ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

Spring 2010

COURSE NAME: Business Internship Seminar
COURSE NUMBER: BA 474 (Four credits)
MEETING TIME: W (4:30 to 5:40)
FACULTY SPONSOR: Dr. Hossein Varamini
OFFICE: Hoover 223
OFFICE PHONE: 361-1278
E-MAIL: varaminih@etown.edu
WEB-PAGE: http://users.etown.edu/v/varaminih
OFFICE HOURS: M W 2:00 - 3:30
Th 3:45 - 5:00
F 11:00 – 12:00
And by appointment

PRE AND/OR CO-REQUISITES:

Complete at least 160 hours on the internship assignment satisfactorily over a minimum of 12 weeks.
Jr./Sr. standing; Business or International Business Major; consent of Instructor; and pre-approved placement.

OBJECTIVES:

Classroom education cannot teach all the elements of knowledge required for a successful career. On-the-job experience can clearly enhance the students' learning and is a valuable supplement to classroom instruction. The seminar is to act as a regular forum for students sharing in discussion of ideas, problems and issues related to the internships of the student participants. The purpose of this course is to assist students in the learning process of reflection, analysis, and integration of experiences and insights gained through their internships with the academic theory, principles, concepts, and social and ethical dimensions of the discipline and subject area. In addition to academic goals, this course—combining abstract/theoretical and experience learning through an internship setting—is intended to further students' lifelong learning skills, professional and public speaking skills, strengthening of personal and professional values and ethics, clarification of personal and career goals, and achievement of self-confidence.

The following provides a more specific list of the course objectives:

1. Help students apply, amplify and add to the theory learned in the college atmosphere.
2. Expose students to the duties, expectations and environment of a job to better prepare them for their initial employment.
3. Improve motivation and direction of students for further learning in the college atmosphere.

4. Help students develop confidence in their abilities.

5. Prepare students for the internship experience by providing reading material in the specific discipline.

6. Increase the student’s knowledge and understanding of concepts, methods and skills that are relevant to the internship experience.

7. Encourage students to become familiar with the sources of literature and research in the specific field.

8. Assist students to improve their written and oral communication skills.

9. Improve the student’s skills in designing a research project, conducting the actual research and writing a research report.

**READINGS:**

A copy of each of the following readings is available on Reserve in the library. Students are strongly encouraged to periodically review the following readings and to incorporate the relevant materials in their class discussions, written assignments, and at the internship site, if appropriate.


11. Students are also expected to identify and read various articles related to their own internships.

12. Additional readings/assignments may be given in class.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

It is clear that the work done or a description of the field experience is not sufficient for academic credit; there must also be evidence of reflective analysis and interpretation of the experience which relates it to the basic theory in related areas. More specifically, students in this course must be able to connect different aspects of their internships with their prior academic preparations and to analyze, compare and evaluate these experiences. Students also need to demonstrate observation and recording skills, interpersonal communication skills, analytical skills, report writing skills, and oral presentation skills.

The specific requirements for the course are:

1. **Learning Contract:** Each student will develop a Learning Contract to be approved by the instructor.
   
   a. The student develop a first-pass draft of the Learning Contract which will state the student's learning objectives, as well as itemize the specific types of experiences the student will be engaged in or will encounter through the internship. The first draft of the Learning Contract should be typed and is due no later than **Wednesday, January 27, 2010**.

   b. The student may meet with the instructor to finalize learning objectives, add statements of relationship to relevant theory, and discuss independent study readings and research to be integrated with the placement. Readings may include material new to the student, as well as previously encountered material which the student will further learn to utilize in various "real-world" applications at the internship site.

2. **Bi-Weekly Reports:** Students should keep a daily journal exhibiting their internship experiences. (A brief note is attached to this syllabus to guide you in journal preparations). Each student will then write a reflective report every two weeks based on notes taken in his/her journals. The bi-weekly report should reflect an analysis and synthesis regarding observations and experiences gained through the internship. The bi-weekly report is not just a record of what happened, but should include your own interpretations and analyses. In other words, when you observe something and record it in your journal, also ask yourself: "What do I make of it? Why? How does it relate to other experiences? How does it relate to my courses?"
Furthermore, students will be expected to relate their internship experiences with their business courses. Bi-weekly reports should be typed, double-spaced, font size 12, pages numbered, and about 3-4 pages. Each report should cover the preceding two weeks.

3. **Class Participation and Attendance**: Seminar sessions will be held every two weeks during the semester. Students should be prepared to share their observations, experiences, interpretations, and reflections with other students in the seminar. The instructor's role in the seminar is to guide the discussion and sharing, assist in student assimilation and synthesis of experience and academic material, and offer suggestions in resolving any problems/difficulties the student is experiencing. Students are expected to suggest and discuss topics related to their internship experiences.

