



SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
MADRID

POLS-3914: Foreign Service Internship

Saint Louis University-Madrid Campus
Division: Business and Social Sciences
Course name: Foreign Service Internship
Professor and Faculty Course Advisor: Barah Mikail
Internship Coordinator: Patrice Burns
Email: barah.mikail@slu.edu
Course Code: POLS-3914
Prerequisites: Director approval and all requirements detailed below.
Credit Hours: 0-6

Course Description:

This course addresses the enriching, hands-on experiences offered to student-interns as they collaborate with public and private structures, agencies and nongovernmental organizations focused on international relations.

A foundational understanding of International Relations is strongly recommended for students embarking on this journey. Ideally, this should be demonstrated through the completion of at least one course in this discipline, ensuring the interns can contribute effectively to their chosen organization.

Academic credits are awarded based on the duration of the intern's commitment, aligning 180 hours of work to 3 academic credits. This generally manifests as a commitment of 12-15 hours per week during the Fall and Spring semesters.

The allocation of academic credit is contingent upon the total hours completed by the student-intern, with a requisite of 180 hours of work translating to three academic credits. Typically, during the Fall and Spring semesters, a work schedule of 12-15 hours per week is anticipated.

Students also have the opportunity to accumulate credits through two separate internships, each contributing three credits. However, it is essential in this case that each internship offers different learning experiences and content.

Prerequisites:

- 1) Overall GPA of 2.65. GPA of 2.85 in POLS courses
- 2) Junior or Senior standing
- 3) Fluent English and Spanish (3000-level Spanish required)
- 4) Meet all internship requirements as listed on the [Career Services webpage](#)
- 5) The student must be a declared Political Science major, and a prior successful completion of 12 credits of POLS courses, including POLS-2000.

Course Registration:

Students must submit all required documents as outlined on the Career Services webpage to the Internship Coordinator. Students must then obtain an internship and meet with the Faculty Director to complete the Internship Agreement Form (available on the [Career Services webpage](#)). Upon acceptance in an internship position, students will be enrolled in the course.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

1. *Student Learning Objectives*

During their first week on the job, students must submit their learning objectives to the Faculty Course Advisor, addressing their goals for the following areas in a two-page double spaced Word document. The SLOs must include the following:

- a. *Professional goal(s)*: How do you expect this internship to help you pursue your career goals?
- b. *Civic aspect(s)*: What political knowledge or civic skills (e.g. public speaking, writing, financial literacy, cultural competency, leadership) do you hope to obtain through this internship?
- c. *Scholar/academic side(s)*: How do you expect your internship to relate to what you have learned as a student of Political Science or International Studies?
- d. *Personal dimension(s)*: Do you expect the internship to give you a greater sense of personal responsibility, and how?
- e. *Institutional aspect(s)*: Which of your skills will benefit the company and its mission? How will you apply them? What do you expect from the company in return in terms of skills and knowledge?

2. *Assessing Behavioral Competencies*

Each two weeks, you will need to answer one of the behavioral interview questions listed on the last page of this syllabus. You can choose the question you want each week, but your **answers must pertain to your current internship position.**

3. *Fortnightly Evaluation*

Every 2 weeks you must submit a problem or procedure analysis to your Faculty Course Advisor. This is an analysis, not a journal. You must **analyze** a specific work activity or situation, not just explain what you have done. The weekly analysis is to focus on one of two areas:

Analysis of a Problem or Project – you must cover the following points:

1. Problem statement
2. Action plan
3. Results
4. Conclusions and recommendations
5. Learning – How does this compare to what you have learned in your classes at SLU-Madrid and/or to your initial thoughts and expectations?

or

Analysis of a Procedure – you must cover the following points:

1. Description of the processes of different activities within the company
2. Coordination of the processes
3. Possible improvements
4. Learning - How does this compare to what you have learned in your classes at SLU-Madrid and/or to your initial thoughts and expectations?

4. *Monthly Meeting: Collaborative Discussion and Updates*

You will meet with the **Internship Coordinator** at least once a month to discuss your progress and **your final work sample.**

5. *Guidance Session: Engaging with your Faculty Course Advisor*

When you are at least halfway done with your internship, **you must schedule a meeting with your Faculty Course Advisor** to discuss your development in the internship. The discussions will encompass reflections on your academic learnings, their alignment with your practical experiences in the workplace, and the application of theories and concepts acquired during your time in class. Topics and issues discussed can also be extended to other points, aspects and/or fields.

6. **Key Highlights: Noteworthy Considerations**

Discussions may/will also encompass reflections on your educational journey, drawing comparisons between your studies and your professional experiences, and examining the practical application of the theories and concepts acquired in the classroom.

