



BOSTON UNIVERSITY PADUA
CAS EC 497 Internship in Business/Economics
HUB SA 330 Study Abroad Internship Course

Class Meets: Core Phase: 2 hours/week for 10 weeks + 3 tutorials during Internship phase
Credits: 4
Hub Units: 1

Course Description

Taken in tandem with a work placement, the course allows students to gain a greater understanding of workplace culture within the host country. It provides a framework to explore and reflect on the professional and cultural practices observed in the internship. The course and placement form an intercultural learning experience in which students can examine socio-cultural differences, beliefs and values while immersed in a diverse organizational and professional community. Through class sessions and assignments, students address the ways in which culture informs both work and learning.

The course is designed to enable students to develop an understanding of the Italian economy, society and culture, and to familiarize with work practices in the global, European, Italian and local Veneto and Padua contexts.

Students will be challenged to understand and participate in a very different cultural and work environment than they have experienced in the United States, or in other countries.

Students will learn about Italy's and the Veneto region's roles in the global economy, their roles in, and relationship to, the European Union, Veneto's position in the Italian economy and society, and Padua's role as a business, administrative, and university center in the life of the Veneto region.

They will study the particular forms of enterprise typical of the area, the forms of employment in Italy, labor regulations, gender roles at the workplace, and the importance of local Veneto language and culture in the workplaces.

The course is composed of two parts:

A core phase. Students meet 2 hours/week for 10 weeks to learn about Italian culture and more specifically about Italian work culture to prepare for the internship experience.

An internship phase. During an 8-week internship phase, students participate in internships with placements located in the greater Padua area. Internship placements are the experiential component of the Internship Course. Students intern for about 30 hours per week, Monday-Thursday and sometimes Friday. Internship providers may require students to also be present on Fridays and Saturdays at times.

During the internship phase students meet with the Internship course professor for 3 tutorial sessions and to prepare a final research paper.

The non-credit HUB SA 330 Study Abroad Internship unit allows students, on successful completion of the concurrent 4-credit academic internship course, to earn 1 Hub Unit in the area of 'The Individual in Community'. The course HUB SA 330 does not award credit, but modifies the learning outcomes to facilitate the goals of the Individual in Community unit. Students will see two entries on their transcripts.

BU Hub Learning Outcomes and Course-Specific Learning Objectives

This course satisfies the following requirements for the BU Hub:

Individual in the Community Outcome 1-Hub Learning Outcome

Through their internship experience and assigned coursework, students will encounter and reflect on socio-economic, political, gender and cultural differences. Class sessions and written assignments will provide a framework for students to explore and reflect on these differences and to confront how these line-up with or challenge students' own views and beliefs. Through the internship course, students will be asked to consider how aspects of their host country's culture and society pertain to the workplace. And, what dimensions of their workplace experience ~ (be it cultural, social, socio-economic) mirror their perceptions of their host country and their beliefs and perceptions of their own country and culture.

Individual in the Community Outcome 2-Hub Learning Outcome

The internship course draws on students' experience in a professional workplace. The workplace, seen as a professional community, will include host country nationals and non-nationals like themselves. Diversity of cultural and social background among members of the professional community will put cultural differences front and center for students. Assignments and class meetings will help students to address what it means to participate in and contribute to a work setting amidst such differences. Students will explore what it takes to work in and adapt to another culture and to work alongside diverse others.

In order to meet the above Hub learning outcomes, by the end of this course:

Individual in the Community Outcome 1

Students enrolled in the course have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with an Italian working environment and develop an understanding of Italian economy, society and culture that challenge their world views and beliefs. The internship experience, class reflections and tutorial sessions will provide students with the opportunity to reflect upon social, cultural and gender differences in their global, European and local contexts.

Individual in the Community Outcome 2

Students will engage in an internship experience in Italy and will therefore be immersed in the local work environment. They will connect with Italian and Veneto communities with which they will share point of views on society, economy, politics and culture.

Students reflect on intercultural differences both in class and during their work experiences. They learn to be respectful, adapt, and adopt appropriate behavior so as to integrate in the community.

Students engage in reflections in class and during tutorial sessions for the whole length of their course. They complete targeted oral and written assignments so as to grow in their understanding of the local reality.