Class participation will be assessed with respect to one's participation in class discussions with fellow students. Evaluation will be based on the judgment of the instructor as to the quality and quantity of contribution in class. *It is important that you not only attend class, but also share your thoughts and feelings. Each student should be prepared to discuss his/her experience, observations, readings, interpretations, and reflections with others in the seminar. Students are required to attend all of the seminar sessions and participate in the class discussions. Remember, if you don't attend, you can't participate. And if you don't participate, you can't expect a passing grade for the class discussion component.*

4. **Book Report**: Each student is expected to read a book in the specific discipline of the internship experience as assigned by the faculty supervisor and submit an eight-page book report for the book. The report must include a few pages of critique (a critical analysis of the book by the student) relating the contents of the book to the internship experience and/or other standards of review. The analytical book report of approximately eight double-spaced typewritten pages must be handed in to the faculty supervisor by **Wednesday, March 24, 2010**. The book report will be evaluated by using the following criteria:

   a. Analysis of material presented in the book
   b. Critical review of material presented in the book
   c. Organization and systematic presentation
   d. Relevancy to the internship experience
   e. Clarity
   f. Proper use of English language
   g. Neatness of the paper

4. **Critical Incident Exercise**: Due to the problem-solving nature of the internship experience, each student in this course is expected to identify some "critical incident" from his/her internship experience and analyze it in some depth. A critical experience is an experience that in your opinion has had a marked impact on you as a person, particularly in light of your learning objectives. A handout in class will specify some of the important components of this requirement. The due date for this assignment is **Wednesday, Apr. 14, 2010**.

6. **Final Research Paper**: Each student will complete a research paper of about 15 double-spaced typewritten pages and submit it to the faculty supervisor by **Wednesday, April 28, 2010**. Any exceptions to this
policy must be clarified with the faculty supervisor at the beginning of the internship assignment. The research assignment requires that research be conducted in an area related to the internship experience and that the findings be reported in an analytical and objective manner. The research report should not be a purely descriptive paper or an opinion paper.

Evaluation of the research paper will be based on the following criteria:

a. Appropriateness and depth of the subject material  
b. Analysis of the topic  
c. Evidence of originality of thought  
d. Ability to summarize and compare opinions and findings of others  
e. Organization and presentation of material  
f. Proper documentation of source materials  
g. Clarity  
h. Proper use of English language  
i. Neatness of the paper  
j. Completeness of the paper

Name of topic, tentative outline and summary of source material must be submitted to and approved by faculty supervisor before the start of the research project. Each student will also make a presentation of his/her research paper to class on Wednesday, May 5, 2010.

**FORMAT FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:**

All written reports submitted to the instructor should be typed, double-spaced, and editorially correct (spelling, grammar, sentence structure, and so on). A copy of each graded assignment, with the instructor's comments, will be kept on file.

Please do not use plastic holders when you turn in your papers. A simple staple in the upper left hand corner is all that is necessary.

**STATEMENT ON DISABILITY:**

If you have a documented disability and need reasonable accommodations to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements, you must:

1.) Contact the Director of Disability Services, Dr. Kristin Sagun, in the Center for Student Success, BSC room 228 by calling 361-1227.

2.) Meet with me within two weeks of receiving a copy of the accommodation letter from Disability Services to discuss your accommodation needs and their implementation.

REMINDER: Students must bring to my attention accommodations they may use in order complete this course. Students will be accommodated as law requires, but remember, by law, initiation must be made by the individual student, not the instructor.
**GRADING POLICY:**

For determination of the final letter grade in BA 474, the following parts will be weighted accordingly:

1. Learning Contract 5%
2. Bi-Weekly Reports 25%
3. Class Participation and Attendance 20%
4. Critical Incident Exercise 10%
5. Book Report 10%
6. Final Research Paper 30%

100%

The normal grading system of 93% or above is an A, 90-92% is an A-, 87-89% is a B+, 83-86% is a B, etc., will be used to determine the grade for this 4-credit course. Students are expected to turn in the assignments on the due dates.

Credits for this course will count toward general electives, but not toward business core or required business electives. No credit will be given for an internship course on a retroactive basis.
A Guideline to Keeping a Journal

Keeping a journal will be an important part of your learning experience as an intern. By forcing you to think about what you are doing and what you are learning from it, the writing of a journal can increase the amount you actually learn. It can also make you aware of what you don’t know, so that you can direct your efforts toward finding out.

You should write in your journal at least briefly every day that you work at your internship. Keeping current in your writing is important because it lets you keep track of how your perceptions and understanding change from day to day and week to week, thereby documenting your learning.

Your journal should include all of the following elements:

1. A daily log of what you do. This should be as brief as possible, but try to be precise rather than general. E.g., "research at the library on consumer attitude toward beer advertising" is better than "research on beer."

2. Questions. If there’s something you want to know, write it down. If you later learn the answer, write that down, too—not necessarily on the same day. Curiosity is the first essential for learning, so the more questions, the better. Try to have at least one question every day that you work.

3. Insights, observations, perceptions, interesting incidents. After you have logged your day’s activity, think about what it meant to you, what you got out of it, new things you noticed, etc.

4. Discussion in your bi-weekly reports. Once every other week, write your report in which you discuss some topic of your choice more fully—either a particular incident or insight, or your reaction to the week as a whole. Try to analyze your experience, interpret your observations, compare events, evaluate outcomes, make judgments, and justify your position.

5. Likes and dislikes—about the work, the office, the political system, the world, yourself.

6. New words. Once a week, write down any new terms you’ve learned during the week—or, if you’ve heard them but not understood what they meant, write that down. Learning specialized vocabulary is a big part of any field.