences and opinions about the readings with other students in the class. You will respond to a question or set of questions in your first post and then comment at least twice on a classmate's postings. The first post is expected to be substantive (*minimum 400 words*). Please read your classmates posts—the instructors' view of Sakai indicates the percentage of posts that you have taken the time to read. You must post at least three times per assignment to receive full credit for each forum. The assignment page provides specific due dates for each post.

How are the forums graded?

- **Comment quality** (relevant information, critical thinking and use of citations if outside sources are used). The first post will count as 75% of your grade for this assignment. It should offer a thoughtful discussion of your perspective on the assigned readings based on your internship.
- **Clear, grammatical writing** is as important in forums as in papers.
- **Participation** (number of posts, reading your classmates post, thoughtful questions for other members of the class).
- **Timeliness.** If you always post at the last minute it will be hard for other members of the class to respond.

Specific due dates are posted for the online discussion forums—late assignments will not only lose credit but diminish the opportunity for dialogue.

Submission/Late Submission

All forums and papers should be uploaded to the specific assignment tab on Sakai. If you have a problem with uploading a paper, you can submit it to me by email. Specific deadlines are provided for all assignments. Please let me know in advance if you anticipate a problem with a deadline. If you need to arrange to hand in an assignment late because of illness or an unanticipated emergency, please give me as much notice as possible. Late assignments lose 1.5 points for each day they are handed in past the initial due date.

Respect the privacy of individuals in your host organization: In referring to your internship supervisor and other staff in your host organization in your papers and online forums, please respect their privacy by using their initials and/or job titles rather than full names.

Resources provided by the writing coach. I strongly encourage you to work with Shawn Taylor, a writing coach at the Learning Center, on a minimum of one or two assignments early in the semester and longer if feedback suggests it is needed. Even if you are a confident writer, it is an opportunity to take your writing to the next level. Working with Dr. Taylor will help you do well in a course in which regular writing is required and clear grammatical writing is an expectation. He is flexible about setting up phone or in person consultations--please see his contact information below:

Shawn Taylor, D.Ed., sktaylor@rutgers.edu
Kreeger Learning Center, Room 122, 151 College Avenue
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

The assignment schedule below creates a schedule for readings and assignments that allows the class to consider their evolving understanding of their internship organization through forums and papers. Assignments are due at roughly 10 day intervals. As this is an online course, you will not receive regular face-to-face reminders about submission deadlines. Please keep track of and abide by posted deadlines.

ASSIGNMENTS AND READINGS MAY BE CHANGED. PLEASE READ ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARE COMPLETING THE VERSION OF THE ASSIGNMENT POSTED ON THE ASSIGNMENT PAGE.

Week of Sept 6th – Schedule check in call

Since this is an online course, I'd like to start by setting up a time to discuss and understand your internship and see if any we need to individualize any of the due dates based on your internship start or completion date. Please email me to set up a "check in" conversation by phone or in person during the first two weeks of the class. To prepare, review the course syllabus with special attention to schedule, readings and assignments.

Sept. 9th – 19th - Forum 1 - Internships and workplace rights

The short readings below discuss basic workplace rights and things every worker (not just young workers) should know. The brief readings by Donna Ballman are drawn from her blog (employeeatty.blogspot.com) which has received recognition from the American Bar Association.

- Donna Ballman. June 10, 2016. 10 Things Every Teen And Young Adult Should Know About Workplace Rights
<http://employeeatty.blogspot.com/search?q=10+Things+Every+Teen+And+Young+Adult+Should+Know+About+Workplace+Rights>
- Donna Ballman. July 13, 2012. Top Six Illegal Policies in Your Employee Handbook.
<http://employeeatty.blogspot.com/search?q=Top+Six+Illegal+Policies+In+Your+Employee+Handbook>
- Donna Ballman. June 7, 2013. Top Six Signs Your Unpaid internship Should Be Paid.
<http://employeeatty.blogspot.com/search?q=your+internship+should+be+paid>
- Fortman, Laura. 2014 When Experience Pays: Paid vs. Unpaid Internships. Workplace Rights Blog.
<https://blog.dol.gov/2014/04/11/when-experience-pays-paid-vs-unpaid-internships/>

In your first post discuss:

- What do you consider the most useful points raised in these readings? How they relate to your current and previous internship and work experiences?
- In selecting your internship, how did you weighed the trade-offs between a paid and unpaid placement?

