

Sc 540/ Sc 541 INTERNSHIP IN SOCIOLOGY I&II

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Wednesdays 6:00-7:30 p.m.

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Office Hours:
Tuesday 4:30-5:15
Wednesday 4:30-5:55
Thursday 4:30-5:30
or by appointment

This course is primarily designed for students who wish to acquire practical work experience in a human service, political, social research, or social policy agency--private or governmental, profit or nonprofit. Some students find placements in consulting firms, law firms, or other business organizations. Some do research with a faculty member at BC, at another university, or in a social research organization in the area. In most cases these internships are unpaid, but in some cases they are paid positions. Undergraduates typically take this course in their junior or senior year as a way to find out more about what it is like to work in one of the many setting that sociology majors take jobs in after graduating from college. While the course is not restricted to sociology students, non-majors should keep in mind that it is expected that sociological concepts and questions will inform the papers you write and discussion in class. To justify academic credit for this course written work and oral presentations will be called for in addition to the time spent and work done in connection with your actual internship placement.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. You must prepare a 3,000-4,000 word term paper that in some way relates to your internship or an issue at least indirectly relevant to your internship placement. This paper is due **Wed., Dec 14** (by 4:00 p.m.; put it in my mailbox in McGuinn 426 or under my door McGuinn 424. (1) The paper must make extensive use of sociological concepts and demonstrate your ability to draw on sociological sources for your conceptualization. (2) You must come to see me in my office once to get your topic approved. In preparation for this meeting do a literature search so that you can demonstrate based on the books and articles that you have found that you will have enough material to do the proposed paper. (3) You must come to see me in my office a second time after you have done most if not all of your reading for the paper. Be prepared discuss what is in that reading and what you plan to argue based on that reading. This is not a test on the details of the reading; it is just a check to make sure you have done the reading you plan to cite. (4) If you would like comments on a preliminary draft of your paper prior to submission of the paper for a grade, it **must** be turned in on or before **Wed Nov 30** in two formats: (1) as an electronic file and as (2) a hard copy. I will then e-mail you with my comments by **Wed Dec 7**. That will give you one week to respond to the suggestions for revision. (5) **YOU MUST TURN IN THE FINAL DRAFT OF YOUR PAPER BOTH AS AN ELECTRONIC FILE (CD or e-mail attachment) AND AS A HARD COPY.** (6) You must learn and use either the ASA or APA citation style. A good place to get help on ASA style is www.buffalostate.edu/library/research/asa.pdf . For APA style I suggest: <http://www.calstatela.edu/library/styleman.htm> . Use this source as a starting point for the citation system for the citations in the body of your paper and in references at the end of your paper. Before you turn your paper in to me, be sure to check what you have done against a more reliable source such as the official ASA and APA style manuals. Please specify which citation system you are using and if APA which edition of the *Publication Manual* of the APA you are using. (6) You are strongly urged to make extensive use of academic sources; it is a mistake to base your paper primarily on newspaper, magazine, and internet sources. (7) If you use internet sources, be sure to give the date you last accessed each source and make sure it is going to be possible for me to access the source using the URL that you have provided. (8) If you take this course pass/fail, you are exempt from this term paper

requirement. (9) In class I will distribute a detailed set of GUIDELINES for the term paper. You are expected to read and follow those guidelines.

2. You must keep a journal with entries on at least a weekly basis. This journal will primarily deal with your internship experience. It must be both descriptive and analytic. Your journal will be due on or before **Friday, Dec 9**. (Alternatively, you may want to turn it in on **Wednesday, Dec 7**). If your handwriting is very clear, there is no need to type it up. Be sure to include a summary as the last entry in your journal describing what you got out of your internship experience including a discussion of what you learned about what you want or do not want in a job when you enter the workforce after finishing your education. Journal entries should run about 300 words on average. See notes from first day of class for details about what to include.
3. You must attend class and be prepared to present on the assigned topic for the specified class. We will meet as a group approximately once every other week for 90 minutes. I expect to see each of you at other times during the semester outside of class to discuss your paper and aspects of your internship that you want to discuss privately. It will be up to you to schedule these meetings and you can come in as often as you like.
4. You must spend at least 100 hours over the course of the term at your internship placement. This work must be completed on or before **Friday, Dec 9**.
5. At your internship placement you must obtain a field supervisor. Turn in **Form B** signed by your field supervisor preferably on the first day of class or by our second class meeting at the latest. Your field supervisor will be responsible for overseeing your work at the internship site. This person must agree to submit a written evaluation of your work by **Wednesday, Dec 14**. This is to be a confidential letter to me. I strongly urge you to **hand deliver** that letter so you can be sure that I get it on time. I your supervisor wants to e-mail the letter to me that is fine, but it is up to you to make sure that letter has been sent to and received by me. If it is to be faxed, please ask your supervisor to call to leave me voicemail message saying it has been sent so that I will check to see if the Fax was received. In that letter your field supervisor should discuss what you did, how well you performed, and make suggestions for improvement. I discourage the use of U.S. Mail for this letter. It takes too long to get to me.

