IB 365: Professional Development in International Business

SAMPLE SYLLABUS – 3 CREDITS, SUMMER

**Course Description & Objectives**

This on-line seminar provides academic and professional development support to undergraduate students during the completion of their international internships with a wide variety of organizations and countries. Although this section of the course is formally listed as an International Business course, the content of this course will be relevant to students from all majors regardless of whether you are interning with a corporation, not-for-profit organization, a school, government agency, etc.! The course focuses on facilitating the acquisition of key knowledge (e.g., an understanding of social, economic, and political skills of the host country) and skills (e.g., communication, working in teams, organizational culture, power and politics, cultural intelligence) needed to function effectively in a global workplace. This course also emphasizes how students can integrate their international internship experiences into a broader plan for short and long-term professional development, job placement, and career success.

The seminar introduces students to key concepts and principles of globalization and strategies for being successful in a global workplace and then requires students to integrate this with their past academic coursework, their international work experiences, career development goals and their personal skills and values. This seminar challenges students to reflect on, to evaluate, and to learn from their global experiences and to exchange ideas, viewpoints, and insights with the faculty coordinator, and peers working in other types of internships, organizations, and cultural environments.

Students will be evaluated on their ability to engage analytically with their international internship experience, course readings and assignments, and with each other in order to maximize their learning experience. This is a great and unique opportunity as many students return from completing international internships reporting they were “life changing experiences!”

By the end of the course students should be able to:

• Demonstrate a high level of understanding of the history and culture of the host country in which they completed their internships and the practical implications of this knowledge for functioning effectively within the host country.
• Demonstrate a high level of understanding of the host organization in which they interned and the practical implications of this knowledge for functioning effectively within the host organization.
• Demonstrate a high level of understanding of the industry, sector, or operating environment (context) in which the intern’s host organization operated, and the practical implications of this knowledge for functioning effectively within the host organization.
• Review, reflect on, and evaluate their overall international internship experience, articulate the ways in which they have personally and professionally developed during their internship, and how they can use what they have learned in their future careers working for other domestic or international organizations after graduation.
• Demonstrate skill in using basic career and professional development tools to enhance their ability to leverage their international internship experience to achieve personal and professional goals.
• Demonstrate a high level of “global literacy” in terms of understanding social, political, and economic issues, trends, and challenges and their practical implications for students in terms of their future jobs, careers, and other personal or professional endeavors.
• Demonstrate a high level of cultural intelligence and understand how it can be used to handle cross-cultural issues in the workplace and in general.

**Workload Expectations**

Given that this course uses a non-traditional format, students often have questions about workload expectations.
Please note that you are earning academic credit (3 credits) based on the completion of the academic assignments and other requirements for the seminar and not the number of hours you work in your international internship. Please note that the university’s guidelines (not policy) for a three-credit class are that the average student should spend about nine hours per week working on course-related assignments outside of their internships. Some weeks may require fewer hours and others (especially toward the end of the seminar) may require more hours.

Seminar Structure
IB 365 is an online seminar connecting students interning around the globe to each other and to faculty and staff in the International Internships Program. Engaged and critical discussion as well as preparation, active participation and "attendance" are not only expected but will be a significant component of final evaluation. We will use the Courses@Business course platform (https://courses.bus.wisc.edu) and Skype to communicate and share ideas throughout the eight weeks of this seminar. You will use the course website interface to post semi-weekly diaries documenting your learning experiences in your host country. You will also post weekly responses to assigned readings and posted discussion questions and participate in online discussions of these readings with the faculty coordinator and other interns.

Keys for Student Success in the Seminar
1. Read the syllabus carefully and ask any questions that you may have no later than June 1st.
2. Important: Remember that you are doing an international internship but that you are also taking an academic course in which you will be earning academic credit. You are earning academic credit for the completion of the assignments and other required activities in the seminar based on your internship experiences. You are not earning academic credit for just doing an international internship. Also, please remember that you will maximize the overall value and your learning from your international internship by completing the requirements of the International Internships Program in conjunction with your practical work experience!
3. Document all weekly seminar assignments and due dates into your work calendar (e.g., a physical planner, the calendar in your phone, a computer application, etc.). Please do not try to remember things based on memory as this will not serve you well once you become busy with multiple personal and professional activities. Remember that the price of “forgetting” about a deadline, meeting, etc. is much higher in a job or internship than it is in some academic courses.
4. Read all course website updates and e-mails from the faculty coordinator and International Internships Program staff promptly and respond by the deadline, if one is specified in an e-mail.
5. If you are having personal or internship-related difficulties, reach out to the faculty coordinator and/or the IIP staff immediately as we are here to help you to be successful! Students who do not do well in their internships and the seminar oftentimes do not address issues they are encountering at all or until it is too late. Please do not make the same mistake.

