

UWP 198

Reflective Writing for Virtual Internships Summer 2022

Units: 2

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No class meeting time or room, as course is held remotely and asynchronously

Office hours TBA

## SYLLABUS

### **Introduction to the course**

Welcome to Summer 2022 Virtual Internships!

All students from all four Virtual Internship career areas will be enrolled in this section of UWP 198, so the theoretical backgrounds you bring to your internships could potentially be quite different. More surprisingly, even those on the same career area are likely to have very different experiences in their individual placements. Yet you are all in the same boat: you'll have in common the experience of launching into the global workplace. All of you will be finding out something about the relationship between the ideas you've been absorbing in the classroom and how they evolve in practice.

### **Assignments**

Writing is a way of processing as well as a way of capturing experiences. I've designed a series of assignments, not to test you, but to give you structure for both. The assignments ask you to consider your experience in relation to your goals and ideas and yourself in relation to others.

The Individual Reflective Essays are designed to help you consider your experience in terms of your personal and professional development. The Discussion Board assignments are focused on the intercultural aspects of your internship; they are set up for you compare your experiences with others. The activities are *progressive* and *cumulative*, that is, they build on each other and they will add up to an overall view of the impact of your internship experience on your understanding of yourself in the global workplace.

To pass the course, you must turn in all of the assignments.

Everything in this syllabus is also available on Canvas, which is also where you will turn in your work.

### **Outcomes**

Participating in these activities will

--help you better understand what kind of work best meets your goals

--leave you with a record of your internship experience from which you can draw in the future (to create resumés, personal statements, cover letters for future employers)

## **Summary of Assignments and Discussion Due Dates**

Monday, June 27: Reflective Essay 1

Tuesday, June 29: Post Discussion 1

Saturday, July 2: Respond to two Discussion 1 posts

Sunday, July 10: Reflective Essay 2

Tuesday, July 13: Post Discussion 2

Saturday, July 16: Respond to two Discussion 2 posts

Tuesday, July 20: Post Discussion 3

Saturday, July 23: Respond to two Discussion 3 posts

Sunday, July 31: Reflective Essay 3

Tuesday, Aug 3: Post Discussion 4

Saturday, Aug 6: Respond to two Discussion 4 posts

Thursday, Aug 11: Reflective Essay 4

The pattern to these assignment is as follows:

--Reflective essays are due on Sundays, except for the last one, which is due on the Thursday before your final day. Only I will read and comment on these.

--Discussions are in two parts: you post on a Tuesday, and then have until Saturday to respond to two others posts. Please note that Canvas doesn't provide a way for me to set two deadlines, so it's up to each of you to post by Tuesday night in order to give your fellow students time to read and respond. I will read the posts and the comments and sometimes throw in a comment of my own.

**OFFICE HOURS** will be set by June 30. In the first week, I will send out a questionnaire about your time zone, work hours, and class schedule in order to determine which two hours in the week fit the majority of your schedules. These office hours are **optional** for you but I will take them as a commitment to be at my computer on Zoom. If I don't manage to set a time that works for you and you need to talk to me, please email me.

## **Assignment Descriptions**

### **Reflective Essay 1: Why you are here 1**

Consider:

--What motivated you to apply for the Virtual Internship program?

--What are your current career goals and what convinced you to take this path?

--What academic experiences in particular influenced your thinking?

--What do you hope to get out of this internship?

--About your experiences so far:

Given your interview and your initial week of work, what aspects of your internship do you think could lead to some fulfillment of your hopes and expectations?

Write a short, 100-200 word discussion of:

- What kind of placement you were hoping for
- The ways your given placement might be an avenue to what you hoped for
- What you think you'll need to do to make your placement work for you

Submit to Canvas on Monday June 27 by 11:59 pm PDT.

Grade: 3 points

### **Discussion 1: What's happening 1**

POST by Thursday, June 29 a 100- to 200-word story that shows you being surprised about your supervisor's and co-workers expectations. Make yourself the main character in the story by telling it in the first person. Compare those expectations to some you've encountered in the cultures of the United States.

Offer a short paragraph that reflects on how it feels to encounter a different work ethic and/or a different approach to problem solving.

RESPOND by July 2 to two other interns' stories and reflections. What do you notice about the strategies the writer used to adjust to a new situation? Responses should be at least 50 words, can be up to 200 words.

Grade: 3 points, 1 for posting and 2 for each reply.

### **Reflective Essay 2: Why you are here 2**

First, catalogue the kinds of tasks that you have been given to do in the first three weeks of your internship (projects you've begun, meetings or trainings you've attended, etc.)

Second, taking a deeper dive into the question of what motivated you to apply to the Virtual Internship program, consider what principles the courses pertaining to your career area have taught you to follow. For example, for Environment, Green Tech & Sustainability interns, what are the environmentalist principles that you've been taught to follow? Whatever your career area, in your enrollment application, you very likely made declarations about what you think is important in the world. The terms you used refer to your principles, your ideals--what you think humans should be doing. But why? A 'should' implies an ethics, a set of principles. What are yours? Where do they come from? What inspired them?

