

## INTERNSHIP AND METHODOLOGY SEMINAR IFSA Summer in Shanghai Program

**US semester credit hours:** 6

**Course Code:** INTS380

**Contact hours:** Seminar: 15 hours (see outline below)  
Internship: 210 hours (approx. 35 per week)

**Course Length:** Summer

**Delivery Method:** Face to Face

**Language of Instruction:** English

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Internship and Methodology Seminar (IMS) underpins the internship in the IFSA Summer in Shanghai program. Students will be placed in individual internships but will collectively take part in the seminar to be prepared for the experience, understand expectations, set personal objectives, identify and strengthen specific skills, critically reflect on their progress, share experiences, and learn from one other throughout. Knowledge of the Chinese work environment and the systems that support it are threaded throughout the seminar. Consideration of the transferability of skills acquired is another important component of this learning experience. In this seminar, students gain real world work experience while developing intercultural agility—skills and experiences which are critically important to personal, academic and professional success.

Details of the internship are described at the end of the syllabus, in the “Internship Information.”

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course includes the following goals for students, guided by the value of applied learning:

- Understand connections between classroom learning and practical learning
- Know strategies for successful navigation within cross-cultural workplaces
- Realize cultural nuances of the Chinese work environment
- Increase understanding of professional areas of interest
- Develop awareness of personal skills, goals, strengths and weaknesses as related to personal, academic and professional objectives
- Gain experience in collaborative work and peer review
- Develop oral presentation skills; specifically, be able to articulate the internship abroad experience to future employers or graduate admissions
- Make cognitive connections between learning in this course and other learning experiences in Shanghai

### COURSE SCHEDULE

A faculty advisor leading the academic component of Internship and Methodology Seminar will meet with students 8 times as a group throughout the term. The following schedule indicates the discussion topics of the course, and related readings will be provided to students in advance of each class session.

## COURSE SYLLABUS

With the exception of Session 1 (when resources will be reviewed as a group during class), students are expected to complete their reading assignments in advance and be prepared to actively discuss them in class. In each session, the faculty advisor will overview the topic and facilitate a group discussion, drawing out relevant themes, following up on specific lines of inquiry, and prompting students' thoughtful engagement with the topic. Students are encouraged to bring their prior learning experiences into class discussions and to make connections between this course and others whenever possible. Theories of experiential learning and integrative learning therefore undergird the dynamic learning environment of this course.

**Session 1 – Introduction and articulating your career path**

**Session 2 – China's economic development and market**

**Session 3 – Innovation and entrepreneurship**

**Session 4 – Chinese organizations and organizational management**

**Session 5 – Chinese business culture: professional and social relationships in Chinese context**

**Session 6 – Survival and success in multicultural workplace**

**Session 7 – Preparation for final papers and presentation**

**Session 8 – Final papers and presentations**

### EVALUATION METHODS

Student will receive a letter grade upon completion of the course. This letter grade appears on student's official transcript for the IFSA Shanghai program issued by Butler University. Evaluation methods include the following course deliverables:

1. Work journal – completed daily; to be submitted three times over the course of the term
2. Proposal for your final paper (2-3 pages)
3. Oral presentation on your internship placement and academic paper
4. Final paper on an approved topic (10-12 pages, double spaced)

The faculty advisor grades all components of your performance in the course except the evaluation of your work performance by your supervisor at the internship placement, which contributes 20% of your final grade for the course. Your final grade in the course will be comprised of the following requirements:

Work performance	20%
Work journal	20%
Paper proposal	15%
Oral presentation	20%
Final paper	25%

<b>Excellent</b>	A	93-100%	<b>Good</b>	B+	87-89%	<b>Acceptable</b>	C+	77-79%
				B	83-86%		C	73-76%
	A-	90-92%		B-	80-82%		C-	70-72%
						<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	D+	67-69%
							D	63-66%
							D-	60-62%
						<b>Failing</b>	F	<60%

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### Timely Submissions

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be accepted at the discretion of the faculty advisor and generally only in the event of a documented illness or emergency.

