



COMM 489: INTERNSHIP IN COMMUNICATION

SPRING 2018 Instructor: Cayla Rios

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Department of Communication's Internship course offers you valuable work experience that you can use as the foundation for your first job after college. Through the internship, you will work for a non-profit or for-profit worksite of your choice. In the internship, you will engage in meaningful work, with responsibilities and experiences relevant to your chosen career field. The internship will provide you with many benefits, including:

- Exploring a chosen career field
- Gaining experience in a professional organizational environment
- Improving your communication skills and knowledge
- Applying principles and theories to real-life work situations
- Meeting and networking with career professionals
- Enhancing your personal growth

PREREQUISITES

To be eligible for the Internship in Communication, you must have

- Attained junior or senior class standing
- Declared a major in Corporate and Organizational Communication or Communication Studies
- Completed COMM 200: Communication Foundations and COMM 362: Organizational Communication
- Completed or be enrolled in COMM 300: Introduction to Communication
- Research Methods

INTERNSHIP STANDARDS

The Internship in Communication defines an internship experience as one that meets the following criteria:

- The internship requires a minimum of 160 hours of on-site work for the program
- You assist in or perform the work in a professional setting, not remotely or from home.
- The purpose of your work is both educational and contributes to the organizational goals of your internship site, thus providing benefit to you and to your employer
- You engage in meaningful, communication-related activities in which you contribute to organizational processes and outcomes
- Your position is temporary or entails new, communication-related activities (i.e. it is not your regular job)
- You report to the site supervisor (you may not report to a close relative, such as your parent, sibling, aunt or uncle or grandparent)
- You may or may not receive a salary or other compensation
- You complete all COMM 489 written requirements by the due dates
- Your written work shows thoughtful reflection on and connection of
- Communication theories with your work experience

EMPLOYER COMMITMENT

To ensure a successful internship experience, the host organization and the site supervisor should make the following commitments:

- Offer a professional work environment in which the intern can participate and interact with other organizational members
- Offer opportunities for the intern to engage in substantial work that contributes to organizational goals (i.e. not just clerical work, but project-based)
- Provide an appropriate workspace, tools, and any other resources necessary for the intern to complete assigned tasks
- Provide direct supervision and offer regular feedback to help the intern understand expectations, assignments and to make improvements
- Formally evaluate the intern's performance by completing the mid-term and final evaluation forms found at http://www.wku.edu/communication/undergraduate_program/internships/forms.php
- Carry business and liability insurance that covers student interns while working both on organizational premises and off-site on behalf of the host organization

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for acceptance to the Internship in Communication, you must complete and submit the following materials to Dr. Sterk:

- The Internship Application found at http://www.wku.edu/communication/undergraduate_program/internships/forms.php
- The Employer Learning Contract found at http://www.wku.edu/communication/undergraduate_program/internships/forms.php
- An unofficial copy or your WKU transcript printed off icap.

All internships are subject to the instructor's approval. Upon approval, you will be advised how to register for COMM 489.

COMMUNICATION WITH INSTRUCTOR

E-mail and Text Messaging are preferred methods of communication with Cayla Rios. Phone calls are accepted for conversations at length. Please allow up to 2 business days for an e-mail response. Meeting in person is by appointment only.

Preferred E-Mail: cayla.rios@wku.edu

Cell Phone (Text): 270-350-0350

ASSIGNMENTS/POINT ALLOTMENT

First Time Report	5 Points
Second Time Report	5 Points
Supervisor's Midterm Evaluation	5 Points
Supervisor's Final Evaluation	5 Points
Student's Midterm Evaluation	5 Points
Student's Final Evaluation	5 Points
2 Journal Assignments	30 Points
Job Description, Cover Letter, Resume	10 Points
Consultant's Report	30 Points

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are explained on the COMM 489 Blackboard site. All student assignments must be submitted on Blackboard through SafeAssign, a plagiarism detection software. Written work should be in APA standard form, including clear theses, organization, headings, grammar, punctuation, and paragraphing. Please use 12-point font and one inch margins. If research citations are used, APA format must be followed.

DUE DATES

January 22: Internship Begins

March 9: First Round of Assignments Due By Midnight

- First Journal Assignment
- First Time Report
- Student's Midterm Evaluation
- Supervisor's Midterm Evaluation

April 27: Second Round of Assignments Due By Midnight

- Second Journal Assignment
- Second Time Report
- Job Description, Cover Letter, and Resume
- Student's Final Evaluation
- Supervisor's Final Evaluation

May 4: Consultant's Report Due By Midnight

Your internship may or may not continue past May 4, depending on your arrangement with your internship employer. Nevertheless, your assignments for the class are due on the dates above.

TITLE IX MISCONDUCT/ASSAULT STATEMENT

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) at <https://wku.edu/eoo/documents/titleix/wkutitleixpolicyandgrievanceprocedure.pdf> and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040) at https://wku.edu/policies/hr_policies/2040_discrimination_harassment_policy.pdf.

Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121.

Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are "Responsible Employees" of the University and **MUST** report what you share to WKU's Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU's Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.

ADA ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

In compliance with University policy, students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center located in Downing Student Union, 1074. SARC can be reached by phone number at 270-745-5004 [270-745-3030 TTY] or via email at sarc.connect@wku.edu. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a faculty notification letter (FNL) from The Student Accessibility Resource Center.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

Journal Assignments

Purpose: To reflect upon the work site, job responsibilities, and management of your internship by your site supervisor. Upload a 1 1/2-2 page double-spaced report on your work experiences and the meaning you've made of them. Draw upon appropriate Communication theories from your COMM 200 and 362 classes (as well as any others that are appropriate) to make sense of what you are experiencing. (Value: 30 points; 15 points per entry)

1st Journal Entry: Due March 9

2nd Journal Entry: Due April 27

Four-Week and Eight-Week Time Reports

Using an excel spreadsheet, submit the hours worked each day and week starting with January 22. (Value: 10 points; 5 points each)

4-Week Time Report: Due March 9

8-Week Time Report: Due April 27

Student Mid-Term & Final Evaluation

Purpose: To allow you to provide confidential feedback about your internship experiences. Submit the Midterm Evaluation form through http://www.wku.edu/communication/undergraduate_program/internships/forms.php. (Value: 5 points each).

Student Mid-Term Evaluation: Due March 9

Student Final Evaluation: Due April 27

Supervisor's Mid-Term & Final Evaluation

Purpose: To allow your supervisor to provide feedback about your performance, particularly to enable you to improve. Your site supervisor should submit the midterm evaluation, found online at http://www.wku.edu/communication/undergraduate_program/internships/forms.php. (Value: 5 points each).

Supervisor Mid-Term Evaluation: Due March 9

Supervisor Final Evaluation: Due April 27

Job Description, Cover Letter, and Resume

Purpose: To capture your internship on your resume, frame it on your cover letter, and write both toward the job description. (Value: 10 points).

You must create a new resume and cover letter, written to include your internship experience, for a job that you do not now hold. The point of this assignment is to write a fresh, focused resume and cover letter, new for this job. In your life, each time you apply for a new job (and you may hold up to 10 distinct jobs over your career), you will write a new resume and cover letter.

Assignment Due: April 27

Job Description Details:

Upload a job description found from a standard jobs source (such as LinkedIn, Ziprecruiter, Indeed, Monster, etc.) for a job you feel you fit.

Cover Letter Details:

Design a personal letterhead that you put on top of both the cover letter and resume, thereby linking them to each other.

Write a one-page cover letter that matches your skills with their needs, using words drawn from the job description. No matter what source you check for advice on cover letter writing, use only your own words. Do not copy words or phrases from samples—it is completely obvious to employers when you are doing that.

See <http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Cover-Letter> for advice (completely ignore the “sample cover letters” because the way they look is inappropriate—all cover letters should be balanced on the page, include your own self-designed letterhead (until you work for a company that provides letterhead), include addresses and dates, and so on. The description does a good job of telling you how to structure, what topics to cover, and how to address the potential employer.

Resume Details:

Write a one-page resume that captures your work experience and college successes well. Again, <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/6/> contains excellent advice on writing a resume. I will upload samples from WKU students on Blackboard so you can see how they handled the design elements.

Consultant's Report

Purpose: To apply the insights gained from your experience and noted in your journal entries in a document designed to improve the quality of communication in your organizational site. (Value: 30 points)

Consultant's Report Due: May 4

Imagine that the organization for which you have interned has invited you back to serve as a consultant. Based on your journal entries, choose three areas ripe for improvement. Be sure that your suggestions are grounded in Communication theories, meaning that you use theories to point out organizational strengths and weaknesses and to support your recommendations for improvement. Your analysis should include examples to illustrate the organization's communication strengths and weaknesses and offer specific recommendations to help the organization improve.

Your 5-6 page paper should be organized as follows:

Introduction: Attention-getting statement, followed by your overall thesis related to the organization's communication, followed by a preview statement of the three topic areas you will discuss.

Topic Area One: Briefly introduce the point. Then explain the theoretical concept/theory, using appropriate APA parenthetical and bibliographic citations. Then, using specific examples, show how the organizational concept/theory plays out in the organization. Evaluate the effectiveness of how that plays out. Offer recommendations for improvement.

Topic Area Two: repeat.

Topic Area Three: repeat.

Conclusion: Summarize your three points and recommendations. Then, offer an answer to the "now what?" question. Now what should the organization do and what good might come about as a consequence of those new actions?

References: Supply an APA appropriate bibliography of sources cited. I expect to see at least 3 solid sources drawn from the Communication and Mass Media Complete database. In addition to those 3, you may use either your COMM 200 App or 362 textbook to provide general context for the theories.

Examples: Let's say you notice issues related to technology use.

Paragraph One: Summarize the importance of understanding good uses of technology, perhaps citing Media Richness Theory in which the richness of the medium must support the meaning of the message.

Paragraph Two: Give some examples of how technology is used to communicate with other organizational members (employees, new customers, etc.). You may use examples from your weekly journal or offer new ones. For example, the boss sent an email to all employees about a major change in the health care policy.

Paragraph Three: Evaluate the effectiveness of the technology for that use, discussing the outcomes (good, bad, who was affected and how). For example, the health care policy email was lengthy and confusing. Employees were upset and complained amongst themselves. It caused a decrease in morale and trust of the management.

Paragraph Four: Offer a suggestion for how technology might be used more effectively in the organization. For example, you might suggest the organization use face-to-face communication for important, difficult, complex policy changes such as those related to employee healthcare, allowing employees to interact and ask questions. Perhaps the organization could provide a list of Frequently Asked Questions, contact numbers, and other resources that employees could access online. You could then discuss how these ideas might prevent conflict, might help reduce and manage employees' uncertainty and might even increase employee identification if employees feel their employer cares about them as people, not just workers.