Seminar Assignment Requirements
Notes:
1. Please see the “IB 365 Seminar Schedule” that provides detailed information about due dates for assignments. This is posted on the course website.
2. Please listen to all of the webinars that have been created for the overall seminar as well as for each of the assignments. The webinars are listed in the Seminar Schedule and the links to these recordings are on the course website.

Weekly International Perspectives Contributions (IPC)
By Monday morning at 6:00 a.m. CST each week, the faculty coordinator will post a set of questions to a discussion
room on the course website. Each student will be required to select and respond to ONE of these questions by Sunday at 11:55 p.m. CST at the end of each week. Each IPC should be approximately 500 words in length and include two Review and Respond questions to stimulate further discussion of the issues in the student’s IPC. The Review and Respond questions should not be included in the 500 word count target. Please view the webinar entitled, “How to Complete the International Perspectives Contributions Assignment” for more information.

Weekly Review and Respond Contributions (RRC)

In order to facilitate interactions between students, each student will be required to read all of the IPCs from other students in the seminar and post a response to any TWO of the Review and Respond questions they included in their IPC contribution for the previous week by Sunday at 11:55 p.m. CST each week. Each RRC should be approximately 250 words in length. Please note that for the weeks after students are also posting International Internship Experience Diaries (IIEDs), students would focus one of their RRCs on responding to another student’s IPC for the previous week and the second RRC should be focused on commenting on the IIED that was posted the previous week. Please view the webinar entitled, “How to Complete the Review and Respond Contributions Assignment” for more information.

Class Facebook Page

A Facebook page will be created so that interns can post updates, images, comments, and links to relevant news stories or videos about their experiences as international interns and living abroad. The purpose of this page will be to promote a strong learning community for interns that is more informal and personal. All interns will be expected to post at least one comment, article, etc. to the class Facebook page each week.

Semi-Weekly International Internship Experience Diaries (IIED)

Every other week, students will be required to submit an International Internship Experience Diary (IIED) that addresses the following questions for each two-week period:

- Based on reading local newspapers and listening to the news on TV/radio, what have been the biggest general news and business news stories?
- What types of work activities, tasks, projects, etc. have you engaged in the last two weeks? Be sure to list and discuss your activities in chronological order and date them.
- What were your internship-related goals for the last two weeks? To what extent were you successful in achieving them? Support your answer with specific examples.
- What types of cultural-differences have you encountered in relation to your work activities? This may include issues related to the work styles of your manager and/or co-workers, the culture of the work unit or organization, etc.
- What actions have you taken to adapt to these cultural differences? Were they effective? Why or why not?
- What is the most important practical implication or takeaway from your internship experience for these past two weeks that you should remember in the future in terms of job and career success after graduation?
- Post two digital images from your internship and cultural experience for these two weeks.

Each IIED should be approximately 1,000 words in length. The due date for this assignment is Sunday at 11:55 p.m. CST every other week. Students will be required to complete and submit an IIED by the end of weeks #2, 4, and 6. Please view the webinar entitled, “How to Complete the International Internships Experience Diaries Assignment” for more information.

Readings

Article readings and excerpts will be assigned throughout the semester and will be available on the Courses@Business course website as well as a physical course reader. The course reader will be provided for students prior to their departure for their internships.
Semi-Weekly Skype Meetings with the Faculty Coordinator

Each student will be required to schedule a 30-minute check-in meeting with the faculty coordinator in weeks #2, 4, and 6. The purpose of these meetings is to have an informal discussion of how the internship is going and to address any issues or concerns that students may be having with their internships. This is not designed to be a formal evaluation of students – it is simply a check-in to make sure that everything is going well for students in their internships. **Students should e-mail the faculty coordinator to schedule a time to meet at least 72 hours before the desired meeting time.** Note: If it is not possible to Skype, other arrangements may be possible for satisfying this requirement.

**International Internship Contextual Analysis Project (IICAP)**

The purpose of this paper is to ensure that students have acquired the basic information needed to be successful as an international intern. Specifically, the paper must address the following:

1. **General Host Country Information**
   - What are the five important customs to remember when living in your host country?
   - What are five important phrases that are important to remember when living in your host country?
   - What are five important facts about the country in terms of its history, geography, political system, economy, society, etc.?
   - What are five popular food dishes and drinks among people in your host country?
   - What are three popular leisure activities among people in your host country?
   - What are the important holidays in your host country? How are they observed or celebrated?

2. **Internship-Level Information**
   - What are the duties and responsibilities of my internship?
   - What are my supervisor’s expectations of me in terms of performing my job as an intern?
   - How does my job as an intern fit into the larger work unit?
   - What is the culture of my work unit?

3. **Organization-Level Information**
   - What are the vision and mission of the organization?
   - What are the organization’s key operating values and principles?
   - What are the organization’s key strengths?
   - What are the organization’s key opportunities for improvement?
   - What is the culture of the overall organization in terms of its philosophy, values, rituals, etc.?