COURSE GRADING:

The grade for the course will be determined on a point system as follows:

- (60%) on the final paper
- (20%) on Internship (based on your supervisor's letter, your journal, and your comments in class)
- (20%) on Class participation (based on quantity, quality, and attendance)

If you take the course pass/fail, your grade is based on the last two items alone.

COURSE READING:

Most students will do a substantial amount of reading in connection with the term paper for this course. The actual amount of reading will generally be greater if it is a library research paper than if it is a paper based on research calling for extensive empirical data collection. How much reading do you do if it is a library research paper? I would suggest (at a minimum) something on the order of 10 or more scholarly sources (professional books, articles in professional books, journal articles) in addition to any other items from more

popular sources (e.g., the internet items, newspapers, magazines, college textbooks, etc.). It is important that you demonstrate your ability to use the computer search systems to search scholarly databases (reference librarians can help you), as opposed to more generic web searches using Google or the like. As each of you will be writing papers on different topics, there will be very little assigned reading for the course that each of you will have in common. **What is my take on use of the internet as a source for citations?** (1) Generally it will reduce the perceived quality of your paper. Unless you select such sources with great care, it will seem that you do not know how to do so serious library research. It is not a problem when the internet is used very selectively and used for things like tables published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census or a report published by the UN, etc. When you do use the internet be, sure to follow published guidelines from ASA or APA as to how to cite such sources including information about when the cite was accessed. I know APA has worked out how to do this, but you will need to check to see if ASA has a published set of guidelines as well. Also it is essential that you provide the hyperlink to the source. If you use the internet to obtain the full text of a published article as it appears in the printed source, that is fine. In that case cite the printed source assuming your source provides all of the relevant information. **The paper that you write for this course must be original for this course, not a paper that you plan to submit to another course as well or a paper that you have submitted in the past to another course.**

PERSONAL SAFETY:

It is very important that you discuss the issue of personal safety with me and with your field supervisor if there is any potential for personal safety problems given the location and/or time when you will be at your internship. I will want to know what steps you are taking to assure that personal safety will not be a problem for you. If at some point during your internship you become aware that there is a problem that you were not aware of at the outset, please discuss the issue with me.

FINDING A PLACEMENT:

1. It is up to you to find your own placement. I have a list of placements that students have had in recent years that may be useful. You are in no way limited to the placements on this list. Some of these placement turned out to be better than others; in some cases there is considerable variation in the quality of the experience depending on who your field supervisor and that may vary between two students working at the same placement during the same semester. Even more useful will be the lists of internship placements listed at the Internship Office in the Career Center (38 Commonwealth Ave., 617 552-4771). I am told they have internship consultation hours daily. I am also told they run workshops on how to interview for an internship (to get the offer and to make sure you get what you want from your internship). You may want to check the website for the career center at <http://careercenter.bc.edu> for internship listings and advice.
2. When selecting a placement, be sure to ask a lot of questions about what you will actually do and what you will be able to present as the educational component of the internship experience. A lot of organizations need volunteer staff for low level clerical work such as photocopy, filing, and filling envelopes for fund raisers. If you do not ask questions, you may end up with a dead-end internship that is not a learning experience. You should make sure you will get a useful educational experience (in a broad sense) for the time you invest.
2. You need to find that placement before the start of the semester in which you take the course. For a September placement, it is best to make your arrangements before you leave for the summer vacation. For a Spring term placement it is best to do it in November or December. Some placements take several weeks for approval.
3. If you have any question as to whether a particular internship placement would be acceptable, do check with me in advance. If you review the list of past internships you should get a good idea of the range of placements that are likely to be acceptable.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Please go to the following website and read the section on academic integrity. It will help clarify what is acceptable and not acceptable in connection with the sources you use for your term paper. <http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity>