



# Internship in Montpellier

## Course Details

**Course Designator & Number: MONT 3303**

**Number of Credits: 3**

**Language of Instruction: French**

**Contact Hours: 39**

**Instructor: Corinne Gorrier Dumas**

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## Course Description

The *Montpellier* internship course is designed to provide students with the opportunity to become more knowledgeable regarding the local culture, organizational cultures, and the professional environment. Through practical internship experiences as well as readings, discussions, and written assignments, students will deepen their understanding of the host country cultural context and critically examine their own worldviews.

The course is designed to guide students in the internship experience and create a foundation for a successful professional career. In addition to gaining a cross-cultural comparative view on work, the topics and assignments will deepen students' insights about themselves, professional expectations, and being successful in the workplace. Students are expected to make a valuable contribution to the internship site through the completion of major projects or tasks.

This course also focuses on themes in which students are expected to develop and enhance over the course of the semester through class seminars and on-the-job experience: leadership, communication, French social system, multiculturalism in the French society, place of secularism in the French society, gender and the workplace, media and politics.

## Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course students will be able to:

- Analyze and understand cultural workplace dynamics with comparative focus with U.S.
- Understand your values, skills, and behaviors and how different values and communication styles may impact workplace dynamics, develop strategies for adapting to these differences
- Identify skills and experiences necessary to reach future career goals; develop learning objectives for internship site that will help the move towards these career aspirations.
- Articulate personal skills, strengths and values within the context of the work environment.
- Conduct work during the internship utilizing best practices around professional behavior within a work environment.
- Analyze the social context of your site and its influence on the workplace particularly social media, language, norms and values, leadership, and economic assumptions and structures.
- Analyze and understand different aspects of French society such as the concept of “laïcité”, struggle for gender equality on the work place, impact of immigration, history of strikes and unions to deepen students’ understanding of different social values with comparative focus with the US.

## Methodology

In-class contact hours include discussions, readings, student personal experiences, and guest lectures

## Required Reading / Materials

### Reference Works

- International Experience and graduate employability: stakeholder perceptions on the connection by Joanna Elizabeth Crossman & Marilyn Clarke.
- Contemporary Leadership and Intercultural Competence, Exploring the Cross-Cultural Dynamics Within Organizations, “Beyond Borders: Leading in Today’s Multicultural World” by Sangeeta R. Gupta

### Required Readings

- Le patron, le footballeur et le smicard by P. Villemus.

- "Pourquoi relever l'âge de la retraite est une mesure juste", by Eric Woerth (ministre du travail), 20 septembre 2010.  
<http://www.travail-solidarite.gouv.fr/actualite-presse,42>
- "Pourquoi l'université française n'assure pas la réussite des étudiants", l'OBS, by Didier Delignières, Professeur d'Université, 22 octobre 2012.
- "L'égalité La parité, rêve impossible?", Direct Montpellier, 4 juillet 2013.
- "L'égalité doit être une culture", JDN, by Nicole Améline (ministre de la Parité et de l'Égalité professionnelle), mai 2004.
- Additional weekly readings will consist of current articles relevant to the topics for that week. Articles will be selected from Le Monde, Libération, Sciences Humaines, etc.

## Grading

### Grading Rubric

Letter Grade	Score or Percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87–89	
B	83–86	
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	
C	73–76	
C-	70–72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements.
D+	67–69	

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Score or Percentage</b>	<b>Description</b>
D	60–66	
F	0–59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

## Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Percentage of Grade</b>
Attendance and class participation	10%
Interview Paper, Internship Reports & Presentation	20%
Mid Term	20%
Site Supervisor feedback	10%
Final project	25%
Portfolio	15%
<b>Overall grade</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Assessment Details

### ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

Although ultimately rewarding, working in another country can be confusing or frustrating. There will be time in most classes to discuss and debrief your workplace interactions and tasks. You should be ready to share your experiences and thoughtfully comment on other's

experiences. This course requires that you participate in class discussions. This means that you contribute to class discussions by relating your experiences, asking questions, and making comments appropriate to the topics being discussed. You will also be required to do some readings about any social or political aspects of the French working culture and you should be ready to discuss them in class.

## **INTERVIEW PAPER**

Interview someone in a career that you are interested in exploring. Describe how you found this person, their responses, how you believe this job compares to a similar job in the U.S., and does this interview make you more or less interested in this field, why or why not?

### **Sample questions:**

What was this person's career path? What type of education do they have? What is their employment history? What types of tasks does this job include? What is the organizational culture and how is it to work within this culture? What is their advice for getting into this field?

## **REFLECTION WEEKLY REPORTS**

Reflection reports are required as part of your internship learning experience. The reports should be in the range of one to two pages explaining what you did, learned and observed during the past weeks. Your reports should not be just a listing of duties performed. You should use the report as a reflection tool. You should write down your thoughts and feelings as well as any interesting personal observations. You will be given a series of topics to help you think / analyze & write about your experience.