Program Learning Outcomes

BU Global Programs/study abroad learning outcomes for BU Padova Italian and European Studies Program and Padua Internship program

<https://www.bu.edu/provost/planning-assessment/program-learning-outcomes-assessment/learning-outcomes-by-program-2/>

Learning Outcomes for MIP

- 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 communication through written, verbal, and nonverbal means
- Refine and clarify professional and career goals through critical analysis of the internship experience or research project

Instructional Format, Course Pedagogy, and Approach to Learning

The course is based on an active learning approach that includes interactive discussion-based class meetings, lectures, readings, guest lectures, tutorials and company visits. This offers the opportunity for students to

discuss their experience and learn from it. Continuous assessment of student work with instructor comments provides detailed feedback on assignments to further students' reflections in which they combine academic and professional skills.

During the entire course, students prepare readings and complete their assignments before each lesson. This allows them to participate in the class discussions, ask and answer appropriate questions, develop curiosity for the local culture of work and Italian culture in general. Individual and group meetings help students' progress in terms of intercultural learning and it is an opportunity to develop a critical approach to different work situations and be proactive in solving problems. The overall educational strategy is to push students towards an understanding of how cultural differences inform practices, beliefs, values and the work environment of the Italian community where they live and work, and to help students' development of interactional and organizational skills they to apply during their next internship experiences or at work in general.

Grading and Assignments

Attendance and Participation	20%
Assignment 1 (Core phase) Written reflection.	10%
Topic: «Setting your Goals»	
Assignment 2 (Core phase) Written reflection.	10%
Topic: «American and Italian work cultures: similarities and differences»	
Assignment 3 (Core phase) Written reflection.	10%
Topic: «Explore your internship placement sector. Identify and quote sources on how business is done in the field in Italy and compare it with the same sector in the U.S.»	
Oral presentation and discussion 1 (Internship phase)	10%
Title: «Your internship organization: expectations and practice»	
Oral presentation and discussion 2 (Internship phase)	10%
Title: «Interning in Italy vs. in the U.S. What I found out».	
Final project (Written paper)	25%
Bibliography	5%

Attendance and Participation - (Outcome 1 and 2) – 20%

Students must be punctual and come prepared to class and to the workplace.

During the Core Phase, they must read and complete assignments before class and within the due date. By doing this, the students are able to ask and answer appropriate questions, develop curiosity for the local culture of work and Italian culture in general, and actively contribute to the class discussions.

The instructor encourages the students to go to the office hours and to ask for help.

During the Internship phase, the students must be punctual at their workplace, they appropriately inform via email or call their placement in advance if there is any kind of impediment for them to go to work. Last minute communication is culturally inappropriate.

3 Written assignments (Core phase) - (Outcome 1 and 2) – 30% (10% each)

Each assignment is of at least 500 words (Times New Roman, 12, single space).

Please, do not report your name on the assignment.

Assignments details listed below.

Each assignment must be posted by students on the course blackboard site within the deadline set by the instructor. No late assignments will be accepted. Please, monitor blackboard regularly.

Assignment 1, Written reflection. Topic: «Setting your Goals». Students will write an outline of what they hope to gain from and achieve in the internship course. These goals can include academic, personal, and/or career. Students should also consider external goals involving their internship organization. Students should use these goals as a basis for charting their progress and for their final reflection paper. (Outcome 2)

For bibliographical references, in addition to the course materials available on the course blackboard site, please use the BU libraries website.

Assignment 2, Written reflection + Video-interview. Topic: «American and Italian work cultures: similarities and differences»

Students should conduct an interview to an Italian person about his/her job and then record a short video-interview to an Italian person (max 2 minutes long).

Then, they should write a reflection about the comparison between American and Italian work culture.

With this assignment students learn to draw comparisons between different cultures and gain cultural sensitivity. Students reflect on key differences in behavioural practices, etiquette, work schedule, communication practices and the like. (*Outcome 2*)

For bibliographical references, in addition to the course materials available on the course blackboard site, please use the BU libraries website.

Assignment 3, Written reflection. Topic «Explore your internship placement sector. Identify and quote sources on how business is done in the field in Italy and compare it with the same sector in the U.S.» (*Outcome 1*)

For bibliographical references, in addition to the course materials available on the course blackboard site, please use the BU libraries website.

2 Assignments (Internship Phase) (Outcome 1 and 2) – 20% (10% each)

Assignment 1, Oral presentation and discussion.

Title: «Your internship organization: expectations and practice»

With this assignment, students show an understanding of the Italian organization where they intern and discuss differences related to their expectations and the work practice in Italy. This assignment allows students to connect the theoretical preparation - the core phase - with real experience.

Students post pdf of oral presentation on the course Blackboard site.

Assignment 2, Oral presentation and discussion.

Title: «Interning in Italy vs. in the U.S. What I found out». Students reflect on their understanding of work and culture differences, both generally and as a process of learning and adjustment in their own internship experience. They refer to examples related to work environment and relationships, economic and cultural issues. They draw comparison with the U.S. work culture.

Students post pdf of oral presentation on the course blackboard site.

Final project (Outcome 1 and 2)– 30% (written paper 25%; Bibliography 5%)

The final project comprises 2 parts: a written paper and a bibliography

Written paper (25%):

7-page Written final paper – due on **tbd**

(Times New Roman 12, Double spaced) Please, do not write your name on the paper.

The paper must be posted by students on the course blackboard site within the deadline set by the instructor. No late assignments will be accepted. Please, do not report your name on the assignment.

Theoretical insight and clear exposition will contribute to awarding a high grade.

Arguments and conclusions should be supported by no fewer than four substantial citations from a variety of different sources. A separate page will with the bibliography be attached (see below: bibliography). Full referencing is a marking criterion and originality of thought, theoretical insight and clear exposition will contribute to awarding a good grade.

The paper aims to describe the most important elements of the internship experience, inclusive of research done for the placement.

Students must address each of the following aspects in their paper:

1. Outline their motivation and initial goals for embarking on the internship.

2. A brief section should offer an overview of the organisation, touching on its history, mission and structure and how these translate into its goals and objectives.
3. Outline briefly the tasks and responsibilities assigned to them and their contribution to their placement.
4. Illustrate an insider's understanding of the organisation, outlining how it operates internally and, in its market, and civil context. It should offer an analysis of the company's strengths and weaknesses and an appreciation of the opportunities open to it and the threats it faces.
5. Reflect on their understanding and experience of cultural difference at play in their workplace and offer specific examples. They should also draw on their prior classroom learning.
6. In conclusion students will locate their internship experience within the framework of their own professional aspirations, noting how they have acquired knowledge, understanding and skills and how their experience will clarify their career goals and impact on their future professional and personal choice.

Bibliography (5%):

Paper bibliography - due on **tbd**

The bibliography will be a separate word document and must be posted by students on the course blackboard site within the deadline set by the instructor. Please, do not report your name on the bibliography.

No late assignments will be accepted.

The bibliography will include no less than 4 different sources. Students can use either Chicago or MLA style (see examples offered through BU library). Be consistent!

Students may draw on non-confidential placement specific sources – web site, annual reports, promotional material, personal interviews etc. – as well as journals, newspapers and books.

For bibliographical references, in addition to the course materials available on the course blackboard site, please use the BU libraries website.

Course Material and Readings

All readings and class material are available on the course Blackboard site.

Readings:

Bauer-Wolf, Jeremy. "Overconfident Students, Dubious Employers", *Inside Higher Ed*, 23 February 2018
<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/02/23/study-students-believe-they-are-prepared-workplace-employers-disagree>

Bennett, M. (2017) "Development model of intercultural sensitivity". In Kim, Y (Ed) *International encyclopedia of intercultural communication*.

BU Padua Academic Internship guidelines.

Bucci Fiorella and Stijn Vanheule, "Investigating Changing Work and Economic Cultures Through the Lens of Youth Employment: A Case Study from a Psychosocial Perspective in Italy", *Young* 28(3) 2020, pp. 275–293.

Cuddy, Amy, Glick, Peter and Beninger, Anna. *The Dynamics of Warmth and Competence Judgments, and their Outcomes in Organizations*, in «*Research in Organizational Behavior*», 31, Harvard Business School, 2011, p. 73-98.

Bettiol, M., Capestro, M., De Marchi, V., Di Maria, E., & Sedita, S. R. (2021). Industrial districts and the fourth industrial revolution. *Competitiveness Review: An International Business Journal*, 31(1), 12-26.

Fregolent, L. and Vettoretto, L. (2016), "Contemporary Process of Urban Regionalization: the Case of the Veneto Region", 55° European Regional Science Congress in Lisbon.

Ginsborg, Paul. 1989. *The "Economic Miracle". Rural Exodus and Social Transformation 1958-1963*, in *A History of Contemporary Italy: Society and Politics, 1943-1988*, Penguin publ., p. 210-52.

Lidia Katia C Manzo, Alessandra Minello, "Mothers, childcare duties, and remote working under COVID-19 lockdown in Italy: Cultivating communities of care", in *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 2020, Vol. 10(2) 120-123.

Andy Molinsky and Sheila Pisman, "The Biggest Hurdles Recent Graduates Face Entering the Workforce", *Harvard Business Review*, April 11, 2019.

