SAMPLE SYLLABUS
FMS99: MEDIA INTERNSHIPS

Your internship will teach you about the world of communications through hands-on experience in broadcasting, film production, journalism, public relations, marketing communications, advertising, publishing, digital media, social media, and other fields. You will learn how media organizations operate and will have the chance to develop skills such as copywriting, editing, account management, web design, social media, blogging, photography, and film production. You may learn that you "have what it takes" for success in a particular field, or you may learn that you don’t want to pursue a media career at all. You will certainly learn things that you could never learn in a classroom.

This course is available to rising seniors, juniors, and sophomores. You do not have to be a FMS major or minor to enroll. To be eligible for credit, internships must be done in an office under the guidance of media professionals, not in a remote or virtual setting. All internships are graded Pass/Fail.

Important: You must be enrolled in FMS99 BEFORE you start your internship.

You must receive consent to register for FMS99. To get consent, please submit to Leslie Goldberg a completed Internship Agreement Form (IAF) signed by you and your supervisor at the internship site. The IAF and the Guidelines for Internships forms are available on the FMS website (tufts.edu/fms/internships/forms) or at the FMS office on the second floor of 95 Talbot Ave. No registration can take place until all parties complete the IAF.

NOTE: For activities directly related to the internship, Tufts covers students in FMS99 with professional and general liability insurance coverage while working at the internship site. This insurance coverage extends for the length of the course, from the first day to the last day of work, provided the student is registered. Be aware that Tufts does not provide students with insurance coverage for duties performed while driving a car or other vehicle during the internship. If students use their own vehicles for internship business, they should be covered by their personal insurance. If students plan to use a company’s vehicle during the internship, they should check with the company as to insurance coverage.
REQUIREMENTS

1) Group Meetings*—There will be one MANDATORY group meeting at the beginning of the semester (Date TBD). This meeting will outline the details of the course and give you a chance to meet the other interns. You MUST attend this meeting. The second group meeting will be held mid-semester, around the time the second paper is due, date TBD). This meeting will give you a chance to learn what other interns are doing, hear about their successes and challenges, and participate in a collaborative internship experience.

2) One-on-One Meetings*—You must meet with me individually at least twice during the semester at a mutually agreed-upon time. I will send out a “Doodle” scheduling calendar around the time that each paper is due; it is YOUR responsibility to sign up for a conference, mark it down, and be available as scheduled! These meetings give you the chance to discuss issues in depth and to put your internship into context with the rest of your Tufts education.

*Note: During the summer, all meetings will be one-on one (no group meetings) and will be held remotely via phone or Skype.
If doing the summer half-credit internship, only two meetings are required.

3) Hours—You must work at least 150 hours* under the supervision of a media professional. Plan to meet regularly with your site supervisor; he or she will be asked to verify your hours at the end of your internship. If you need to miss work due to illness or an emergency, notify your supervisor immediately and be sure to reschedule missed hours. Also, when counting hours, be sure to factor in changes to the Tufts schedule, including holidays, “Monday’s schedule” days, and Thanksgiving or spring break.

*Note: If doing the summer half-credit internship, you must work 75 hours.

4) Writing Requirement—

A) Weekly Emails—Once a week (Friday, Saturday, or Sunday—your choice), send me a short email about your week. The SUBJECT LINE of your email MUST be in this format: Your Last Name—Friday date of that work week (even if you send the email on Saturday or Sunday). So for example, if you are sending your email on Saturday, September 19th for the prior week, your email subject line would look like this: YOUR LAST NAME—9/18/15.

Information to include: (1) a log of your hours for the week (dates worked, number of hours worked, and a running total for the internship so far); (2) a brief description of your duties that week; (3) a description of problems or successes (if any). This is your chance to let me know about any concerns and to seek advice, asks questions, and pat yourself on the back. If you have larger concerns you wish to discuss in person, feel free to set up a time to talk.
B) Internship Blog/Diary—While not required, many students find it helpful to keep an internship blog/diary, in which you can reflect on and analyze your internship experience. This is a great resource for when you have to revise your resume or talk about your internship to future employers!

C) Three Short Papers*—The papers in this course will help you reflect upon your work as an intern and teach you about the issues your industry is facing. Papers are due approximately every 4-6 weeks. Papers are due via email or hard copy, by 5 p.m., on the dates assigned; I need time to read on your papers before we meet so please DO NOT simply bring the paper with you to our meeting.

Papers should be approximately 4 pages typed, double-spaced. Given the importance of clear, concise writing in the communications field, these papers offer a great opportunity to hone your writing skills. Be creative—tell me a story or write about an interesting anecdote. Regardless of your writing style, please offer thoughtful reflections about your experience.

PAPER TOPICS: PLAN AHEAD! SOME PAPERS REQUIRE RESEARCH AND INTERVIEWS!

*Note: If doing the summer half-credit internship, only Papers #1 & 3 are required.

1) PAPER #1

PLEASE INCLUDE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING IN THIS PAPER:

A) A BRIEF OVERVIEW of the company where you are working: Describe the industry and the products or services your company provides within that industry.

B) YOUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES for the semester in a bulleted list. IMPORTANT: You MUST meet with your site supervisor to develop the list, so plan ahead so you have plenty of time to review your goals with your supervisor before the paper is due. You should look back on these goals every week in order to assess your progress.

C) YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS of your internship. Topics might include:

• What were your expectations as you walked in the door, and is the internship meeting those expectations?
• What is the work atmosphere/office environment like? Describe the people and the “corporate culture.”
• What do you notice about interpersonal dynamics or “office politics”? Consider issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, if relevant.
• What skills do the professionals at this organization need to do their jobs?
• How does this organization compare to previous internships or work experiences, if any?
2) PAPER #2

PLEASE PLAN AHEAD. THIS PAPER REQUIRES RESEARCH AND INTERVIEWS WITH YOUR SITE SUPERVISOR AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS AT YOUR INTERNSHIP!

PLEASE INCLUDE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING IN THIS PAPER:

A) Interview your site supervisor or another professional with whom you work. Write about their educational and work backgrounds, job responsibilities, and views on the field/industry they're working in. Topics might include:

• How did they get into the field?
• What career advice do they have in terms of making the most of your internship, expanding your knowledge, networking with other communications professionals, and breaking into the field?

B) Do a great deal of background research on your organization, and then interview at least one other person in the company who is not your supervisor. Your goal is to learn in detail more about the business and how it fits into the specific media industry of which it is a part (e.g. television, advertising, newspapers, etc.). If possible, and with your supervisor’s permission, reach out to people high up in the organization such as the CEO, president, or vice president. The types of questions you might try to answer in this research/interview are:

• What are the site’s overall objectives?
• Who are its main competitors?
• Is it a successful company and how is success measured?
• What outside forces influence its bottom line (e.g. government funding cutbacks, economic recession, new competitors)?
• Are there local, national, or international events that have affected, or will affect, the organization?
• What types of products does this organization “produce,” be they books, magazines, newspapers, films, public relations or advertising "campaigns" for clients, etc.
  o How are the products funded?
  o Who are the audiences for these products?
  o To what extent are the products influenced by the financial side of the company? (e.g. are the formats and anchors of news shows changed to improve ratings and advertising rates?).
  o Do these products help the organization reach its goals (financial, political, ethical, etc.)?
• How did you (the VP, CEO, other person you are interviewing) get involved in this industry? What was your career path? Would you have done anything differently? Do you have any
“war stories” to tell about your experiences in this field? What advice do you have for someone starting out?

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND FOR THIS PAPER:

• Talk to several professionals at your internship site to gather information and specific comments (Include names/titles of the people you interviewed, either through quotes or other attribution)
• Do research on this industry and organization in the library, in trade journals and other publications, on the Internet, and at the internship site. Do not rely solely on the organization’s website for information!
• Do not simply “lift” material from the company marketing materials
• Supply sources for your research
• Write creatively. Tell me a “story” about the business and the people who populate it. Don’t just transcribe your interviews!

3) PAPER #3

Your final paper is more in-depth than the first two and has three required sections. For this paper, you MUST do parts A & B AND CHOOSE between parts C & D.

PLEASE INCLUDE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING IN THIS PAPER:

A) Write an in-depth overview and evaluation of your internship experience. Have you met the goals you set out for yourself at the beginning of the internship? (Refer back to the list you made for paper #1 and be specific in answering this.). Questions to think about:

• What have you gained academically, professionally, and personally?
• What have you learned about yourself and your interpersonal skills?
• Discuss the relationship between your liberal arts education and your internship. Are there courses you've taken that have been helpful? Are there courses you wish you had taken, or now plan to take?
• How has your internship experience affected your career plans? Are you interested in working in this field/industry? If not, why not? If so, what sector of the field appeals to you most?
• How difficult is it to obtain entry-level employment in this area, and how should you go about networking and looking for a position? Is graduate work necessary for a career in this field?

- AND –
B) Learn how to "market" yourself as a potential employee in this field. Review the “resume packet” on the Career Services website (there are good samples and a list of action verbs to use in your bullets). Then:

• Update your resume and ask your supervisor for feedback. Get advice on how best to word the description of your current internship and ask them about "gaps" in your resume (e.g. additional skills or experience that you need), and how to best fill them.
• List in your paper what specific advice/comments you received.
• Attach the new resume to your final paper, so I can review it in advance of our final meeting.

Choose one of the following to include in your paper:

C) Submit a “portfolio” of work from your internship. Please include:

• A description of what your sample is (1 paragraph)
• How the project came about (was it assigned or did you push for it?) (1 paragraph)
• What research and skills you did/used to get the project done (1-2 paragraphs)
• Any feedback you got from your supervisor about the project (1-2 paragraphs)
• How this project will help you in the future (1-2 paragraphs)

- OR –

D) Discuss an internship-related topic of your choice. I encourage you to be creative! Here are some examples of the types of topics you could write about, but anything is possible:

• Describe a situation at the internship that called for an "ethical decision"—either something you were directly involved in or something you observed. Analyze this situation. How did you handle it—or how would you have handled it if you’d been involved? Why?
• Describe a situation from which you learned something about yourself in terms of effective interpersonal communications.
• Discuss a mistake you've made, almost made, or feared making. Why is it significant, and what did you learn from it?

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please remember that in order to receive a "Pass" for this course, you must fulfill all of the above requirements and submit papers on time (not all at the end of the internship). If you encounter any problems meeting these requirements, please contact me immediately—do not wait until the end of the semester. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with me.