

Internship in Buenos Aires

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: ARGN 3896

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: English

Contact Hours: 45 (to include 25-30 instructor contact hours plus 90-180 hours at the internship site)

Instructor: On-Site Faculty

Course Description

The Buenos Aires internship course is designed to provide students with the opportunity to become more knowledgeable regarding the local culture, organizational cultures, and the professional environment. Through practical internship experiences as well as readings, discussions, and written assignments, students will deepen their understanding of the host country's cultural context and critically examine their own worldview.

The course is designed to guide students in the internship experience and create a foundation for a successful professional career. In addition to gaining a cross-cultural comparative view on work, the topics and assignments will deepen students' insights about themselves, professional expectations, and being successful in the workplace. Students are expected to make a valuable contribution to the internship site through the completion of major projects or tasks.

This course focuses on themes students are expected to develop and enhance over the course of the semester through class seminars and on-the-job experience, particularly characteristics of work dynamics in Argentina; work relations, work protocol, and hierarchy; differences between Argentina and the US, notions of leadership in Argentina, and local cultural traits that are unique to the country; and multiculturalism, age, gender, and communication in the workplace.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze and understand cultural workplace dynamics with comparative focus on the US
- Understand their values, skills, and behaviors and how different values and communication styles may impact workplace dynamics; develop strategies for adapting to these differences
- Identify and articulate skills and experiences necessary to reach future career goals; develop learning objectives for the internship site that will help them move toward these career aspirations
- Conduct their work during the internship utilizing best practices around professional behavior within a work environment
- Analyze the social context of their worksite and its influence on the workplace, particularly in terms of social media, language, norms and values, leadership, and economic assumptions and structures
- Understand and practice tolerance of different cultural assumptions
- Understand how to navigate their way around the workplace in a high-context culture (Argentina)

Methodology

During class contact hours, there will be discussion and debates, lectures, readings, presentations, debriefings, and guest lecturers. These will be complemented with interviews with locals and at the workplace. In each session there will be a discussion about students' experience at their worksites and the strategies they may have used to solve potential problems. Assigned readings and case studies will be discussed. One-to-one meetings with students will be scheduled to assess their progress.

Required Reading / Materials

Bennett, M. J., "Becoming interculturally competent". In J.S. Wurzel (Ed.) *Toward multiculturalism: A reader in multicultural education* (2004). Newton, MA: Intercultural Resource Corporation

British Council (2013). *Culture at Work: The value of intercultural skills in the workplace*. Booz, Allen, Hamilton, McLean, VA.

Frontiers: *The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*. Especially: "Experiential Education and Study Abroad" (Special Issue, Volume VIII, Winter 2002).

Hofstede, Geert; Hofstede, Gert Jan; Minkov, Michael. (2010). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, 3rd edition. Mc Graw Hill

Meyer, Erin. *The Culture Map: Breaking Through the Invisible Boundaries of Global Business*. PublicAffairs, 2014.

Morreale, Sherwyn P., Spitzberg, Brian, and Barge, J. Kevin (2007). *Human Communication. Motivations, Knowledge and Skills*. Thomson Wadsworth, 2nd edition.

Selection of articles from e-magazines and newspapers.

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
Attendance and class participation	10%
Interview paper	20%
Journals	20%
Internship presentation	15%
Site supervisor feedback	10%
Final paper	25%
Overall grade	100%

Assessment Details

ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

Although ultimately rewarding, working in another country can be confusing or frustrating. There will be time in most classes to discuss and debrief students' workplace interactions and tasks. Students should be ready to share their experiences and thoughtfully comment on others' experiences. This course requires that students participate in class discussions. This means that they should contribute to class discussions by relating their experiences, asking questions, and making comments appropriate to the topics discussed.

INTERVIEW PAPER

Students will interview someone in a career that they are interested in exploring. Students should describe how they found this person; this person's responses; how students believe this job compares to a similar job in the US; and if this interview makes them more or less interested in this field and why or why not.