Soffell, Jenny. *What are the 21st Century Skills Every Student Needs?*, in *World Economic Forum*. 10 March 2016, www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/03/21st-century-skills-future-jobs-students/

Sweitzer, Frederick H. and King Mary A. 2013. *The successful Internship (4th edition) Internship Essentials: Tools for staying engaged*, Cengage Learning, (selected chapters)

Ting-Toomey, S., & Chung, L. C. (2012). *Understanding intercultural communication*. New York: Oxford University Press, Chap. 9 p.157-170.

The Lancet "COVID and the convergence of three crises in Europe".

Hurdles Recent Graduates Face Entering the Workforce, Harvard Business Review, April 11, 2019.

Veneto Region Statistical Report year 2019 Summary, pp. 3-15.

On-line sources:

National report:

http://immi.se/eiw/texts/National_Report_Italy.pdf

Skills for Job:

[https://www.oecdskillsforjobsdatabase.org/imbances.php#IT/ /USA/ /\["skills"%2C"knowledge"%2C"abilities"\]/ig](https://www.oecdskillsforjobsdatabase.org/imbances.php#IT/ /USA/ /[)

World and Italian Business Culture:

<https://www.worldbusinessculture.com/country-profiles/italy/culture/>

Career Readiness For The New College Graduate – A Definition and Competencies, in *National Association of Colleges and Employers*, January 2019, www.naceweb.org/uploadedfiles/pages/knowledge/articles/career-readiness-fact-sheet-jan-2019.pdf

Hofstede model:

<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/>

Top 5 Etiquette Mistakes New Workers Make:

<https://bu-beyond.blog/2021/04/20/top-five-etiquette-mistakes-new-workers-make/>

Video: Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6vKRFH2Wm6Y>

EU National report on Italy (2023): https://economy.finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/2023-country-report-italy_en?prefLang=nl

Class and University Policies

Examinations

All academic commitments must be completed before you leave the site; no incompletes are permitted. Students who do not complete a course on time will be given an F. Students are required to sit their examinations on the dates, at the times, and in the same classroom as the other students in their class. If a student is ill or has another extenuating circumstance that causes the student to be absent from a scheduled examination, he/she must provide appropriate documentation and receive approval from the Director.

Attendance

Students should note that attendance will be taken into account by faculty. Boston University Padua students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, on-site class, internship work appointment, and activity required for the class as indicated in the syllabus. Any student with irregular class attendance may have his/her final grade penalized.

Absences

Unjustified absences from class and any class related activity, will affect the students' participation grade, which will be lowered by one letter grade for each absence.

Absence for Religious Reasons

According to Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day, shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study, or work requirement that may have been missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examinations or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said students such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to students because of their availing themselves of the provisions of this section. Students who have questions about practicing their religion while abroad should contact Boston University Study Abroad.

Lateness

Students arriving more than 10 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Being late three times is equivalent to missing one class.

Late Assignments

Students are expected to turn in all course assignments on time as stated in each course syllabus. Late assignments will not be accepted and missed assignments will automatically be awarded an F. Please note that all coursework must be completed by the end of the program.

Plagiarism

Simply stated, plagiarism is taking another's work and presenting it as you own. Definitions of plagiarism frequently include terms such as 'theft' or 'steal'. Plagiarism is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. For more details please see Boston University's Code of Student Responsibilities: <http://www.bu.edu/lifebook/universitypolicies/policies-code.html>

Disability accommodations

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Disability and Access Service office (DAS) at 617-353- 3658 to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. For more information, please visit: <http://www.bu.edu/disability>

Interruption of program or early departure

Only in serious cases – mostly related to medical emergencies – the Director will allow a student to take a significant break during the program or to leave before its official conclusion. Official written approval must be received by the Director.

Academic Advice

The Program Director is the head of the faculty and the academic advisor. The Program Director is available by appointment to assist students with academic issues. For academic advice regarding students' home institutions' policies and transfer credit information, non-Boston students should also contact their school's academic advisors.

Tutorials

BU faculty are available by appointment for students who may need support in the learning process. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this resource. Students in the past found it very useful to succeed. Students who receive a C on a test must seek support from faculty.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

CORE PHASE

WEEK 1

Syllabus explanation: course structure, goals, materials and grading

Introduction to the course

How culture informs both work and learning. Work and economic culture changes and youth.

Guest Lecturer: Prof. Elisabetta Convento, Director BU Italy

Intercultural learning through work practice

Introduction to the Hofstede model.

By using the Hofstede model presented in class, students critically reflect about the differences between Italy and the U.S.

Introduction to Milton Bennett's DMIS theory and practice.

