

# **The Ithaca College London Internship Spring 2007**

## **Introduction**

The internship (British: “work experience”) should serve as a bridge between the university and the “real world”, giving you:

1. A chance to develop your academic skills into marketable tools, and to apply what you have learned in the classroom to a professional setting;
2. First hand knowledge of a particular field or type of work;
3. Experience that may help you to clarify your own career goals.

**However, the most important aspect of this internship is your unique opportunity to participate in a foreign culture. The above concepts should always be secondary to your learning more about British society, and gaining insights into aspects of life here.**

Fifty per cent of your grade will be based on the quality of work as evaluated by your supervisor.

## **Getting Started**

There are a number of steps to getting settled in your internship:

- You will receive the details of the internship that has been arranged for you at a brief individual meeting with Rachelle. This internship has been matched to your interests and requirements that you stated in your internship application form and CV.
- An interview has been set up for you. Please make sure that you leave plenty of time to get there on time.
- Report the outcome of your interview to Rachelle by e-mail immediately. Rachellejv@aol.com.

## **Practical Details**

The internships are voluntary, unpaid positions.

- You are expected to work two or three days a week depending on the number of credits you are registered for.
- If for some reason you are ill and unable to attend your internship you must phone Rachelle as well as your supervisor. You should phone Rachelle first (07960 160002) thing (anytime after 6am) and then your supervisor when the office opens.

## **The Work Itself**

The type of work you do varies, depending on the needs of your employer. Supervisors are encouraged to give you as much professional and semi-professional work as you can handle: researching a particular issue, writing articles and speeches, organising special events, information gathering, assisting with special projects. Invariably some of the work you will be required to perform will be routine (e.g. photocopying, answering the phone, stuffing mailings...). This is the type of work that another professional in the office would do if you were not there.

## **Course Requirements**

You should keep a daily journal of your internship. You should include information about what you are doing, about how your work fits into that of the organisation and anything that strikes you as interesting or different. Journals are to be submitted by e-mail to [Rachellejv@aol.com](mailto:Rachellejv@aol.com). The first entry is due on the Monday after your first full week of work – I will e-mail back your journal with comments inserted into it. Journals should be with me by 10am on Monday mornings. The journal is worth 10% of your final grade.

Final papers and portfolios are due Monday 23 April by 5pm. Please leave them in my box (or above the boxes if there isn't enough space in the box) in the faculty office.

Your final paper should be a creative effort that addresses the following questions:

1. What does your internship organisation do?
2. How does the organisation fit in with other similar organisations in the UK?
3. What is the organisational structure? Does this work effectively? What would you change to make the organisation more effective?
4. What was your role in the organisation? How did this relate to your studies at Ithaca or your home institution?
5. What cultural differences did you notice between working in the UK and working in the US?
6. What skills will you take from this internship?
7. Anything else you feel is interesting or relevant about your internship.

I suggest you write it in a style or format, which you could submit to a future employer or for postgraduate admission. Approaches could include comparing and contrasting the American and British workplace and analysing how your academic training has applied to your work. I encourage you to be creative in your approach and writing of your paper. The papers should be at least eight to ten typed pages. The paper is worth 30% of your final grade.

You are also required to produce a portfolio that illustrates your internship. It should be a collection of documents that include information about your organisation, samples of your work and anything else you think is relevant. It should be bound in some sort of folder or binder and all items in it should be well labelled so that I understand how they are relevant to your internship. The portfolio is worth 10% of your final grade.

Towards the end of the term, the supervisor will be asked to fill out an evaluation of your work; this will be worth 50% of your final assessment.

### **Final Comments**

Please keep in mind that internships are a concept that is fairly new to the UK. Your experience may be very different from what you have known previously; remember that this in itself is an asset. It is not always possible to determine, prior to accepting the internship, precisely what level, quality or type of work you will do. It is important that your expectations be realistic.

Remember that you are, as an American university student, an “outsider” in a foreign country. The fact that we share a language can be deceptive, disguising a cultural divide that is than all the more difficult to understand. Say “how do you do this?” rather than “we do it this way”. Listen first, question second and argue third. An educated answer is better than an immediate one. Never simply assume you understand something, even if it seems trivial.

The most important thing is to keep lines of communications open, with your supervisor, your co-workers, your classmates and myself.

We will also have mandatory group meetings once a month. Because of the size of the groups you will be split into two groups. You **must** attend one of the two meetings assigned to your group. Meetings are held in the student lounge at the Ithaca London Center.

#### **Group 1**

|                         |    |                            |
|-------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| Tues 13 Feb. at 6pm     | or | Wednesday 14 Feb. at 8am   |
| Tuesday 19 March at 6pm | or | Wednesday 20 March. at 8am |
| Tuesday 24 April at 6pm | or | Wednesday 25 April at 8am  |

#### **Group 2**

|                         |    |                            |
|-------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| Tues 20 Feb. at 6pm     | or | Wednesday 21Feb. at 8am    |
| Tuesday 26 March at 6pm | or | Wednesday 27 March. at 8am |
| Monday 23 April at 8am  | or | Tuesday 24 April at 6pm    |

If for some reason you absolutely, positively cannot make one of the two meetings you can come to see me at my office on Tottenham Court Road.

If you have a problem of any kind, try to work it out on your own, but if you can't, do not hesitate to talk to me.

If you need to see me between group meetings please e-mail me to arrange an appointment at my office (99 Great Russell Street, London WC1 - near Tottenham Court Road Station.

The best way to find me is on my mobile or by e-mail at [Rachellejv@aol.com](mailto:Rachellejv@aol.com).

**Good luck and Enjoy!!!**