4. **Industry or Sector-Level Information**
   - Who are the organization’s key stakeholders (i.e., groups of individuals who are impacted by the organization or have an interest in the organization)?
   - What are the key opportunities that exist in the organization’s external environment (e.g., expanding services or programs)?
   - What are the key threats in the organization’s external environment (e.g., weak economy, political conflict)?

Note: This information should be obtained from documentation provided by the employer, meetings with the intern’s supervisor and other members of the organization, and Internet research.

The final report should be a minimum of 2,000 words and it is due by the end of the third week of the seminar. Please view the webinar entitled, “How to Complete the International Internship Contextual Analysis Project” for
International Internship Capstone Project (IICP)

Students need to choose to complete one of two capstone projects - an International Experience Capstone Project (IECP) OR an International Applied Research Capstone Project (IARCP) that relates to some aspect of work completed during the internship.

• **Option #1: International Experience Capstone Project (IECP)**: Whereas the *semi-weekly diaries* are your ongoing record of specific analysis, the final paper provides an opportunity to reflect on the entire internship experience. The final reflection paper should do the following:

1. Identify and discuss at least FIVE important work-related cultural differences that you encountered as an intern and the actions you took to adapt to these differences. Discuss specific situations to support your answer.

2. Assess your strengths and opportunities for improvement as an international intern. As part of this requirement, students must conduct structured interviews their boss and at least two other people who they worked with to provide specific additional feedback to support their evaluation of themselves.

3. Suppose that your internship was extended for another 12 months. Identify and discuss at least three actions you would take to enhance your effectiveness as an international intern with the organization at which you did your internship.

4. Suppose that you were offered another amazing international internship with another organization in another country you would be potentially interested in working and living in at some point. Identify the country and the type of internship in which you would be interested. Identify and describe at least FIVE actions you would take to understand and to adapt to the cultural differences you experienced in your internship this summer in relation to your new internship.

5. Identify and describe THREE specific actions you will take during the remainder of your time as a UW-Madison student to build on what you learned from your international internship this summer to prepare you for your future job and career after graduation. Be specific.

6. Identify and describe what you feel are the THREE most important practical takeaways from completing your international internship and the International Internships Program this summer. Be specific and support your answer with specific experiences and course material (i.e., readings).

The goals of the IECP are:

a. To provide an opportunity for the student to reflect on and synthesize the full experience, and to analyze personal and professional effectiveness;

b. To facilitate closure of the internship experience and to connect it to your future growth and development as a person and as a professional.

**Note:** The IECP final written report should be a typed summary that is a minimum of 3,000 words in length. Please view the webinar entitled, “How to Complete the International Experience Capstone Project” for more information.

• **Option #2: International Applied Research Capstone Project (IARCP)**
The scope and structure of your applied research project will vary. It could closely follow a research project comprised of the particular work you conducted in your internship or another research project that your supervisor is willing to have you take on to satisfy this requirement. A good IARCP project focuses on a specific issue or problem that the intern’s employer wants to solve that is also of interest to the intern. The exact scope and structure of a student’s IARCP, if he/she chooses to take this option, will be determined on a case-by-case basis with the faculty coordinator.

Note: The final IARCP written report should also be a minimum of 3,000 words in length. Please view the webinar entitled, “How to Complete the International Applied Research Capstone Project” for more information.

Important: Students must decide whether they will complete option #1 or option #2 for their capstone project no later than the end of the third week of the class. Students may not change the type of capstone project they complete (e.g., from option #2 to option #1) after the third week of the class.

Presentation of the International Capstone Project
Note: Students will be required to schedule a Skype meeting with the faculty coordinator for week #8 to complete a 30-minute presentation of their International Capstone Project. If the student is back on campus, this can be done in person. Students should dress business casual for this presentation. Students must use PowerPoint or Prezi to deliver their presentations. Please view the webinar entitled, “How to Complete the International Capstone Project Presentation” for more information.

Academic Integrity: You are expected to uphold the expectations of academic honesty and integrity according to the standards of the University. Your work should be your own. Always cite your sources, including author, page numbers, or website if applicable. Do not cut and paste from websites without quotations and source information. Do not present as your own ideas or words that belong to someone else. If you have questions about how to properly cite your sources please contact your instructor or refer to the UW Writing Center’s guidelines. Anyone suspected of cheating, plagiarizing or otherwise failing to meet the standards of academic integrity will, at a minimum, receive a zero on the assignment. Additional sanctions may include notification of the Dean of Students Office, failure in the course, expulsion from the course or expulsion from the university. For more on the University’s Academic Integrity policy see: http://students.wisc.edu/doso/acadintegrity.html

Privacy and Confidentiality: Students are expected to respect and maintain the privacy and confidentiality of their peers. Any information about employers, colleagues, or any personal information shared by students in the course is not to be disseminated in any way, shape, or form without the consent of the author.

Course Grade

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Course Grades will be based on a standard scale and not a curve using the following standards:
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Note: Students who end up on the borderline for a higher grade at the end of the seminar will be considered for a bump to a higher grade based primarily on the quality of the student’s discussion contributions and his/her