MDA 250: Internship for the Liberal Arts (Section 42289D)  
Mondays 2:00-3:50 pm, SOS B4  
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Office Hours: Mondays and Fridays 12-1 pm and by appointment

Course Description: MDA 250 Internship for the Liberal Arts is taken concurrently with an internship to ensure that students get the most out of their off-campus experiences. Drawing from best practices in experiential and service learning, the course centers on rigorous reflection, both in writing and in person. Students consider all aspects of their internship and serve as sounding boards for each other as the semester progresses. In addition, students contextualize their experiences by joining into cultural and academic conversations about relevant topics, such as the ethics of unpaid internships, the nature of work in the 21st century, and identity dynamics in the workplace. Finally, the course provides guidance on professionalization, enabling students to frame their internship experiences in future professional endeavors.

Learning Objectives: Students will:
- Participate in meaningful reflection about their internship
- Engage in conversations about contemporary issues in work
- Develop effective professional materials
- Use the skills learned in this course to perform well in their internship and future work endeavors

Internship Requirements:
- All enrolled students must work a minimum of eight hours per week and start the internship by Friday September 7.
- Interns and intern supervisors must fill out the Employer Agreement Form and return it to Maria Velasquez (mvelasqu@usc.edu) in order to register for the course.
- Intern supervisors must meet with interns at the middle and end of the term to discuss progress and submit an Intern Performance Evaluation by Monday, Dec. 3.

Course Requirements:
- Weekly Reflection Journal Entries (due almost every week, 10 total): 35%
  - Each reflection should be approximately 300 words and identify one key specific issue, concern, event, or experience from your internship the week before. After describing the issue, concern, event, or experience, you need to analyze or evaluate it – why does what happened matter? Why did you choose to focus on this key thing this week? Why is this thing worthy of reflection? Then, think about how this thing informs how you will act moving forward and/or your sense of your self at work. What did you learn from this thing? What will you do differently in this internship or in the future as a result of this reflection. We’ll be discussing two research-based models of reflection in class that you can use to structure each reflection (what? so what? now what?/DEAL), or you simply write a narrative that hits the three required parts of an effective reflection.
o Optional component of each reflection: targeted questions for me, issues you want a direct response to. I read every reflection but only comment if you ask for it or if I see something especially troubling/problematic.
o This is not a diary – entries that simply report what happened with little actual reflection will not receive credit.

• Reading Response Journal Entries (due 9/10, 9/24 and 10/8, 3 total): 15%
o The point of these reading responses is twofold: (1) to prove you’ve done the reading and (2) prime you to participate in an interesting discussion about them. As such, you should answer the prompt or question provided on the schedule below with enough references to the reading to show that you’ve done and thought about them, but you do not need to provide summaries of the readings. Effective reading responses will say engage directly with the readings but also explore your own ideas or opinions about the topics that are being discussed; ideally you’ll be adding something different or unique to the points that the authors make.

• Intern Learning Plan (due 9/3) and Mid-term Check-in (due 10/22): 10%
o See assignment sheet distributed in class on 8/28

• Participation: 20%
o You should come to each class prepared and ready to actively participate. Active participation includes verbal contributions to discussions, active listening and engagement both with what I am saying and your classmates’ comments, focused work in small group and partner activities, and thoughtful completion of in-class writing. In other words, you can be physically present without being mentally present – be both.
o During in-class meetings I may ask you to post responses in your journal. Incomplete responses will result in a 5-point deduction for your participation grade for each day.
o Includes participation in the resume and cover letter workshops held from 11/12-11/26. Not posting to the blog and/or not bringing required materials (or not following the instructions) to those sessions will result in a 5-point deduction from your participation grade for each missing item.

• Final Professional Dossier (due 12/3): 20%
o Includes updated resume, cover letter and final reflection

Course Materials: Please bring some device with access to Blackboard (I prefer not phones, if possible) AND something to write with and on to every class period.

