

INTERNSHIP ACADEMIC PROGRAM

GENEVA SWITZERLAND

COURSE SYLLABUS

(Property of Boston University Global Programs)

4 credits - 1 hub unit - applicable to the following courses.

CAS IR 455 E GN
CAS PO 405 E GN
CAS PS 495 E GN

Internship in International Organizations
Internship in International Organizations
Internship in Health/Human Services

Hub Unit: SA330 E GN

The Individual in Community-ICC

Program Director:

Ms. Leonella Castellano Thiébaud
lcastell@bu.edu

Professor:

Dr. Joanne Jankowski
jjjoanne@bu.edu

BU Internship:
Placement Manager

Ms. Mehrnaz Tohidi
mtohidi@bu.edu

Website links

<https://www.bu.edu/abroad/programs/switzerland-geneva-internship-international-relations/>
<https://www.bu.edu/abroad/programs/switzerland-geneva-internship-public-health/>

Digital platform:

BU Blackboard: <https://learn.bu.edu>

I – INTERNSHIP COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Geneva is a town of only 205,000 inhabitants but it has an international presence which is second to none. As the home of the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross, and with nearly 250 NGOs, it is the global heart of humanitarian action, global health and multilateral diplomacy.

By engaging in the Geneva Study Abroad program, students have the opportunity to gain valuable real-world experience and be part of the global policy-making processes, impacting societies and billions of individuals all over the planet. Students will immerse in a unique blend of cultural experiences by living the Swiss lifestyle and working in a dynamic multinational environment.

Embedded in a semester-long program, the internship course is tailored to be the cornerstone of the academic learning process on global policies and international cooperation and provide a real-world experience in the international organizations industry.

During the semester, students are placed in one of the many humanitarian, political, public health or economic organizations headquartered in Geneva while taking two required courses, one elective and one internship course.

Internships and courses are mainly conducted in English, but the students will be given the opportunity to practice French as well as any other official languages of the United Nations.

Upon successful completion of the internship course, students earn 4 credits and 1 hub unit; **a total of 16 credits will be obtained at the completion of the Geneva Program.**

The internship course comprises two components: the internship placement and an academic reflective work, graded by BU faculty.

Program part I: 7-week courses

During the first 7 weeks of the program, students will enroll in the International Relations or the Public Health tracks and will take one required course and one elective course. On week 5, students will start onboarding with their internship for 2 days a week while continuing their classes.

Program part II: 8-week internship placement & courses

After a one-week break, the program rhythm changes. Students will be working at their internship for 3,5 days (average of 26 hours a week) and the rest of the time will be dedicated to the second required IR/PH track course and to the internship course.

II – COURSE OVERVIEW & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

BU LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The Geneva Internship Program is designed to ensure that students are thoroughly prepared for their professional journeys. While participating in an internship abroad can be challenging, it offers significant opportunities for personal growth and professional development. By overcoming these challenges, students ultimately acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to

make informed decisions regarding their future educational and career paths. The Internship Program Objectives are the following:

- gain an understanding of workplace dynamics, professional expectations, and the influence of culture on both;
- build proficiency in a range of business or industry skills appropriate to the field of the internship placement, including professional and **inter-cultural** communications through written, verbal and non-verbal means;
- refine and clarify professional and career goals through critical analysis of the internship experience and research project;
- analyze the historical, socio-economic, political, gender, linguistic, religious or cultural dimensions and that inform the students' own worldviews and beliefs as well as those of other individuals and societies;
- participate respectfully in different communities such as campus, citywide, national and international groups, encouraging students to recognize and reflect on the issues relevant to those communities;
- be able to contextualize academic knowledge in real-world projects, practice critical thinking while contributing to the sector of international relations and global public health policies. The student will reflect on global challenges, intercultural cooperation, and experiment holistic and systemic approaches to understand interconnected world, other societies and individuals' beliefs and worldviews;
- achieve exposure to international conferences, **various** forms of collaboration, global networks, teamwork across cultures, and diplomacy and intercultural acumen.

At the end of the course, students are expected to build on the following professional competencies:

- contextualize academic knowledge within a larger professional and social perspective;
- perform a sectoral study and a critical reflection on the sector of the international cooperation and international affairs. Analyze how it operates, including its key players, structures and mechanisms. Evaluate the success or failure of initiatives based on their goals, sustainability, resource use, and impact on communities;
- reflect critically on their contributions to their host organization and their overall internship experience;
- gain an understanding of workplace dynamics, professional expectations and the effect of culture on these;
- acquire intercultural competences and international communication skills to ultimately understand intercultural management in a business setting;

- build proficiency in business and leadership skills. These will include critical thinking, research, information literacy, advocacy, impact writing, written/oral/digital communication, strategic planning, responsibility and time management;
- refine professional and career goals through critical analysis of the internship experience and/or research project;
- grow as an individual and as a professional in an international environment gaining a deep understanding of the diverse cultures, beliefs, and values that shape it;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Swiss culture which encompasses political federalism, the notion of neutrality, linguistic diversity, local work ethics, social norms and values.