WEEK 2

Setting goals in an internship

Characteristics and Trends of the Modern Labor Market: the importance of career concern, career control, career curiosity, and career confidence.

After the Great recession: Career transitions and coping with transitions for young adults.

Let's reflect: Career design or Life design?

What can students learn from an internship? Personal development, professional development, civic and cultural development.

Being an Engaged Learner: Essential Attitudes and Values; Essential Skills; The Skills and Habits of Reflection; Essential Personal Resources and Essential Knowledge.

The Essentials for Empowerment in a different cultural context.

Assignment 1 due

Professional and cultural practices observed in the internship: improving intercultural communication

Globalized world: why should we still talk about differences?

Learning about context: cultural practice, communication and work ethic.

Students will be engaged in discussions about intercultural communication and cultural behaviors at work.

WEEK 3

Guest lecturer: Prof. Edward Taylor, Penn State University and University of Padua

Learning and Work: A Cross-Cultural Perspective

Using an interactive lecturing, Ed will involve students in some short lectures followed by some active working time either collaboratively or alone. Ed teaches a course at the University of Padova on Cross cultural

Anthropology focusing on differences in human behavior across cultures. The discussion will include cultural concepts such as for example, proximity, time, risk, masculinity, etc. and explore them within an Italian work setting. Students will also explore ways to enhance their cultural competency as they spend time in the workplace.

Work culture in Europe, Italy, and the Veneto context

Students learn and discuss the impact of history, culture, and the territory on the economic and industrial development of Italy and in particular the Veneto region.

Students will also learn how an Italian district is organized from an economic and structural perspective, how it has developed in the territory, how the business and industrial relationships between stakeholders and clients are typically managed.

Discussion about The culture Map: Hi- and Low-context cultures.

Assignment 2 due

WEEK 4

Guest Lecturer: Professor Giulia Storato, University of Padova, Dept. of Sociology

Changing Italy: a sociological perspective

Italian society: An analysis of facts and figures.

In this lecture students will have the opportunity to explore a sociological perspective about the Italian context, considering global trends. Topics will include: gender considerations, the role of families, cultural profile and welfare system of Italy and how these phenomena are intertwined.

Navigating your internship site.

Going beyond your role: the importance of learning about the organization.

Understand the importance of learning about the internship site. Acquiring knowledge to analyze:

1. Background info: History, Size, Mission, Values, Funding
2. The Organizational structure
3. Human resources
4. The External environment (Customers, Suppliers,...) and the sector

How can we analyze an organization? What are the main sources of data? How can you plan your organizational analysis?

WEEK 5

Guest lecturer: Prof. Diego Campagnolo, University of Padua, Dept. of Economics and Business

Internationalizing small businesses in Italy: challenges and opportunities

In 2019, The Economist highlighted several factors that were contributing to a process coined “slowbalisation.” The term is used to signify the waning of globalisation as we know it. Also called de-globalisation, it is indicative of a less connected world, characterised by “powerful nation states, local solutions and border controls rather than global institutions.” During the seminar we will discuss the main challenges and opportunities of internationalization process for Italian small and medium sized companies also in the light of this new phenomena: were Italian companies also hit by slowbalisation? Why?

Assignment 3 due

Start your internship with the right foot and stay engaged

(Meeting with Lucia Bernardi – SIT Group)

The engaged intern: Tools for staying engaged

Build an emotional “heat shield”

Becoming entrepreneurial and modeling a reciprocity culture.

Going beyond technical skills: the importance of socializing and networking.

Receiving and providing feedback.

Readings:

Sweitzer and King, *The successful Internship*, (selected chapters)

INTERNSHIP PHASE

TUTORIAL 1

Connecting theory to practice: where the core and the internship phase meet.

Oral presentation 1 «Your internship organization: expectations and practice». **Followed by discussion**
Students reflect how to receive feedback and to self-evaluate their work with objectivity.

TUTORIAL 2

Oral presentation 2 «Interning in Italy vs. the US. What I found out». **Followed by discussion**

TUTORIAL 3

Reviewing your internship experience and planning for the future

Course wrap-up

Students review their internship experience and reflect upon their initial goals and expectations: How have they changed?

In looking into the future, students will identify their new skills and will include them in their profile (LinkedIn, Resume). They will discuss about how to market the newly acquired skills for professional planning.

Students take some time to reflect on the internship experience to recognize what they learned about Italy and the wider world, as well as the skills they developed, and the contributions that they made to the host organization.

Check-in on final paper.

FINAL WRITTEN PAPER AND BIBLIOGRAPHY – due on TBD