When we are not explicitly doing something digital (discussing online readings, workshopping digital copies of student work) please keep your devices closed or away.

Grading: Although you must participate in an internship to receive credit for the course, your grade is not based on your work as an intern. You are being assessed exclusively by your performance on class assignments and participation in class. This is a two-credit, graded course, though you should strongly consider taking it P/NP. You have until Fri. Sept. 11 to make this choice. (In order to receive a P, you will need to earn at least a C- in the course.)
Attendance at class meetings is a required component of this course. You can miss one class with no penalty. If you miss another class you will lose two letter grades from your final grade. A third absence will mean you fail the course.

Lateness (no matter by how much time) is distracting and disruptive to me and to the entire class. Please don’t be late. Your first late entrance is free; additional late entries will each cost 3 points from your participation grade. The same policy applies to leaving early. If you need to miss more than a half an hour of class (i.e. arrive more than 30 minutes late or leave more than 30 minutes early) that counts as an absence.

If you register for the class late (after classes start), you are responsible for making up all work by Sept. 10 (if not before) and setting up an appointment with me to discuss what you have missed.

Reflections, reading response journal entries, the intern learning plan and the midterm check-in will be assessed on a Great (A-level), Fine (C-level) and Unacceptable/Incomplete/Not Submitted (0) scale. If you do everything the assignment requires well, you’ll get full credit. If you do the assignment but don’t do everything the assignment requires well, you’ll get 70% credit (i.e. a C). If you don’t do the assignment or it doesn’t meet the requirements, you won’t get credit for it.

I don’t accept late work. Assignments not submitted by 2 pm on the due date will receive a 0.

As indicated above, I am assuming you will hand in all the professional documents due in the second half of the semester. Because they are in-process, you simply get credit for handing them in. Missing assignments in this part of the course result in penalties to your participation grade a detailed above.

The Final Professional Dossier will be graded on a traditional A-F scale. A rubric will be distributed closer to the deadline.

Schedule: (Bolded dates indicate IN-CLASS meetings)
All assignments are due at 2 pm on the dates listed below.

Monday, Aug. 20    No class – class begins on week 2.

Monday, Aug. 27    In class: Introductions to each other & to the course & requirements
                    Why reflect?
                    What makes an ideal intern?
                    Preview/assign intern learning plan

Monday, Sept. 3 (Labor Day)    Due: Intern Learning Plan
                                (uploaded to Turnitin link on Blackboard)
                                Email me if you need an internship verification form
Monday, Sept. 10  

Due: Reflection #1  
(uploaded to your Blackboard Journal)

Due: Read all 5 of the essays in the NY Times Room for Debate forum: “Do Unpaid Internships Exploit College Students?”

Due: Journal entry in your Blackboard Journal: Where do you stand? Respond to the readings with your own (more nuanced than yes or no) answer the whether unpaid internships are exploitive. You must reference details of at least 3 of the essays in your response. (350-500 words)

In class: Email etiquette  
Assign cover letter workshop groups  
Discuss reading and of the ethics of unpaid internships

Monday, Sept. 17  

Due: Reflection #2  
(uploaded to your Blackboard Journal)

Monday, Sept. 24  

Due: Reflection #3  

Due: Watch the four videos from the NYU/McKinsey Digital Future of Work Summit held in 2017.  
Journal entry in your Blackboard Journal: Write one response that comments on all four of them. With what did you agree and/or disagree? How did watching these make you feel about the future of your work? How, if at all, were some of the points made relevant to what you’re doing/how you’re approaching your internship right now? (350-500 words)

In class: Discuss viewings and the future of work  
Longer-term career goal-setting

Monday, Oct. 1  

Due: Reflection #4  
(uploaded to your Blackboard Journal)

Note: This week or next week you should plan to schedule a time to meet with your intern supervisor or someone else senior to you who has been working closely with you to get feedback on your progress. The meeting should take place during the week of Oct. 15.

