



American University
Brussels Center
Summer Internship Program
Summer 2011

SYLLABUS
EUROPEAN INTERNSHIPS AND INSTITUTIONS

European Internships and Institutions provides you with a brief overview of the European Union's governing institutions and the international environment of Brussels. Weekly classroom lectures give you a summary of the European Union's governing institutions and policy processes. Internships in a public or private office introduce you to a professional environment and give you the chance to apply your previous course work in a real-world setting. In addition, the internship will help you learn more about particular career path, to sort out your career interests and goals, to develop new skills and to sharpen your existing professional skills. Finally, although the program is brief, you will hopefully gain insights into aspects of European life and culture that a normal foreign tourist would not observe.

Course Structure

The course lasts for seven weeks. During the first week, you receive an orientation to Brussels and an introductory lecture on Belgium, and you have internship interviews. The internships begin on Tuesday 24 May and they continue on Mondays through Thursdays of each week until Thursday 30 June. On Friday 1 July you will have your final examination and a final farewell lunch.

Lectures will be held according to the schedule of classes included with this syllabus. Classes take place at American University's Brussels Center. Taught by Dr. Jerome Sheridan, the lectures introduce you to the institutions of the European Union and the EU's policy-making process. By the time you leave at the end of June, you should have a good grasp of how the EU works and how it affects the private sector.

Course Requirements

Remember that your internship is an academic experience. You are not employed by your internship supervisor. You are studying in your supervisor's office with your supervisor's assistance. So, the following course requirements will determine your final grade for *European Internships and Institutions*:

- 1) **Supervisor's Evaluation:** Your supervisor will receive a form to evaluate your internship performance and learning in writing. This evaluation form is sent directly to the supervisor by the Brussels Center and is returned directly to the Brussels Center. Please be advised that the Brussels Center treats this form as confidential. We cannot share your supervisor's evaluation with you or with anyone else. If you would like to know your supervisor's evaluation of your performance, we strongly encourage you to ask your supervisor if he or she will meet with you to discuss your performance at the end of the program.
- 2) **Learning Contract:** At the beginning of the internship, you are to develop a Learning Contract and use it to monitor your progress throughout the program. The exact assignment for the Learning Contract is included with this syllabus. The learning contract itself is due on **Monday 30 May**. Your final learning contract report is due on **Tuesday 28 June**.
- 3) **Final Examination:** A final exam covering the topics discussed in the evening lectures will be held on **Friday 1 July**.
- 4) **Attendance and Participation:** Attendance and participation at our evening class sessions is required.

These four elements would be weighted in the final grade as follows:

Supervisor's Evaluation.....45 percent
 Learning Contract.....10 percent
 Final Examination.....45 percent

Textbook

There is one textbook for the course that you will receive at orientation. The book is: Neill Nugent, The Government and Politics of the European Union, Sixth Edition, (London: Macmillan, 2006.) Your reading assignments from this book are:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
1	Introduction to Belgium and the EU	Chapters 1 through 7
2	The Commission and the Council	Chapters 9, 10, 11
3	Parliament and the EU's Policy Process	Chapters 12, 15 and 16
4	COR, ESC and the Court	Chapters 13 and 14
5	Justice and Home Affairs http://ec.europa.eu/publications/booklets/move/42/index_en.htm	
6	Foreign, Security, and Defense Policy	Chapter 19.
7	Accession and the Future	Chapter 22



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INTERNSHIP LEARNING CONTRACT

The internship is an experiential learning course. Unlike normal college lecture courses that you are accustomed to, no one will tell you what you should be learning at your internship. Indeed, the lessons that each student will learn will differ, depending upon each student's interests. Thus, the objectives of this learning contract are as follows:

- 1) To make your learning process more active, conscious and productive.
- 2) To make you decide what you intend to learn and accomplish from the experience.
- 3) To develop an understanding between you and your internship supervisor about your mutual intentions and expectations of the internship.
- 4) To develop a set of criteria and techniques for evaluating your internship experience.

The following are your instructions for developing and implementing your internship learning contract:

Step I: The Interviews

During your interviews, think about why you want an internship. Write down on a sheet of paper what you want to learn or achieve. Be as specific and detailed as possible. For example, "I want to learn about EU politics" is not as clear and focused as "I want to learn how businesses lobby the EU: which individuals they target and how they can influence those individuals." Prioritize these learning goals, and think about how you will be able to measure your progress in achieving them.