**During our class sessions you will have an opportunity to share those reflection reports with your classmates.**

## **SITE SUPERVISOR EVALUATION**

There will be a mid-term and final assessment of the student's performance by a site supervisor. The assessment is based on site supervisor's interaction with the student as well as feedback received from other staff that has had contact with the student. The mid-term evaluation will not affect the student's grade, but will help to strengthen and support the student throughout the rest of their internship. However, the final site supervisor assessment will count toward the student's final grade.

## **PORTFOLIO**

The portfolio is meant to "pull it all together". In writing this paper, draw upon your reports, interview, required readings, class discussions, discussions from colleagues at internship, and general observations. This paper should be around 5 to 6 pages. This paper has three sections: personal, workplace and intercultural awareness.

Reflect on everything you experienced and learned during your internship, then look back at your learning objectives and journal entries.

## **Personal**

- 1) Did you achieve your personal goals? Why or why not? What was challenging? What was easy? What did you learn and why does it matter? What will you do differently next time you start a new internship or job? Did you improve on the career competencies outlined in your internship report paper?
- 2) What makes you a good candidate for this job? Write down a job that you would like and respond to that interview question highlighting the three skills you have developed during the internship. How have you developed these skills over the course of your internship? Why are these skills important in your chosen career? If these skills are different from what you listed in your learning objectives, describe why and how this is the case at the end of this paper section.

## **Workplace**

Analyze the structure of the organization, role and duties performed in internship, and the organizations' position and its importance in your host culture. Include selection of work samples or other artifacts. Choose artifacts that reflect what you did as well as what you learned during your internship.

## **Intercultural awareness**

Critically assess intercultural differences and similarities from host to home culture. Describe two expectations you had about your country's work culture. Are these expectations similar or different than the U.S. work culture and why?

Compare your career in your host culture to the same one in the U.S. What are differences? What are similarities? Do you have a preference for one country's work norms over another one?

## **FINAL PAPER**

Write a 6 to 8 page reflection paper on a social / economic / political aspect (it can be linked to the problem of immigration, women struggle, secularism, unemployment in France...) of contemporary France with a comparison with the US. Use some articles we discussed in class as a starting point or any articles you will find interesting about the topic and write a full well-organized essay.

**Note: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus with adequate notice to the students.**

# Course Content

## Unit 1

- Quick presentation of the class: format, assessment and exam. Presentation of the Internship: rules, goals....
- Discussion on working values and the positive and negative aspects of the words “remuneration” and “travail” from Antiquity until today. Extracts from Le patron, le footballeur et le smicard
- Vocabulary Review
- Writing a CV in French + How to get ready for your interview
- HWK: Read the article “Beyond Borders: Leading Today’s Multicultural World”

## Unit 2

- Discussion of the article from Contemporary Leadership and Intercultural Competencies.
- Working conditions in France: different types of contracts, weekly hours, minimum wage, vacation. Students will see how it differs with the US and will discuss how it affects the two models of societies they are facing
- Preparation of the “Rallye”: survey about some aspects of the world of work. Students will go to different places to interview the community of Montpellier
- The CV is due that week

## Unit 3

- Rallye: meet with students at the fountain Les Trois Grâces on Place de la Comédie and then each group will start the survey.
- Intercultural and Goal Setting Paper is due that week. Students will start their Internship that week or next week

## Unit 4

- Oral report on the survey
- Social charges and Taxes in France: presentation of the French social system
- Movie: Ressources humaines

- Discussion about their first week on their Internship sites: observations? Questions? Challenges? Students start to work on their Journal

## Unit 5

- End of the movie: Ressources Humaines. Discussion
- Students will prepare their Interview to explore someone's career

## Unit 6

- Education in France: presentation of the 1881 / 1882 Jules Ferry's Laws to introduce our education system. Comparison between French and American school systems
- Movies "Entre les murs"

## Unit 7

- End of the movies followed by a discussion / debate
- "Laïcité" in the school systems and the French society in general. Discussion on the conflict / tensions between the French "laïque" republic and the Islamic religion. Students will read and discuss diverse articles to understand the major differences between France and the United States regarding secularism.
- The Interview is due that week

## Unit 8

- La France contestataire: Unions in France and the history of strikes in France

## Unit 9

### Mid Term

## Unit 10

- End of student's Internship. The portfolio is due that week.
- Immigration in France and its impact on the world of work
- Cultural identity of the inhabitants of Montpellier and the Region (Harkis, Pieds-Noirs, Espagnols...). Movie about clandestine immigration, "Welcome".
- For next week: Students will have to look at Pôle Emploi's website and look for their future job. They will then analyze all the competencies they gained during their



Internship and see how they can present all those competencies for their new job opportunities

## Unit 11

- Each student will have mock interviews (for the job they found on Pôle Emploi)
- End of the movies about clandestine immigration, “Welcome”, followed by a discussion & debate in class.

## Unit 12

- Gender and the workplace: the place of women in the active population (history, struggle for parity).

## Unit 13

- Final projects are due that week. Student will present them in class

# Policies

## Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

## University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

### Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

### Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found [on the Learning Abroad Center website](#).