III - ACADEMIC WORK

COURSE STRUCTURE

The academic course comprises several components:

Academic work & grades: Academic credit for the internship is assessed through the collection of assignments which start soon after arrival in Geneva and ends at the conclusion of the semester.

In the second week, the instructor will introduce the course, outline the course expectations, and provide detailed instructions for the assignments. Throughout the internship duration, the instructor and the internship placement manager will conduct classes in the form of interactive and hands-on workshops. The instructor will assess the assignments and provide tailored feedback to students throughout the semester. Attendance is mandatory.

Pre-Placement Sessions: Prior to their arrival in Geneva, students will engage in one-on-one meetings with the internship placement manager to discuss and refine their interests and objectives for the internship. Leveraging BU Geneva's expertise in the market and considering students' abilities and related experiences, students will be placed in one of the areas related to international cooperation, such as global health, politics, data governance, and migration. While the internship manager will recommend students to supervisors, the final decision rests with the employing organizations. Note that internships are not paid and are taken for BU credits

On site preparatory sessions: During the course phase, students will attend mandatory sessions designed to introduce them to local Swiss culture, business etiquette, and to the professional environments of international organizations. These sessions will cover various aspects of professional conduct, including workload and time management, interview preparedness, diplomatic protocol, communication codes, importance of confidentiality, and other codes of conduct. Additionally, role-playing exercises will be conducted to enhance students' readiness to handle difficult situations and conflicts in the workplace. Emphasis will be placed on adaptability, stress management and policies against harassment and discrimination, which are important components of the program.

Individual and group coaching session throughout the semester: The instructor and the internship placement manager ensure regular class sessions providing tools and tips for a smooth transition from academic to professional environment. Students will be guided individually, and

groups sessions will be organized to build on experiences. During the internship phase, the internship placement manager will support students to respond responsibly to any situation that may arise in the workplace.

METHODOLOGY

The internship course content and related assignments are meticulously designed to promote and assess the acquisition of Boston University's learning objectives. These assignments serve as a tool for understanding the internship experience, demonstrating competencies, and documenting academic and professional readiness. The resulting portfolio will constitute a comprehensive file that students can utilize in their future job searches. With this in mind, the course constantly evolves through the use of new technologies, pertinent software and critical use of artificial intelligence that will be placed at the availability of students by the lecturers.

There are 7 assignments, covering the entire process of taking an internship, from pre-preparation and expectations to afterthoughts. They are built around learning objectives that are related to the application of classroom learning in the workplace and professional work experience. The assignments will culminate in the elaboration of a professional portfolio which the students will also be able to use in their future professional engagements and interviews.

The assignments have specific deadlines, which are meant to train professional accountability and time-management. The course uses the Blackboard digital platform and students are encouraged to be creative and use all means of communication to illustrate their experience and learning.

Assignment expectations and instructions for assignment submission will be provided by the instructor soon after their arrival in Geneva.

Assignment 1	Video Pitch – Presenting Yourself	10%
Assignment 2	Placement, Tasks, and Expectations	20%
Assignment 3	The Organization and Workplace Culture	15%
Assignment 4	Workplace Interview	15%
Assignment 5	Skills, Assessment and Key Learnings	15%
Assignment 6	The Bigger Picture	15%
Assignment 7	Lessons Learned	10%

Students are encouraged to submit well-structured reflections, provide clear contexts, logic and sound analysis and refrain from merely logging facts. Students' observations can be either positive or negative. The scope of these observations is to help the students to build on for their future career and foster professional preparedness. Note that the portfolio and assignments will not be shared with internship supervisors.

Assignments will be date-stamped, and the student will lose 5% per day of late submission for failing to submit them on time and up to 10% for poor presentation. Entries must be proof-read for spelling, grammar and punctuation. The final grade is determined solely by the instructor. The grading process is cumulative.

A BU faculty member is responsible for grading the assignments. Each assignment will be graded within a week and it is the student's responsibility to look at the grade and comments prior to starting the next submission. Students are encouraged to include pictures, links, digital resources and use audio or video files for some parts of this portfolio.

Technical assistance will be provided at BUSA IT service (ithelp@bu.edu) and by BU Geneva site staff.

IV – ACADEMIC POLICY & PROCEDURES

INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

An internship is a professional commitment and should be taken seriously. The BU Geneva internship manager will place the student based on **BUSA Geneva's assessment of the** student's skills, interests and professional goals as well as upon our expertise and knowledge of internship sponsors' needs and work cycles.

Once the internship placement is assigned to the students, they may not change their placement.

During the first 7 weeks of the program, students will enroll in the International Relations or the Public Health tracks and will take one required course and one elective course. On week 5, students will start onboarding with their internship for 2 days a week while continuing their classes. After a one-week break, the program rhythm changes. Students will be working at their internship for 3,5 days (average of 26 hours a week) and the rest of the time will be dedicated to the second required IR/PH track course and to the internship course.