Monday, Oct. 8  

Due: Reflection #5  
(uploaded to your Blackboard Journal)

OPTIONAL REFLECTION TOPIC: Reflect on how one or more aspect of your identity (race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, etc.) has impacted your experience of work (at this internship or elsewhere) and/or your choices about work.

(Continued on next page.)
Due: Go to [this link](#). Click “I wish to proceed” at the bottom and then take the Race IAT and one other IAT of your choice. (Continued on next page.)
Watch the [7 videos](#) on Implicit Bias from UCLA’s Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
Journal entry in your Blackboard journal: Share the results of your two IATs and reflect on the experience of taking those and respond to the videos. What was interesting, informative and/or confusing? Why? How might this information impact your experience at work, now or in the future? (350-500 words)
In class: Discuss readings and role of identity and implicit bias in workplace dynamics
Plan midterm meetings
Goals check-in

Monday, Oct. 15

Due: Reflection #6
(uploaded to your Blackboard Journal)
Note: During this week, meet with your intern supervisor or someone else senior to you who has been working closely with you to get feedback on your progress.

Monday, Oct. 22

Due: Mid-term check-in reflection (see Intern Learning Plan assignment sheet for more details).
[No additional reflection is due this week.]
Due: Bring a paper copy of your resume and upload it to the course blog (not your blackboard journal) as an attachment
In class: Resume workshop
Framing your internship experience for different work contexts in the future

Monday, Oct. 29

Due: Reflection #7
(uploaded to your Blackboard Journal)
Due: Post a pdf version of a job ad (or the prompt for a grad school admissions essay) to which you might want to apply in your Blackboard journal. (I’m asking for a pdf rather than a link because these things often disappear from the internet over the course of the semester.)
In class: Decoding job ads/decoding your job ad
The genre of the cover letter/looking at sample letters

Monday, Nov. 5

Due: Reflection #8
(uploaded to your Blackboard Journal)
Due: Upload a good, complete (but not necessarily final) draft of a cover letter or admissions essay to the class blog
(as an attachment). In the body of the blog post include the job ad or essay prompt to which you are responding. Cover letters should be no longer than a single page. Other formatting determinations are up to you.

**Due:** In the same blog post, upload the pdf of the job ad or admissions essay you are responding to.

**Due:** In the same blog post, upload a copy of your resume, revised based on the feedback you received in class on 10/22.

*In class:* Assign/discuss the final professional dossier
Prepare for small-group cover letter workshops.

Note: Monday, Nov. 5 will be the last time all of us meet in person as a class. However, each of you will be responsible to attend one more class period to participate in small group workshops of your cover letters. I will assign groups and dates in class on Sept. 10 so you can plan your lives. If you already know you will NOT be able to attend one of these days (especially 11/19 which is Thanksgiving week), please email me to let me know by 9/7 so I can plan groups accordingly.

**Monday, Nov. 12**

*Due:* Reflection #9
(uploaded to your Blackboard Journal)

*In class:* Small-group cover letter workshop #1

*Due (if you're participating in the workshop today):*
Prepare feedback for your peers following the instructions laid out in class on 11/5.

**Monday, Nov. 19**

*Due:* Reflection #10
(uploaded to your Blackboard Journal)

*In class:* Small-group cover letter workshop #2

*Due (if you're participating in the workshop today):*
Prepare feedback for your peers following the instructions laid out in class on 11/5.

**Monday, Nov. 26**

*Due:* Intern Learning Plan Final Reflection (see Intern Learning Plan Assignment sheet for more details)
(uploaded to your Blackboard Journal)

*Due:* Complete course evaluation; a link will be emailed to you and appear on your Blackboard page.

*In class:* Small-group cover letter workshop #3

*Due (if you’re participating in the workshop today):*
Prepare feedback for your peers following the instructions laid out in class on 11/5.

**Monday, Dec. 3**

*Due:* Intern Performance Evaluation (to me via email from your supervisor)

*Due:* Final Professional Dossier (via Turnitin)