Write 100 to 200 words reflecting on the following:

What does the company you work for do and why? What motivates its leaders?

Does the company's work correlate with your principles?

What is the work that you've been given to do?

Do some aspects of the work the company does or the work you do conflict with your ideals?

What kinds of compromises do you see being made? What kinds of compromises are you having to make?

Submit to Canvas on Sunday July 10 by 11:59 pm.

Grade: 3 points

### **Discussion 2: What's Happening 2**

**POST by July 13:** Tell a story about a piece of work that you've been engaged in during your internship so far—how it was assigned, how you began on it, any setbacks you've encountered so far, how or if you overcame them. Make communication the focus. Did you encounter culturally different communication conventions from your own? You can tell this as a straight first person narrative or you can try using dialogue. Some possible situations to show:

- receiving instructions
- explaining something you have done or want to do
- asking for clarification or information

Then offer a short paragraph in which you reflect on how you handled the communication. Story and paragraph should be about 200 words.

**RESPOND by July 16 at 11:59 PDT** to two other interns' stories and reflections.

What do you notice about the rules of communication the speakers in the story are following? Responses should be at least 50 words, can be up to 200 words.

Grade: 3 points, 1 for posting and 2 for each reply.

### **Discussion 3: Registering change**

One of the hardest things to do is engage in a situation where you don't know the rules. You did that by signing up for this global internship program!

By now, you may have made some adjustments: on the macro level, in response to different cultural or professional expectations, or on the micro level, to the particular expectations of supervisors. You may have felt pressure to BE different (as opposed to behaving differently) and had to learn how to hold your ground or how to be flexible.

**Post by July 20** a 100- to 200- word story that shows you learning to do something differently in your internship.

**Respond by July 23** to two other interns' stories and reflections. How did it feel to read each one? Did the other interns' stories change your sense of your own uncertainty?

Responses should be at least 50 words, can be up to 200 words.

Grade: 3 points, 1 for posting and 2 for each reply.

### **Reflective Essay 3: Progress report to self**

First, looking back to Reflective Essay 1 and 2 and to the things you were doing in the first weeks of your internship, describe how you feel you have progressed.

Second, consider what has made progression possible and how your actions and attitudes have hindered or helped your progress.

- Have you used all of the resources available to you?
- What have you learned about yourself as a team member?
- What have you learned you don't know that you need to know?
- In what ways has your cultural background shaped the kind of contributor you have been?

Write a 100- to 200-word evaluation of your performance so far. Give yourself praise and be honest about your shortcomings.

Submit to Canvas on July 31 by 11:59 pm PDT.

Grade: 3 points

#### **Discussion 4: What just happened?**

What has happened to you as a result of undertaking this internship? Have you had your career goals confirmed? Have you discovered that you want to seek another path? Can you describe a specific encounter, a specific exchange or event that you now realize was the turning point?

POST by August 3 a story of whatever length that shows what has happened to you over the last seven weeks. Consider writing something you can submit to the “Global Learning Blog” at <https://globallearning.ucdavis.edu/news/blog>. Those posts are either written by students on study abroad programs in other countries or composed by Study Abroad staff from student answers to set questions.

Having your post chosen and published would be a great CV item. To be considered, in addition to posting your story to the Discussion Board in Canvas, you must also submit it to the Global Learning Hub. You can do that by sending your story to Glynis Kincaid, [gakincaid@ucdavis.edu](mailto:gakincaid@ucdavis.edu). You already know her as your Program Coordinator. Not only would she love to see a student blog from her program on the website, she wants to read your stories to hear first hand what your experiences have been. She'll pass them on to the editor of the blog, who will choose which are to be published.

RESPOND by August 6. Reflect back to two students what it is about their stories that would be useful to future interns, virtual or otherwise. Please post by August 3 to leave enough time for your fellow students to read and respond by August 6. After you have received responses, revise and submit to Glynis!

Responses should be at least 50 words, can be up to 200 words.

Grade: 3 points, 1 for posting and 2 for each reply.

### **Reflective Essay 4: Results**

Eight weeks is not very long for professional work projects, but it is to be hoped that you can point to some concrete pieces of work. Perhaps you brought a project to a new stage. Perhaps you helped create a system or you established a format for tracking ongoing work. Make a list of all your activities in as concrete of terms as you can. (For example, “Created flow chart” is more concrete than “assisted in organizing,” and “compiled data *used for...*” is more concrete than just “compiled data”). Further, since the work you do in your internship might not correlate exactly to the work you hope to do in the future, make another list, maybe in an adjacent column, of the skills you demonstrated in the process. Finally, consider how you feel about the kinds of work that you were able to do.

Write 100 to 200 words describing a specific task you brought to completion—from beginning to end—and what that task shows about the skills you possess

Include a final paragraph on what you’ve learned about what kinds of work you like and don’t like, what you’ve learned about what you will pursue in the future. Have you come to a different understanding of your goals and how you are going to fulfill them?

Submit to Canvas on August 11 by 11:59 pm PDT.