Students represent Boston University in the internship workplace and are expected to show professionalism and respect and must comply with BU and the Organizations codes of conduct. Student well-being concerns (e.g. sexual harassment or unsafe working conditions) must be immediately notified to the Geneva Director and to the Internship Manager.

BU ACADEMIC CONDUCT

All students are responsible for having read and understood the program's academic policy in addition to BU's Academic code of conduct.

Using the Internet for research is encouraged, but you must not plagiarize. Cheating of any sort, submitting the same work for more than one course, deliberately impeding the performance of others, and other forms of academic misconduct are serious offenses. As a rule, if you have any doubts, give credit to the source; if you have any questions, talk to the instructor.

AI: You may use AI tools like Chat GPT to help you prepare background material for your own information or to help you prepare background for oral your presentations and visits. You may not use AI tools as scripts for any oral presentations, for any written products or slides you present in this course. To do so will be considered a serious offense subject to docking of grades and possible disciplinary action.

Refer to the Academic Conduct Code, which will be strictly enforced. The policies are published on the program website:

<http://www.bu.edu/geneva/academic-policy/>

<http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code>

Professionalism Clause

BU Study Abroad Geneva Program courses are professional seminars tailored to standards prevailing in Switzerland that may deviate from those at the Boston campus or in the participants' country of origin. Understanding and adapting to the local professional environment is a key element of the program. Participants are therefore required to conduct themselves professionally, respectfully and in an appropriate manner at all times. Presence in class is mandatory and any religious or medically justifiable absences have to be communicated to the Direction as soon as possible in accordance with the BU Study Abroad Geneva Academic Policy & Procedures and the Academic Guidance.

BU GENEVA ATTENDANCE POLICY

The rules governing Internship Program students' Swiss visas are strict and require, as a condition of the student's presence in Switzerland, that the student participates fully in all classes and in the internship. If a student does not attend classes or his/her internship as required the student will be considered to be in breach of the visa and labor law. As the sponsor of our students' visas, Boston University has the legal obligation to ensure that each student complies with visa requirements.

For that reason, the Boston University Geneva Program requires full attendance in classes and internships. Any student who does not comply with this policy may be sent home from the program.

Students who expect to be absent from class or their internship must notify their lecturer or supervisor by email at the earliest opportunity. They must also copy the program director on the email.

<http://www.bu.edu/geneva/academic-policy/>

Absence from Class

All Boston University Geneva Program students are expected to attend each and every class session, seminar, and field trip in order to fulfill the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student who has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorized or unauthorized) will need to meet with the program director to discuss their continued participation on the program.

Absence from the internship

Attendance is mandatory. Students are not entitled to take time off from work. As a requirement of the Swiss resident permit and in accordance with the BU Geneva Attendance policy, all students must attend every day of their scheduled internship. The Organization's holiday calendar will be observed..

Authorized Absence

Authorized absence may only be granted in cases of illness, injury, or bereavement. Students who are absent for illness or injury must present a local doctor's note. Absence or lateness due to other circumstances, even if these are outside of the student's control, may not be accepted as

valid justification. Once granted, the absence must be notified by email to the teacher and/or to the internship supervisor with copy to the Program Director and Internship Placement Manager.

For requests for absence for bereavement please see the BU academic policy
<https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/>

Travel during Internship

Boston University must approve in advance any travel for an internship. Internship supervisors will be asked to confirm travel details, accommodation and supervision. **BU will not meet travel costs.** It is expected that all costs will be met by the internship. Students must receive the BU Geneva authorization prior to departure.

COURSE CHANGE

During the first week on site, students may request permission from the program director to change their elective course. Any changes are subject to availability of spaces on the course. Because of the accelerated nature of the program, no changes are possible after the end of the first week.

Students are responsible for making sure that their course choices have been approved by their academic adviser on campus.

LATE SUBMISSION OF PAPERS

Late submission of papers, particularly those that may delay the processing of final grades for a course, is not permitted except for medical or emergency reasons. All other late submissions will not be accepted unless they have been authorized in advance and will always incur a penalty. The penalty incurred will increase with the lateness of the submission. An extension must be petitioned for at least 24 hours in advance of the submission deadline.

Requesting an extension does not necessarily mean it will be granted.

Extension petitions should be addressed to the faculty member and the program director, by email with supporting evidence. Any delay may warrant a reduction in the final grade. If the extension will delay the posting of a grade, the instructor should award a grade of 'MG' (Missing Grade) with a specific due date.

ACADEMIC ADVICE

Students' first line of academic advising for courses is with their course lecturers. The program director serves as the head of the faculty and as senior academic adviser together with the assistant academic director. The assistant academic director is available on an appointment basis to assist students with advice on academic issues. For academic advice regarding students' home institutions' policies and transfer credit information, non-Boston students should contact their school's academic advisers.

Learning Management System

Blackboard is Boston University Study Abroad Geneva's main Learning Management System. Additional information on how to use Blackboard can be found at:
<https://www.bu.edu/tech/services/teaching/lms/blackboard/students/>

Boston University Study Abroad
Geneva Program

In case of access problems, please contact: bugeneva@bu.edu.