7. **Reflective Insights: Internship Experience and Accomplishments**

At the end of the semester, you will submit your *Internship Reflection*. There are two steps to take into account. The main aspects related to this work come the following way:

7.1. **Work Sample**

Students must submit a sample of their work (draft structure and explanation of content) for prior approval. This will vary from student to student, depending on the nature of the internship. It can be a spreadsheet, a website, a press release, a report, etc., but **prior approval of the artifact by the Internship Coordinator and the Faculty Course Advisor is required.**

7.2. **Final Paper**

Students will write a **paper of an average 1,500 words** that focuses on the international and social role of the organization and their own experiences and analysis. The reflection should respond to the following considerations, among other possible relevant choices:

- a. Analyze the effectiveness of the institution from both the organization's point of view and based on your own findings.
 1. *Who is the organization trying to serve and how? What are the organization's standards for effectiveness? Does it live up to those standards?*
 2. *Create your own criteria to assess the organization's effectiveness. Following these criteria, in what specific ways are they successful? What obstacles do they face? Consider individual people, public opinion, local and global institutions, resources and government support.*
- b. Evaluate the impact of both the service provided by the organization and your own active participation in this field.

How does the organization fit into the parameters required for strengthening civil society? If it did not, then explain what you and the organization could do or could have done differently to make a bigger impact.
- c. Assess your work and development through the internship.

Did you meet your own learning objectives by working for the organization? Why or why not? How did you apply the concepts learned in school and university to your work? What theories did you see in practice in the workplace? How will you apply these lessons learned as you develop in your career?

*** The final reflection project you turn in will incorporate all written work you have completed for the course (points above).**

On the job commitment:

1. Obligations of the student:

- Fulfill the hours and follow the norms set by the company
- Fulfill the job outlined by the company
- Maintain contact, request meetings and send regular updates to your Faculty Course Advisor and the Internship Coordinator

2. Faculty Course Advisor

- Review and evaluate the student's work and on-the-job performance
- Develop a work plan for the student
- Orient and support the student on the job

- Evaluate the student's on-the-job performance
- Meet with the student and provide mentoring throughout the course as needed
- Submit the final grade for the class.

3. *Internship Coordinator:*

- Coordinate with the student and Faculty Course Advisor to ensure the work is challenging and that the student is fulfilling her or his commitment
- Work with the Faculty Course Advisor to evaluate the performance of the student's goals, journal, progress reports and the final report.

Grading: The work will be supervised and monitored by the Faculty Course Advisor and the Internship Coordinator from SLU Madrid. The Faculty Course Advisor will evaluate the student's performance by completing an evaluation form and returning it to the Internship Coordinator. The final grade for this course is A-F and will be determined as follows:

- 25% - Overall Evaluation of the Internship Experience, Communication, the Following of Procedures...
- 25% - Evaluation of Personal Development Goals and Journal
- 50% - Grade for the Final Report, the Resume and the Portfolio.

E-mail: Campus and course announcements will often be handled by e-mail. Students should check their "@slu.edu" e-mail regularly.

Grading System: A 93%-100%, A- 90%-92%, B+ 87%-89%, B 83%-86%, B- 80%-82%, C+ 73%-79%, C 67%-72%, C- 60%-66%, D 50%-59%, F 0%-49%

Addendum - Behavioral Interviewing Questions:

Each week choose one question among the following ones and answer it in detail.

Note: your internship and/or academic supervisors may also suggest other questions depending on what they see from your experience.

- Describe a time when you organized or planned an event that was very successful.
- Describe a situation when you demonstrated initiative and took action without waiting for direction. What was the outcome?
- Talk about your most difficult sales experience.
- Give a specific example of a time when you had to address an angry colleague or customer. What was the problem and what was the outcome? How would you assess your role in diffusing the situation?
- Talk about a time when you took responsibility for an error and were held personally accountable.
- Describe a situation where you felt you had not communicated well. How did you correct the situation?
- Describe a time when you came up with a creative solution/idea/project/report to a problem in your past work.
- Describe the most significant written document, report, or presentation which you had to complete.
- Mention a recent successful experience in making a presentation. How did you prepare? What obstacles did you face? How did you handle them?
- Give two examples of things you've done in your job that demonstrate your willingness to work hard.
- Tell us about a time when a supervisor criticized your work. Give a specific example.
- Describe a situation where you demonstrated initiative and took action without waiting for direction. What was the outcome?
- Describe a situation when you made a suggestion to improve the work in your organization.
- Describe a situation where you felt you had not communicated well. How did you correct the situation?
- Describe a situation where you demonstrated initiative and took action without waiting for direction. What was the outcome?
- Describe a time when you were able to effectively communicate a difficult or unpleasant idea to a superior.
- Describe a time when you came up with a creative solution/idea/project/report to a problem in your past work.
- Describe a time when you took responsibility for an error and were held personally accountable.
- Describe a situation when you demonstrated initiative and took action without waiting for direction. What was the outcome?

- Describe a time when you undertook a project that demanded a lot of initiative.
- Describe the project or situation which best demonstrates your analytical abilities. What was your role?
- How do you typically deal with conflict? Can you give me an example?
- Did you face situations of silo mentality? Explain.
- Are decisions in this organization made vertically or horizontally? Is this process efficient? Explain.
- Some people consider themselves to be "big picture people" and others are "detail-oriented". Which are you? Give an example of a time when you displayed this.
- Do you prefer to work independently or on a team?
- When and how are you most productive?
- What did this internship experience change in you?