Step II: The First Week at the Internship

Use your first week on the job to get to learn more about the organization, its activities, and the role that you as an intern will play in the organization. With this background, think about how well (or not) your current internship responsibilities will fulfill your objectives. You should also think about what additional internship activities you think you could do that would help you meet your learning objectives. Make sure to arrange an appointment with your supervisor to discuss your learning contract, how realistic your objectives are, and the possibilities of creating other activities to meet your objectives, if

needed. In light of this discussion, prepare your learning contract, and email it to Professor Sheridan on **Monday 30 May**.

Step IV: Mid-Program Progress Review

By Tuesday 14 June, look at your Internship Learning Contract again and review your goals. Are you making progress toward your learning objectives? If so, why? If not, why not? What efforts are you making to achieve your learning objectives? Do you need to change your activities to meet more objectives? Do you still want to learn those objectives? Have you developed new objectives or decided to delete other objectives? Have you discussed your progress toward learning objectives with your supervisor? Take the time to discuss these issues with your internship supervisor if necessary.

Step V: Final Self-Evaluation Report

Write a one to two page report analyzing and evaluating your internship experience in light of the goals you set in your learning contract. In this report, discuss the following issues:

- a) Your Initial Objectives: Did you meet your initial objectives? If so, why? If not, why not? What efforts did you make to fulfill your learning objectives? What could you have done differently? Were your initial objectives realistic?
- b) Your New Objectives: Did your learning objectives change over the course of the internship? If so, why? Did you develop new objectives that you did not consider at the beginning of the internship? Did you achieve these new objectives and why?
- c) Your Learning: What did you learn from this internship experience? After you leave Brussels, how do you intend to use what you learned at the internship?

This final report is due on **Tuesday, 28 June**.

INTERNSHIP LEARNING CONTRACT

INTERN: _____ ORGANIZATION: _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

List in order of priority your goals for your internship and what you wish to accomplish.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Describe in as much detail as possible your role and responsibilities in the organization in order of priority. List your duties, projects, deadlines, etc.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Discuss what you will learn from your responsibilities that were originally not part of your learning objectives.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Describe how you intend to meet your learning objectives. In doing so, discuss how the activities you will be doing both on and off the job that will enhance your learning on the job.

SUPERVISION

Describe the supervision you will be provided on the job. What kind of instruction, assistance, consultation, etc. you will receive and from whom?

EVALUATION

Describe how you will evaluate whether or not you have met your learning objectives. Describe the criteria you think the supervisor should use to evaluate you.

PLEDGE

I promise that I will make every effort to meet the learning objectives that I have set for myself at this internship.

Your Signature

SAMPLE INTERNSHIP LEARNING CONTRACT

INTERN: Jane Louise Doe ORGANIZATION: My Association (MA)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1) To learn how a professional office environment functions.
- 2) To improve my communications skills, especially my ability to write and to conduct business telephone conversations.
- 3) To learn more about how my major in international affairs can be used in the world of business.
- 4) To make contacts with people who will help me get a job later on.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) Assist in the overall smooth functioning of office operations by answering the telephone, writing correspondence, filing, acting as the receptionist when needed, taking notes in meetings, and other such duties.
- 2) Perform background research on legislative issues affecting MA under consideration in Parliament. Research involves library research, telephone inquiries, and field visits. Will report findings in a briefing paper to the supervisor by a pre-determined date.
- 3) Assist with maintaining library and database records on an as need basis. Tasks entail clipping articles and filing in appropriate folders, entering cataloged information into a database, and locating resource materials as needed.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- 1) I can learn new office skills like library management and how to manipulate an Access Database.
- 2) My supervisor will take me to business luncheons and some American Club functions.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1) By assisting in the smooth functioning of the office, I will learn how a professional office environment functions.
- 2) By writing correspondence and making telephone calls I will improve my business communication skills.
- 3) By performing research on European Parliament legislative initiatives I will see how my international relations major is relevant to the business world.
- 4) By putting forward a professional face at the office, attending business luncheons and other functions, I will make contacts that should help me for the future.

SUPERVISION

My supervisor, Mr. Smith, will meet with me weekly to monitor the progress of my research and learn about the implications of my findings. I will receive instruction on what to do around the office from Ms. Jones, who will also give me a general orientation and assist me as needed in performing general office tasks.

EVALUATION

I will have met my learning objectives if:

- 1) I see improvement in my writing skills.
- 2) I gain greater self-confidence on the telephone and in business meetings.
- 3) I see one issue that I learned about in class have an impact on the business.

My supervisor will give me an excellent evaluation if I am on time for the internship, do all assigned tasks punctually and cheerfully, show initiative and act professionally.

PLEDGE

I promise that I will make every effort to meet the learning objectives that I have set for myself at MA during this program.

Jane Louise Doe