

## Assessment of Overseas Business Internship Experience at the University of Boston

The University of Boston provides overseas internship opportunities in a wide range of locations, including the USA, Europe, Asia and Australia. Students can apply for internships in line with their own disciplines and gain real-world work experiences related to their study. For business students, they can choose to enroll in Internship in Economic/Finance (CAS EC 497), a 4-credit course provided in different locations for example Brussels, Padua, London and Paris. This case example will focus on the internship in Paris.

Internship in Economics/ Finance in Paris offer students the opportunity to work at chambers of commerce, fashion and cosmetic companies, IT & telecommunications companies or financial services companies. The course is a combination of workshops and authentic workplace experience.

Students are also required to complete academic assignments so as to give academic value to the internship and to add an analytical perspective to the entire internship experience. Academic internship experts and professors will closely monitor students' performance and provide support to students whenever necessary.

### Distinctive Features:

- ✔ Requiring business partners to take up active mentorship and assessment roles while hosting student interns;
- ✔ Maintaining close communication with student interns and making placement visits to host organizations midway through the internship;
- ✔ Combining teaching arrangements with placement activities

### Designed Learning Outcomes (LO):

- I. Gain an understanding of workplace dynamics, professional expectations, and the influence of culture on both.
- II. Build proficiency in a range of business or industry skills appropriate to the field of the internship placement, including professional and inter-cultural communication through written, verbal, and non-verbal means.
- III. Refine and clarify professional and career goals through critical analysis of the internship experience or research project.

Source: University of Boston (2018) Internship Course Syllabus

### Coursework Teaching & Learning Activities:

- ✍ Pre-internship Group Sessions (4 sessions; Week 1, 2, 7, 8): present the general academic, professional and cultural process of the internship;
- ✍ Workshops (90 minutes; 5 sessions; during internship): the first three workshops aim at stimulating and nurturing reflections for writing the final essay; the fourth workshop prepares students for the final oral interview and the last workshop is a re-entry seminar;
- ✍ Virtual Session by Email (3 sessions; Week 6, 9, 10): individual monitoring of the internship and provision of support by professors and internship experts
- ✍ Internship Placements (Week 10-Week 16; 6 weeks)

## Assessment Approaches

Name	Learning Activities	Weight	Aligned LO	Type	Generic Skills
A1 Attendance	Attendance is mandatory for all group sessions, workshops and virtual sessions. Students are also expected to submit all assignments on time and be present for the entire placement period. One absence from a workshop or from work will result in two points off the final grade; and a late submission	N.A.	I. II.	Formative	Time & Self-management

A2	Workshops	of assignment will lead to 0.5 point off the course grade per day. More than four unexcused absences would result in an F for the course. Students are required to prepare before each of the first four workshops. They have to complete handouts and be prepared for short “elevator pitch” presentations related to the topic of the workshop. Students’ preparedness, motivation and relevance of presentation will be graded.	30%	I. III.	Formative	Communication; Presentation; Critical Thinking
A3	Essay	Students can choose to write the final essay which concludes their internship experiences in French (2000 words minimum) or English (2500 words minimum). The essay should cover all aspects of the internship experience, including the company, the industry, the intercultural experience and the individual professional development. Students are required to not just state and describe facts, but to reflect on the internship experiences and to carry out research and investigation.	35%	III.	Summative	Communication; Critical Thinking
A4	Final Interview	Students are required to attend a 20-minute individual interview. They will stage as job applicants and an internship expert will act as a potential employer. Students will be asked to highlight their professional and academic learnings as well as other benefits from the internship experiences.	25%	III.	Summative	Communication; Critical Thinking; Adaptability; Professionalism

**Assessment Type**

A number of formative as well as summative assessment methods are employed in this course to monitor student performance and the grasp of knowledge and skills.

**Assessment Focal Areas**

**Holistic competencies:** As suggested in the course’s LOs, the development of students’ holistic competencies including written, verbal and non-verbal communication and professionalism is significantly important in this course. Holistic competencies are assessed in all of the assessment methods. For instance, students’ attendance (A1) emphasizes on time and self-management skills and the sense of responsibility. The final interview (A4), on the other hand, puts students’ professionalism and verbal communication to the test, as students are required to attend an individual interview in which

they stage as job applicants and present their learnings in the internship experiences.

**Reflection:** To achieve the third LOs, which is to “refine and clarify professional and career goals, students are expected to both the essay (A3) and the final interview (A4) require students to reflect on their internship experiences. When writing the essay (A3), students are required to take an analytical approach to reflect, raise questions and even carry out investigation within the company. As for the final interview (A4), students are expected to reflect on their professional and academic learnings and all other benefits from the internship and present it to the jury during the interview.

### Assessment Standards/ Sample Rubrics

Detailed assessment rubrics are not available for this course. However, there are brief assessment standards of two of the assessment methods: the essay (A3) and the final interview (A4).

A3. Essay	Areas	Marks
	Content: research, reflection, richness of ideas	35
	Form: structure, methodology, written expression	10

Source: University of Boston (2018) Internship Course Syllabus

A4. Final Interview	Areas	Marks
	Reflection and ideas	12.5
	Professionalism and expression	12.5

Source: University of Boston (2018) Internship Course Syllabus

### Teacher's Stories

Emmanuelle Farhi, Associate Academic Director, Boston University, Paris

### Professional Engagements

Emmanuelle holds a Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies (equivalent of the ABD in the United States) in American literature and a Master of Arts from the Université de Paris IV Sorbonne. She has worked for Simmons College, Susquehanna University and Boston University, Boston. She started serving as the Associate Director of Studies at Boston University, Paris since 2010 and she is responsible for all

academic matters of the Paris study programme and monitors students' internship performance.

### Partnership

This course provides a wide variety of internship opportunities to business students. Companies providing internship opportunities include chambers of commerce, fashion and cosmetic companies, IT & telecommunications companies and financial services companies. The support from these partnering companies is of foremost importance.

### Students' Side of Stories

- ☑ *"I studied abroad in Paris Spring 2015 and was lucky enough to live in the 16<sup>th</sup> arrondissement. I interned for a company known as Reputation Squad and they work to repair people's e-reputation. My main tasks were writing articles for clients and proofreading/translating. I learned that I am capable of being independent and that living in a new city is not that scary. Also, in order to really enjoy your time abroad you have to go in with zero expectations other than living outside of your comfort zone."* (Tanya

Moronge, Paris Management Internship 2015)

- ☑ *"I worked for a designer, Jasmin Santanen, who designs luxury apparel for women by combining Nordic simplicity and Parisian elegance. Her first couture collection was presented in Paris in 2007 for which she was recognized with the Elle Style Award for best collection of the year. As an intern, I took on a variety of tasks such as working on brand development presentations, researching material and compiling summary documents. When studying international management, it is important to understand all perspectives,*

so it is beneficial to have work experience internationally. In Paris, I learned the European perspective on fashion, which would have been hard to do working in North America. Paris is one of the centers of the fashion industry, and, therefore, an excellent place to have work experience if you are interested in pursuing this field.” (Bronwen Ambridge, Paris Internship Program 2013)

- ✔ “I interned at JPA International, a network of independent public auditors that spans across forty countries. JPA International is headquartered in Paris and serves clients all across the globe with audit, consulting, and corporate finance. Their major clients are

French corporations, specializing in French culture and the arts, as well as international companies desiring to expand their business into the French market. From interning abroad, I learned the importance of learning a second language. It is one thing to study French in a classroom, but it is completely different speaking French in a work environment with French colleagues. Learning French gave me the opportunity to experience the French work culture and international business, something I now have a passion for.” (Karli Abshier, Paris Internship Program 2013)

### Featured Video/ Photos

- ▶ Paris Internship Program, Fall 2017 <https://www.facebook.com/BUParis/posts/1461548240566807>
- ▶ BU Abroad: Voulez-Vous Diner Avec Moi Ce Soir? [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUKcCqD\\_myM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pUKcCqD_myM)
- ▶ Student blog- Tanya Moronge <http://questromworld.bu.edu/studyabroad/2015/08/29/tanya/>
- ▶ Student blog- Bronwen Ambridge <http://questromworld.bu.edu/studyabroad/2013/09/30/paris/>
- ▶ Student blog- Karli Abshier <http://questromworld.bu.edu/studyabroad/2013/05/06/karli-abshier-paris-internship-program/>

### References

University of Boston (2018) Internship Course Syllabus. Retrieved from <https://www.bu.edu/paris/files/2018/04/s18-Internship-syllabus-EN.pdf> (accessed 13 Apr 2018)