

Nicole Brown

English 461: Internship and Professional Identity

Syllabus

Eng 461

Prof. Nicole Brown

Office hours: W/W 2:30 p.m.- 4 p.m. and by appointment

Welcome to Internship in English. I look forward to working with you this quarter. This syllabus provides you with key information on various aspects of the course. Please read it over carefully. If you have any questions or need further elaboration, let me know.

Description: This course provides you with the experience of interning as a writer in a professional setting and participating in weekly seminar meetings. The seminar meetings are designed to contribute to your internship experience by providing you with regular opportunities to discuss observations, challenges, and accomplishments that arise for you in your internship. The seminar also offers you professional development sessions including information about: transitioning from academic to nonacademic contexts, approaching problem-solving, developing a professional identity as a writer, and other topics relevant to your personal internship experience. In addition, the course provides the opportunity to share strategies and activities from your internship, as well as articulate and develop your professional identity as a writer.

Writing is a fundamentally social activity. The most effective and most valued writers in professional contexts are those who are able to use social knowledge for two purposes: to recognize the key aspects of an organizational culture and to contribute effectively to the organizational culture; and to offer new ideas that improves the culture and work practices of the organization.

In English 461, you will develop skills in “reading”—or recognizing and analyzing—the culture of your particular organization, and you will apply this knowledge to contribute to the organization’s work and eventually identify possibilities for innovation. As the quarter proceeds, you will have opportunities to think in terms of a social perspective when working on writing tasks in your organization and will be better prepared to develop and apply social knowledge and analytic abilities in future professional experiences.

Course Structure: The course is divided into four parts (though there will be some overlap). Here is the tentative schedule:

- Getting started with the internship (weeks 1-2)
- Organizational analysis and strategies for social integration (3-4)
- Professional writing practices (weeks 3-5)
- Organizational analysis and strategies for processes of change & innovation (weeks 5-7)
- Professional Writing Portfolio (weeks 6-10)
- Presentations and Reflections on the internship experience (week 10)

Note: I may decide to change this schedule somewhat, if I feel that doing so will benefit the class.

Materials: Course materials will come from a variety of sources: journals, books, interdisciplinary texts, brochures, web sites, and a wide-range of other documents. Some of these materials will be made available to you via course reserve. However, you are primarily responsible for collecting a large number of materials based upon your professional interests/goals in the class and the demands of your internship. You will acquire and share readings relevant to the internship experiences being discussed in class.

These readings will be archived as a part of your Internship & Reading Journal.

Grading:

Progress on goals negotiated with your host organization 25%

Professional Portfolio 25%

Internship & Reading Journal 10%

Presentation on Internship Experience 15%

Written Report on Internship Experience 15%

In-class Activities and Discussion 10%

The grading scale for the course is 100-93 = A, 92-90 = A-, 89-87 = B+, 86-83 = B, 82-80 = B-, 79-77 = C+, 76-73 = C, 72-70 = C-, 69-67 = D+, 66-63 = D, 62-60 = D-

Policies

Regular attendance is required. If you do need to miss a class for some reason, please send me an e-mail message—beforehand if possible—explaining your situation. You will be receiving a schedule indicating when written assignments are due; please hand the assignments in on time. Extensions will only be granted under necessary circumstances and only if you contact me before the due date. You must complete all the assigned written work and participate actively in class discussions to pass the course.

You do not need to type your Internship & Reading Journal, but be sure to use a loose-leaf folder if you hand-write entries so that you can remove pages. All other written work must be typed.

You will be expected to approach your internship as responsibly as a regular employee. By taking on the internship, you are making a commitment to go to work when expected, to notify your contact in the host organization if you must miss a day or be late, and to fulfill all your job responsibilities to the best of your ability. Your organization will expect you to demonstrate a fully professional work ethic.

You will also be expected to demonstrate flexibility—a willingness to accommodate your fellow workers and to adapt to the particular conditions of your work environment. Please treat your host organization with tact and respect. This might entail, for example, keeping confidential information to yourself or not to showing proprietary (company-owned) materials to anyone. Host organizations have the option of terminating your internship at any time (though this is extremely unlikely to happen). Keep in mind that regular and prompt attendance at your worksite at the expected times will be the minimum requirement for fulfilling your organization's expectations.

Times I may communicate (phone or visit) with your host organization:

- At the beginning of the quarter to confirm the arrangement
- At mid-quarter to discuss your work to that point and to confirm your goals for the internship
- At the end of the quarter to ask evaluate the progress you have made towards your goals.

Let's work together to get the very most possible from your internship and from the seminar!