

## **Internship Service** **Learning Course Option**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Very few people who study abroad have the opportunity to experience an important dimension of the culture of any country—that of the workplace. Work is a significant part of human life, and the foreign workplace is thus a logical focus of study for students who spend any length of time abroad.

At SSA Education Abroad in Spain, Argentina, and Puerto Rico, you may incorporate an internship into your regular study program. In doing so, students accept a unique challenge and have the opportunity to gain work experience while learning about society and a particular field or profession from the viewpoint of another culture.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **Evaluation:**

The SSA Education Abroad Resident Director or internship tutor as well as the intern's supervisor in the workplace evaluate the intern's performance. The student's home institution may establish additional criteria for evaluation, grading, and granting of credit. If these are to be considered when evaluating the student's final paper, they must be communicated to Spanish Studies Abroad in writing, before the start of the internship.

#### *Spanish Studies Abroad uses the following grading criteria:*

1. Interns are required to keep a blog and meet with the Resident Director once a month to discuss the progress of their internship. The Resident Director will also visit the student's workplace once during the semester to ensure the quality of the student's performance.
2. A final memoir, written in Spanish, is required of each intern. The final length of the paper will depend on the amount of credits the intern is receiving. This will be a global self-evaluation and critical analysis of what the intern has learned and the challenges he or she has met.
3. The workplace supervisor will also submit a written evaluation of each intern's performance.
4. The Resident Director or internship tutor will give a letter grade to each student according to the student's performance in the criteria outlined above. The following weight is given to each criteria:
  - Resident Director's evaluation through monthly meetings, blog entries, and workplace observation: 30%
  - Evaluation by workplace supervisor: 40%
  - Final Memoir: 30%

*\*A Pass/Fail grade is also available upon request with prior consent from the home institution. Spanish Studies Abroad grants a Pass to a letter grade of C- or above.*

**Credits:**

Spanish Studies Abroad internships require students to complete coursework in addition to the regular “clock hours” that they accumulate in the field. Students can earn between 2 and 4 credits.

- 75 clock hours (90 contact hours) receives 2 internship credits
- 112.5 clock hours (135 contact hours) receives 3 internship credits
- 150 clock hours (180 contact hours) receives 4 internship credits

**Prerequisites:**

- Successful completion of one course in advanced Spanish or the equivalent prior to the start of the program and an advanced level of comprehension and expression in the Spanish language.
- Special consideration may be given to students with experience relative to the area in which the student wishes to do his or her internship.
- Each applicant is required to obtain prior approval for the internship from his or her home institution, affirming that the institution will accept the internship for credit. The Internship Approval Form can be found on the last page of this packet.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *\*Internships are not guaranteed. Spanish Studies Abroad will work to place you according to your professional interests and goals. However, it is ultimately the Spanish business or organization that decides who they want as interns. In addition to their language skills, candidates are selected based on their professional, academic, and personal qualifications.*

**Internship Application Process**

1. Register for the Internship/Service Learning Course Option in the course selection form of your online portal.

**2. Application:**

Submit the materials in your online portal under Internship or Service Learning Course Option, which includes Essay, Resume in English, and Approval Form.

**\*Submit by the following deadline dates:**

- Fall Semester: June 1
- Spring Semester: December 1
- Summer: April 15

**3. Evaluation:**

Your application will be evaluated and measured against other candidates after your acceptance to the Spanish Studies Abroad program. Remember that we try to satisfy all applications for internships **but that supply is limited and no student is guaranteed an assignment.** In the event that you are not placed in an internship you may continue the semester with the full course load which you pre-registered for in your Spanish Studies Abroad course selection form, or complete an

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Independent Research Project (IRP).

4. Summer internships in June and July will be complemented by a 1-credit Spanish course focusing on "Spanish for the Working Environment".

5. **Preliminary Acceptance:** Prior to your departure for your program, you will be notified by

Spanish Studies Abroad as to whether or not you have been selected as a candidate for the Internship Option.

**6. Final Acceptance and Placement:**

Upon arrival in your study abroad city, each candidate will meet with the Resident Director and Internship Coordinator to discuss his/her interests and expectations, as well as various aspects of the local working environment. Each prospective intern will be accompanied to the organization to which he or she has been tentatively assigned. Pending final approval by the employer, a schedule and start date will be established.

