

SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
The Pennsylvania State University

INTAF 595 – Capstone Internship

Overview:

The Capstone requirement for graduation is that you complete either a professional internship (INTAF 595), or a Masters paper (INTAF 594). The Capstone requirement is normally completed after the core courses, in the Summer after 1st year, or in a subsequent semester. Internships are supervised professional placements in which students experience the integration of their curricular studies in a professional environment. Students who complete an internship gain work experience and skills, encounter opportunities to test academic knowledge in working environments, and increase their knowledge about potential careers.

Requirements:

All Capstone internships must be approved by the Director of Career Services and your faculty advisor **PRIOR** to beginning the internship, through approval of your Plan for Internship form and statement, and the Capstone Registration form. Successful completion of INTAF 595, and the awarding of credit, requires two elements:

- 1) An evaluation of your performance in the internship by your work supervisor, documenting your professionalism, satisfactory completion of all work assignments, consistent attendance, punctuality, and diligence in your assigned duties.
- 2) Following your internship, you are required to submit a paper based on your internship experience. Details of the assignment are below.

Paper:

The paper must be a minimum of 3000 words in length. It must evidence your understanding of the relationship between your work and the theoretical concepts and factual information gained in the classroom, and through readings and research. You should discuss specific professional skills learned and knowledge gained. It is suggested that you maintain notes or a journal to facilitate your writing of the final paper. Required elements of the paper are:

- 1) Overview of the internship – which organization, where, what tasks, etc. (500 words)
- 2) Link between coursework and practical internship experience: referencing readings and materials from your coursework in SIA provide a brief analysis of the experience and the organization with which you worked that demonstrates your ability to connect concepts learned in your courses with your internship experience (1250-1500 words)
- 3) Professional skills acquired: describe in details the skills you acquired during the internship that will help you in your future career options (500-750 words)
- 4) Personal reflection: Take stock of the experience and reflect on what you learned, what you could have done better, what you excelled at. Were there surprises? What expectations held true? What would you do differently next time? How did the experience help you develop as a leader? How did it help you develop as a team player? How did it contribute to your training in international affairs? (750-1000 words)

Grading:

INTAF 595 will be graded with an “R” for research. “R” denotes the work (both in the internship and on the paper) was completed satisfactorily. The Director of Career Services and the Director of SIA will jointly review your paper **AND** the evaluation by your internship supervisor, and will determine that you have successfully completed the requirements. The “R” grade is not calculated into your GPA; the credits will be counted toward fulfilling degree requirements and will show in your total credits earned.

Deadline:

The paper must be submitted electronically to careers@sia.psu.edu **NO LATER** than the last day of classes in the semester in which you’re enrolled (in the case of credits split over two semesters, the last day of classes in the second semester). The deadline applies **REGARDLESS** of the end date of your internship. If your internship extends beyond the end of the semester, you must still complete and submit the paper by the last day of classes.