### ASSIGNMENTS

#### 1) Work Journal (3 submissions)

You are expected to keep a work journal throughout the term. It is to be an analytical journal. This means recording your experiences, and adding your thoughts, reflections, interpretations and analyses of your experiences. Part of the emphasis should be on cross-cultural experiences. If you have worked in American work settings, what differences do you observe between American and Chinese workplaces? What similarities do you see? What is difficult or challenging about those differences, and what do you think you can learn from them?

You may also use the journal to build a complete picture of your organization. For example, what are your general observations that you have had a brief experience of a Chinese workplace? What are the strengths and weaknesses of your organization? What problems do you think it might need to solve in the future? What are your expectations for its development? What have you learned about Chinese people and Chinese society from your experience? What have you learned about your area of academic interests in relation to your internship experience?

**Suggestions for Journal Keeping.** Journals should be dated and kept electronically (or converted to electronic format if written by hand), and will be submitted to the faculty advisor at three points during the semester. When submitting your journal, include a single page summary of your journal entries and highlight any specific item you would like to discuss in the submission. Think of the single page summaries as progress reports of sorts for your internship experience.

It is crucial that you make entries as close as possible to the time of the events you are describing. This is true for research note-taking as well: if you are in a situation where you cannot take notes on the spot, find yourself a quiet corner as quickly as possible and note down everything you can remember. If time is pressing, writing down headings will help you recall what you heard. You can write a full account later in the day. The reason for stressing this point is that journal entries and research notes written later are much different from those written at the time: you begin to edit, to have second thoughts, to elaborate and rationalize – all freshness is lost. Thus, in the case that you want to write about an event happening in your internship placement, you are advised to take notes at your placement or not too late after the event if possible.

#### 2) Oral Presentations

You will be expected to introduce others to your internship organization. What kind of organization is it? How is it structured? How large is it? What products or services does it provide? Who are its customers or beneficiaries? What are its advantages and disadvantages?

You will also be expected to share your academic project with others. Why did you select the topic that you selected? How did you go about researching your topic? How did your experience at your internship contribute to your understanding and knowledge of that subject area?

The oral presentation can take the form of PowerPoint, ePortfolio project, pre-recorded video, and/or some other sort of visual presentation, and should not exceed 15 minutes in length.

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### 3) Final Paper

This academic project is intended to bring together the academic and experiential components of your internship experience. It should span the personal, professional, and intellectual elements of your internship experience, and be self-reflective while at the same time placing the experience within broader, national, cultural, economic, and academic contexts.

Your paper should be about 10-12 pages (12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced), structured according to your outline and organized into logical sections. It may be a research paper, a report, a case study or other forms that is approved by your faculty advisor. In your paper, you shall:

- Ask an interesting question
- Construct a coherent argument using evidence to support your points. Include five peer-reviewed journals in a reference list in support of your discussion
- Demonstrate your enhanced knowledge of cultural nuances in Chinese work environment
- Articulate how the experiential and intellectual experience gained through internship program may shed insight on your future career path
- Tie in the experiential elements of your internship experience with the academic subject you are exploring

It is only possible to do your academic project justice if you start work early and work methodically throughout the program. To receive approval, you are required to submit a **proposal** (2-3 pages) via email to your faculty advisor by Friday of the 4<sup>th</sup> week into your program. In your proposal, please specify your topic, your key questions or the purpose of your paper, your approach to the topic and provide a summary of major referenced literatures. Be sure to indicate in your proposal which citation style (APA, MLA, or ASA) you intend to follow.

#### How to Choose Your Topic

This course offers you a lot of flexibility to explore something that you are personally interested in learning more about. That said, your topic must be related to the work/project that you are doing in your internship placement. Topics indirectly related to your specific work but directly related to what your organization does are acceptable.

You are recommended to choose a topic that is not excessively ambitious. You may wish to write about a broad topic (e.g., endangered species conservation), but you will need to break it down to a more specific analysis (e.g., community participation in Amur leopard conservation efforts in Jilin Province).

By asking you to submit a proposal well in advance of the final project due date, we want to ensure that you have plenty of opportunities to discuss your ideas for topics and get feedback on how to proceed before you sit down to write your paper.