**\*\*FINAL NOTES TO APPLICANTS**

***What to Expect When Interning Abroad:***

You must be realistic in your expectations; despite all the experience and skills you may have accumulated at home, the job markets abroad are very competitive and you will be required to meet the challenges of working in a foreign culture, communicating mostly in Spanish.

Remember that an internship means an entry-level position. You should look at it as the chance to investigate and experience first-hand something you are interested in as well as learn about the Spanish language and local culture. It is an excellent opportunity to make contacts, do informal interviews, and learn about an industry, economic activity or profession.

Please keep in mind that each internship site is different. Supervisors and coworkers vary in styles of communication and work patterns. Some might require students to be more independent, to take the initiative and propose new ideas and projects while others might follow a more traditional line of work. In general, you must keep an open mind and be flexible with these possible work scenarios in order to make this experience as rewarding and enriching as possible. While it is your responsibility to meet the challenges of the workplace, the Resident Director is always available to discuss any questions or concerns that you might have.

***Work Culture Abroad:***

Remember that you can expect to encounter a number of socio-cultural differences in the workplace, which will most likely require you to adapt your thinking and behavior in your internship.

You should keep in mind that your host country can often be more formal than the US in regard to workplace interactions. For example, there is typically more distance between bosses and employees and it may take longer to break down the initial formality. You may find that people are

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more conscious of differences in status and social class, etc.

Perhaps the most important aspect is dress. Spaniards and Latin Americans are much more rigorous and conservative in their attire, not only when dressing for work but also when selecting an outfit for a social occasion. Of course, one always dresses for the kind of job he or she has, but the most appropriate dress is what we consider business casual. Baseball caps and backpacks might be seen at the university and gym, but are not typical in the workplace. White socks are not seen anywhere except on the playing field. Remember to pack according to the kind of internship you are requesting.

As a general rule of thumb, you can plan to bring button-down shirts (or other non-t-shirts), slacks or nice jeans, a belt, leather shoes or sandals, and a skirt or dress. Sweaters and silk scarves are commonplace in winter. You should never wear the following items to your internship: sneakers, tank tops (with spaghetti straps), flip flops, shorts, or ripped/tattered jeans. In the event your internship requires something specific (e.g. a tie), the internship committee will let you know before your departure.

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## Internship Approval Form

*\*\*This form verifies that the student is approved to do an internship through Spanish Studies Abroad. It should be signed by the student's Advisor, Dean, or Registrar.*

### **Credit:**

All candidates for the Internship Program must have an advanced level of comprehension and expression in the Spanish language. An internship involving 112.5 clock hours (135 contact hours) over the course of a semester is awarded three-semester credits, while one of 150 clock hours (180 contact hours) receives four credits. The student's performance is evaluated by the Resident Director and the student's supervisor in the workplace.

### **Supervision of Student Progress:**

1. Interns are required to keep a blog and meet with the Resident Director once a month to discuss the progress of their internship.
2. A final paper or report of 8-10 typed pages, written in Spanish, is required from the intern. This will be a global self-evaluation of what the intern has learned and the challenges he or she has met, as well as a discussion of specific goals, if necessary.
3. The workplace supervisor will also submit a written evaluation of the intern's performance.
4. The Resident Director will assign a letter grade to each student according to the above criteria. A Pass/Fail grade is available upon request with prior consent from the home institution.

### **Evaluation:**

- Resident Director's evaluation through monthly meetings, blog entries, and workplace observation: 30%
- Evaluation by workplace supervisor: 40%
- Final Memoir: 30%

### **Advisor/Dean Approval:**

\_\_\_\_\_ (name of student) has applied for an Internship at Spanish Studies Abroad in Spain, Argentina, or Puerto Rico, for the \_\_\_\_\_ (year/term) period. I approve the internship for a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ (# of s/h credits) credits. I understand that Spanish Studies internships are assessed with a letter grade. If a Pass/Fail grade is requested, Spanish Studies grants a Pass to a letter grade of C- or above.

Name & Title of Advisor or Dean or Registrar \_\_\_\_\_ Name of

college \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_