In your second and third posts: Ask your classmates questions about their opinions and experiences, and compare and contrasts your views with those of other members of the class. ***For full credit, upload the first forum post to Sakai no later than Sept. 15th; second and third posts by Sept. 19rd.***

Sept. 19th - 29th - Forum 2 - Comparing internships goals and objectives

In your initial post include the following points and questions:

- Introduce yourself (major, year, career goals, and anything else you would like to share)
- Discuss your internship placement (type of business or organization, where is it located, mission of the organization, your title, etc.) and your work schedule
- What will you be doing in this organization? What do you hope to learn?
- What challenges do you anticipate?
- How does this internship relate to your values and future career plans?

In your second post:

After reading through your classmate's posts of your peers, contrast and compare your goals, experiences and learning objectives to those of at least two other students. Ask these students direct questions in order to create a dialogue. Make sure to check back to respond to any questions that I or other students ask you about your placement.

In your final post: Use your final post to draw together your observations about the class as a whole— what do you have in common? What differences do you see in the way people approach their internships.

For full credit, first post on or before Sept.26th; second and third posts no later than Sept. 29th.

Sept. 29th - Oct. 9th – Short paper 1 - Traditional vs. Learning Organizations

Read the following short article:

- Amy Edmundson. 2008. The competitive imperative of learning. Harvard Business Review. http://www.marshwhiteinc.com/HBR_The_Competitive_Imperative_of_Learning.pdf

You can also refer to the fact sheets on learning organizations in the resources tab. Edmundson is describing ideal prototypes: most organizations combine features of both “traditional” and “learning” organizations although they may be weighted toward one or the other. Relate what you have observed in your host organization to the specific characteristics of “traditional” and “learning” organizations. Do you think your internship setting could be improved by adopting one or more “learning” or “traditional” practices? ***For full credit, upload paper to Sakai no later than October 10th.***

Note: Look ahead to Forum 3 and set up interviews with two full time staff at your host organization.

Oct. 9th – Oct. 18th – Short Paper 2 - How Relationships Shape Communication at Work

Read the fact sheets (relational coordination, psychological safety and challenges to communication) posted in the [resources] tab:

- Discuss relational coordination, psychological safety, and factors that promote good communication in the context of what you have observed in your host organization.
- How does the quality of information flow affect your sense of being part of this organization and your ability to perform your work effectively?

For full credit, upload paper to Sakai no later than October 18th.

Oct. 18th – Oct. 24th Forum 3

For this forum, interview two colleagues within your host organization about their work history. If possible interview target individuals with different roles who have been in the organization at least six months. Your questions should include: 1) their areas of undergraduate study and graduate study, their initial jobs, why they chose the career they did, how they got to their present position, etc.; and 2) how would they characterize the culture of their work organization; 3) what they enjoy most--and least--about the work they do.

In your initial post: Share your observations from these interviews and provide what you found most interesting, important or surprising. *In discussing individuals in your workplace, refer to them by initials and/or general titles to protect their confidentiality.*

- Did hearing about your co-workers' career path give you any insight into your future employment perspectives or path?
- Were their comments on the culture of your host organization consistent with your own observations?
- What themes do you see emerging from the various work histories shared in this forum?

RESPONSES TO YOUR PEERS: After reading the posts of your peers, feel free to ask them questions about their postings in order to create a dialogue. Make sure to check back to see what questions that I or other students ask you about what you have shared. ***For full credit, first post due on or before by Oct. 24th; second and third post due by Oct. 26th.***

Oct. 24th – Nov. 7th - PAPER - Analysis of Workplace Culture. Review instructions for papers in syllabus. Carefully read and utilize information in the [resource] tab.

Optional: Submit an outline for your paper and any questions you have about the assignment by Oct. 31st. The paper must be uploaded to Sakai no later than Nov. 7th.

Nov. 7th – Nov. 18th – Forum 4 - Diversity and Discrimination

Diversity is a value that many organizations officially embrace and yet individuals who do not represent the dominant culture may feel subtly or not so subtly excluded because of their race, religion, ethnicity, sexual preferences, age, gender or disabilities. And in many settings workers face overt abuse, discrimination and harassment from co-workers and supervisors.

Readings:

- Sam Polk. July 7, 2016. How Wall Street Bro Talk Keeps Women Down. The New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/10/opinion/sunday/how-wall-street-bro-talk-keeps-women-down.html>

- Abba Bhattari. August 9, 2016. Chipotle ordered to pay \$550,000 for discriminating against pregnant worker. The Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/capitalbusiness/chipotle-ordered-to-pay-550000-for-discriminating-against-pregnant-worker/2016/08/09/962ac72e-5e49-11e6-8e45-477372e89d78_story.html
- Reading packet of short articles on harassment and discrimination (see resources tab)

Based on both the readings and your own insights and experiences, reflect on the following questions:

- Have you encountered discrimination or watched it unfold against others in your internship or in any previous work settings?
- Why are harassment and other forms of discrimination and abuse tolerated in some work settings and not in others? (Be as specific as possible, e.g. please don't simply attribute harassment and discrimination to "workplace culture")
- What is the impact of discrimination on individual workers and society? (Consider both prevalence and the impact on individuals.)
- What can work organizations do to prevent or end harassment? (Again, be specific and think broadly about the steps organizations can and should take.)

Respond to each of these questions in your first post due on or before Nov. 14th. In two or more additional posts, compare and contrast your views, observations and interpretations of the readings with your peers. Final post due by Nov. 18st.

Nov. 21st – 27th No assignment - Happy Thanksgiving!

Look ahead to background readings for Forum 5 and the final paper.

Week of Nov. 28th – FORUM 5 – Summing Up: The Value of Internships

Review the readings from Forum 1 (Sept. 9th) and the following short articles:

- Perlin, Ross. (2011) Colleges Shouldn't Stick Interns with the Bill. Chronicle of Higher Education. April 24. <http://chronicle.com/article/Colleges-Shouldnt-Stick/127234/>
- Charles Westerberg and Carol Wickersham (2011). Internships have value whether or not students are paid. Chronical of Higher Education, April 24. <http://chronicle.com/article/Internships-Have-Value/127231/>

Describe the key arguments made in each article. Share your opinions and conclusions about the value of your internship and any recommendations you would make for the LSER internship program. In your additional posts, compare and contrast your experiences and conclusions to those of your peers. ***For full credit, first post due on before December 5th, remaining posts no later than Dec. 7th.***

Week of Dec. 5 - FINAL Paper – Due on or before Dec. 16th

Background readings:

- Robert H. Frank. July 22, 2016. The Incalculable Value of Finding a Job You Love, The New York Times, http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/24/upshot/first-rule-of-the-job-hunt-find-something-you-love-to-do.html?_r=0
- Introduction to John Budd's 2011 book, The Thought of Work (see Resources tab).
- Review of The Thought of Work by Brandon McCoy http://www.legacy-irc.csom.umn.edu/faculty/jbudd/research/tow_jei_review.pdf

Prepare an 8– 10 page paper in which you assess and reflect on your internship. The paper should build on the reflections and analyses you have shared over the course of the semester through your papers, forum posts. The paper should use headings and subheadings to provide an organized presentation of the following:

- Provide internship site information including the name, type of business/organization (purpose); location; internship supervisor; and mission of the internship site.
- Summarize your responsibilities including the title of your position (if any); goals of the internship with examples of how these goals were achieved; specific tasks and/or assignments you were given, and any impact of your work on the internship site; etc.
- Summarize the strengths of your organization in terms of the concepts covered in readings and journals (for example, leadership, communication/relationships/teamwork, culture, diversity) and any positive lessons you hope to emulate and integrate into your own approach. Briefly describe your recommendations, if any, for how the organization could increase its effectiveness in advancing its mission (Reference relevant readings)
- How did your accomplishments in the internship relate to your personal, professional and/or academic goals? What have you learned about the kind of work you enjoy and find meaningful from your internship experience? Have values related to the role you hope work will play in your life evolved over the past two months? (See background readings for this assignment.)
- Would you recommend your internship site to future students—why or why not? Would it be possible for the organization to provide a better experience for future interns? Explain how.

If you directly quote your previous papers, use quotations and include in-text citations indicating from where you are pulling your content. If you draw on readings for this class or outside sources, also use in-text citations (Author, Date) and include complete citations in a short reference list. For instructions on citations format, see <http://citesource.trincoll.edu/apsa/apsa.html>