#### How to Find Information about Your Topic

You may find important information about your topic:

- At your internship placement (e.g., office library, documents, journals, websites)
- From people around you (e.g., your supervisor, colleagues, customers or beneficiaries)
- Electronic library resources (e.g., electronic databases, online journals)
- Physical library resources (e.g., books, journals, periodicals)

Be sure to find out where information for your project is located as soon as possible in case there is a waiting/ appointment/ delivery time involved. Your Faculty Advisor and Resident Director may be able to help you here.

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

### **How to Structure Your Final Paper**

In structuring your paper, you may wish to:

- Draw on your internship experience to provide ‘real life’ examples of theories in practice. (This is invariably a very effective approach.)
- Draw on theories/academic concepts to critique how particular activities are conducted at your internship workplace. (This is also a very effective approach.)
- Discuss the relative merits and disadvantages of particular concepts and argue your own conclusion. (This is often more difficult than the first two options.)

You should keep your advisor informed of your progress on a regular basis.

### **Some Tips for Preparing Your Final Paper**

- Plan the structure of your project before you start writing. Make sure that it follows a logical line of reasoning.
- Express your thoughts clearly and concisely, always ensuring that it relates to the topic you’re addressing.
- If you are using a text or texts, quote to illustrate your points. Remember to keep a thorough and accurate record of the sources that you have used.
- Always distinguish between your own words and those of others.
- Employ the language of formal presentation and do not use slang.
- Avoid abbreviations
- Keep to page limits.
- Use standard margins, fonts and formatting.
- Provide a bibliography.
- Don’t be afraid of using the first person point of view, but do so thoughtfully, carefully, and effectively, as an additional source or perspective that informs your experience and conclusions. Using the first person is a key element in bringing an experiential dimension to your academic work, but it must be done thoughtfully and framed carefully.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Any academic endeavor must be based upon a foundation of honesty and integrity. Students are expected to abide by principles of academic integrity and must be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work while studying abroad. Any academic work (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill an academic requirement must represent a student’s original work. Any act of academic misconduct, such as cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty, will subject a student to disciplinary action.

IFSA takes academic integrity very seriously. Students must not accept outside assistance without permission from the instructor. Additionally, students must document all sources according to the instructions of the professor. Should your instructor suspect you of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty, you may receive a failing grade for the course and disciplinary action may result. The incident will be reported to the IFSA resident director as well as your home institution.

## **COURSE SYLLABUS**

### **INTERNSHIP INFORMATION**

IFSA Shanghai Internship and Methodology Seminar (IMS) offers students the opportunity to earn academic credits while acquiring valuable hands-on professional experience. The purpose of internship experience is to allow students to develop valuable professional skills, to experience what it is like to work in China, to improve their Chinese language skills, to develop a holistic understanding of the field in which they work, and network with professionals in their chosen field. Many employers and graduate programs highly value candidates with experience working in diverse environments. Taking on the challenge of working overseas helps you demonstrate your adaptability and resilience.

#### **Time Commitment**

You will spend approximately 35 hours per week at your placement (210 hours over the entire term). You should be aware that the time required to complete this course will be greater than the time required for the other courses that offer the same number of academic credits. In addition to the required weekly work hours, you must commute to and from your internship placement. In Shanghai, travel time can be up to an hour or an hour and a half each way. Some organizations require that you complete all of your hours on-site, while others allow you to complete some of your hours off-site. Overall, though, you should be prepared to invest more time in the internship experience than with traditional academic coursework.

#### **Internship Placements**

Interns are placed in Chinese, joint venture, or foreign-owned companies and not-for-profit organizations across a variety of fields. All students are guaranteed a placement, with the understanding that language ability, organizational availability and other professional competencies will determine the type of internship that is possible for them.

Internship placements may be quite competitive, and are subject to the mutual decision by student and proposed placement organization. Usually, students with advanced Chinese language skills and strong work experience have a better chance of being placed at a more competitive organization. In some cases, you might be the first intern to have been placed with your particular organization, and the placement could have taken many weeks to arrange. We do our best to find the most suitable placement for every student. Final internship decisions are made in Shanghai, based on placement availability and candidate interviews.

#### **Compensation**

All internships are unpaid. Some organizations may proactively offer a modest stipend to cover your lunch and daily transportation costs. Please discuss any such offers with your IFSA Resident Director.

#### **Interviews**

After reviewing a student's Internship Intent Form, a suitable placement will be identified for the student. It is matched to a student's expressed interests and learning goals. In most cases, students can expect to have an interview with their proposed placement organization through phone/WeChat prior to their arrival on site and during their first week in Shanghai. Prior to the interview, students will be given detailed information about the internship organization and any further background information that may assist with their interview process. However, students are also encouraged to research the organization on their own. If there have been any relevant changes to their background, qualifications,

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or academic interests since you submitted your application, student must tell the Resident Director during their first meeting.

Internship interviews vary considerably in style. The purpose of the interview will be to establish a student's suitability for that particular placement. Students should therefore treat it as the equivalent of a job interview and present themselves as well as possible. The placement organization is not under any obligation to offer a placement if the student does not fulfill its requirements. The interview may be held in English or Chinese.

### Confirmation of Placement

Usually students will be informed within a week after the interview whether or not they have been accepted for the internship placement. In some cases, a student will be told at the interview; in others, the organization will want to consider a student's application in more detail, interview other candidates, or discuss specific arrangements first. When the placement is confirmed, student will sign an Internship Learning Contract with Internship Supervisor.

It is important that students make every effort to fit in to their place of work as quickly and unobtrusively as possible. A student cannot expect to be given responsibility unless he/she demonstrates early in the placement a willingness to be adaptable and, above all, reliable. Previous IFSA Shanghai students who have demonstrated their commitment to their work have been rewarded with increasing levels of responsibility, more opportunities to take part in interesting activities, and outstanding letters of recommendation.

### During the Placement

Because the internship permit issued by the Chinese government is tied to specific internship placement, it is very difficult to change internship placement after it has been finalized. In the case that a student experiences unexpected issues during a placement, please raise your concerns with your Resident Director immediately. Your Resident Director will help you troubleshoot the situation and liaise with your internship placement. Given the competitive nature of internships in China, students are advised to find a way to make their current internship placement work — flexibility and adaptability are, after all, an important part of the skill sets one acquires through living, studying, and working abroad!

#### Important Note

Your internship placement is not:

- Contracted to help with your academic project – only your allocated supervisor is obliged to give you advice about your project, which must be done outside of your placement duties/premises;
- To divulge information that is sensitive or confidential;
- To be compromised in any way by your project; and
- To be asked for “time off” to finish work on your academic paper.

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### **Supervision of Internships**

You will receive close support and supervision from IFSA, as well as from your host company Internship Supervisor. Here is a brief summary of the roles of the people you will be working with over the course of your internship:

The Faculty Advisor is primarily responsible for leading the academic component of the Internship Methodology Seminar. As described above, the Faculty Advisor meets with students 8 times over the course of the term, offers guidance and assessment on the required assignments and academic research project.

The Resident Director and staff coordinate the internships. The Resident Director and staff work with host companies to identify possible internship placements, to track student progresses, and to help trouble shooting internship issues timely.

The Internship Supervisor works day-to-day with students at their internship placement. The Internship Supervisor introduces students to the workplace, guides them in their daily work activities, and supervises their performance onsite. In addition, the Internship Supervisor prepares student Internship Placement Evaluation, which determines 20% of student's grade in the course.

### **Framework for the Internship**

The internship is designed to meet the standards set forth by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) in the United States, which defines a legitimate educational internship as follows:

1. The experience must be an extension of the classroom: a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It must not be simply to advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform.
2. The skills or knowledge learned must be transferable to other employment settings.
3. There are clearly defined learning objectives/goals related to the professional goals of the student's academic coursework.
4. There is supervision by a professional with expertise and educational and/or professional background in the field of the experience.
5. There is routine feedback by the experienced supervisor.
6. There are resources, equipment, and facilities provided by the host employer that support learning objectives/goals.