Sample questions:

What was this person's career path? What type of education do they have? What is their employment history? What types of tasks does this job include? What is the organizational

culture, and what is it like to work within this culture? What is their advice for getting into this field?

INTERNSHIP REPORTS

Four reflection reports are required as part of students' internship learning experience. The reports should be in the range of two pages explaining what they did, learned, and observed during the past weeks. These reports should not be just a listing of duties performed; they should be used as a reflection tool. Students should write down their thoughts and feelings as well as any interesting personal observations. Guidelines and prompts will be provided.

INTERNSHIP PRESENTATION

At the end of the internship program, students will have an opportunity to share their internship experiences. The presentation should include:

- a two- or three-page paper
- A presentation (to their fellow students and the instructor) supported by a PowerPoint/Prezi presentation. This presentation should not exceed 10 minutes in duration and should include the content of the internship placement and learning outcomes.

SITE SUPERVISOR EVALUATION

There will be a midterm and final assessment of students' performance by a site supervisor. The assessment will be based on the site supervisor's interaction with them, as well as feedback received from other staff who have had contact with them. The midterm evaluation will not affect their grade, but will help to strengthen and support them throughout the rest of their internship. However, the final site supervisor assessment will count toward students' final grade.

FINAL PAPER

The final paper is meant to "pull it all together." In writing this paper, students should draw upon their reports, the interview, required readings, discussions in class and with colleagues at their internship, and general observations. This paper should be around seven pages long. This paper has three sections: personal, workplace, and intercultural awareness. Students should reflect on everything they have experienced and learned during their internship, then look back at their learning objectives and journal entries.

Personal

1. Did you achieve your personal goals? Why or why not? What was challenging? What was easy? What did you learn, and why does it matter? What will you do differently next time you start a new internship or job? Did you improve on the career competencies outlined in your internship report paper?
2. What makes you a good candidate for this job? Write down a job that you would like to have and respond to that interview question, highlighting the three skills you have

developed during the internship. How have you developed these skills over the course of your internship? Why are these skills important in your chosen career? If these skills are different from what you listed in your learning objectives, describe why and how this is the case at the end of this section.

Workplace

Analyze the structure of the organization, the role and duties performed in your internship, and the organization's position and its importance in your host culture. Include a selection of work samples or other artifacts. Choose artifacts that reflect what you did as well as what you learned during your internship.

Intercultural awareness

Critically assess intercultural differences and similarities between your host and home cultures. Describe two expectations you had about your country's work culture. Are these expectations similar or different than US work culture, and why? Compare your career in your host culture to the same career in the US. What are some differences? What are some similarities? Do you have a preference for one country's work norms over the other?

Note: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus with adequate notice to the students.

Course Content

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Unit 1

Course overview and introduction

- Internships in Buenos Aires: cultural differences with the US
- Learning objectives
- Activities to prepare students for their job interviews
- Workshops

Unit 2

Space and time at the workplace

- Work relationships, hierarchy, and types of social interaction expected at the workplace
- Work protocol

Unit 3

The importance of communication

- Communication competence
- Differences in communication in high- vs. low-context societies (Argentina vs. the US)

Unit 4

Intercultural competence and awareness

Unit 5

Visit to students' host organizations

- Meeting with colleagues and site supervisor

Unit 6

Developing skills to write a CV

- Strategies

Unit 7

Individual meetings to review site supervisor evaluations

- List
- List

Unit 8

Break

Unit 9

The Argentinian job market

- Guests (Argentinian students or young professionals) talk about work in Argentina

Unit 10

Developing cross-cultural awareness

- Experiencing Buenos Aires as an expat

Unit 11

Prepare questionnaires to interview locals and professionals at students' workplaces

Unit 12

Re-entry workshop

- Students talk about their experiences abroad and how this may impact their future professional careers

- Discuss how to make the most of an internship abroad, and how to incorporate this into future job interviews and updated CVs

Unit 13

Internship presentations

Unit 14

Internship presentations (continued)

- Final discussion

Unit 15

Individual meetings to review final site supervisor evaluations

- Final paper is due

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](#).