

Externship in Travel and Culture

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Course Description

"Travel is broadening," goes the old saying. Indeed it is. Leaving behind familiar food, language and customs offers the traveler not only an awareness of a new place and the way its people live, but a heightened awareness of home. This Externship offers students insight into another culture through travel with one of SNL's travel-study programs or through exploration of another culture as experienced in immigrant life and/or cultural experiences (literature, music, and so forth) in the United States.

Like traveling, learning is a journey. It involves beginning from a place of comfort and familiarity, moving into the unknown, then returning to the place of origin, changed and renewed. As with travel, there is often discomfort along the way in learning, because soothing normal routines have been stripped away. Yet since the dawn of time humans have explored new terrain intellectually as well as geographically, because the journey of learning holds excitement as well as discomfort. In this class, we will use the metaphor of the learning journey to illuminate the connections between travel and education.

Any Externship requires considerable independent learning. Externship is a unique feature of the School for New Learning's degree programs, offering students a way to learn through experience and to reflect on the way that learning takes place. Using the Kolb Learning Styles Inventory, the course asks students to understand their own preferred learning style and then to learn about a selected culture using a different learning style.

Externship in Travel and Culture brings together students taking part in SNL's travel-study program with those who wish to learn about a new culture but who are unable to join the touring group. Both travelers and armchair travelers are joined by their interest in exploring a specific culture (China, Ireland, Africa, and others; course content depends upon the travel program offered that term). Both groups of students are united as well by the Externship process, which asks students to become familiar with their own preferred learning style and to design a learning experience that uses a less-preferred style.

Travelers will post descriptions and photos from the tour, allowing those at home to compare and contrast the immigrant experience with the original homeland. Most importantly, both groups share the experience of exploring learning styles using the Kolb Learning Styles Inventory. The final products for all students are two learning journals, one of which describes the learning activities undergone, the other of which reflects upon the experience.

Course Learning Goals

After completing this course, you will be able to:

L-10: Can reflect on the learning process and methods used in an experiential project.

To show competence in reflection on learning process, you should:

- Take the Kolb Learning Styles Inventory (if taken within two years, this requirement is waived, providing you can find the original test results; if the test has not been taken within two calendar years or the results cannot be found, you must retake the test).
- Write weekly short essays on announced topics related to learning styles, which together will comprise a learning reflection journal.
- Post portions of the essays above in online discussion forums.
- Expand essays to include consideration of individual questions addressed by instructor to you regarding learning styles.
- Post at least two reflective responses to other's comments each week.

To show competence in learning methods, you should:

- With the guidance of the instructor, select a learning method that differs from your preferred or typical learning style/method.
- Design a learning project that employs this new style/method.
- Execute a learning project using the new style/method.
- Document that execution in the Learning Experience Journal.
- Working with an assigned group of other students, create statements of the benefits and liabilities of the preferred and the selected learning styles.

L-11: Can design and execute an experiential learning project related to the culture of Ireland.

To show competence in the design of an experiential project, you should:

- Prepare an Externship Worksheet and submit it to your instructor for comment via the Assignments area of the course website. The worksheet should state specifically what Learning Experiences you have selected for the completion of your Externship.
- If necessary, revise and resubmit your revised worksheet to your instructor via the Assignments area of the course website.
- Upon instructor approval, prepare your Externship Proposal and submit it via the Assignments area of the course website.
- Send a copy of Externship Proposal form to your faculty mentor (the faculty member who taught your Foundations of Adult Learning course); no action is required by faculty mentor.
- If you are traveling, the Worksheet and Proposal above must be completed before departure; if you are not traveling, both must be completed before any Learning Experiences are undertaken.

To show competence in the execution of the experiential learning project, you should:

Document in writing all learning experiences, which must be completed by Week Nine; photographic documentation is acceptable as supplementary, but not as primary, documentation.

Course Resources

Required Text

Monaghan, P. (Ed.). (2002). *Irish Spirit: Pagan, Celtic, Christian, Global*, Dublin: Wolfhound Press. ISBN: 0863278752

Text is available from the online bookstore at <http://www.mbsdirect.net>

Kolb Learning Styles Inventory

All SNL students take the Kolb Learning Styles Inventory as part of Foundations. If you have taken Foundations in the last two years, please locate the Kolb test and review its results. If you have not taken Foundations in the past two years or cannot locate the test results, please take the test again and review the descriptions of your learning style.

Kolb Learning Style Inventory booklets can be ordered from the online bookstore at <http://www.mbsdirect.net>

Web Pages

<http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/experience.htm>

<http://homepage.eircom.net/~kthomas/history.htm>

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/socst/grade3/whatisa.html>

<http://www.connemara.net/history/part1.php>

http://www.absolutewrite.com/novels/self_editing.htm

<http://infohost.nmt.edu/~cpc/syntax/>

<http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:2dKVyYJHAp0J:www.zeta.org.au/~mls/MStevens.rtf+prose+editing+techniques&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=33&ie=UTF-8>

Course Competences

In this course, you will develop the following competences:

Competence	Competence Statement
L-10	Can reflect on the learning process and methods used in an experiential project.
L-11	Can design and execute an experiential learning project related to the culture of a particular country or region.

Course: Externship (pre-requisite: Research Seminar)

The Externship is designed to give you an opportunity to focus on the dynamics of learning from direct experience in new situations.

1. Identify and explain a personal learning goal;
2. Identify and select learning opportunities to support the goal;
3. Select and employ methods to achieve the desired learning goal;
4. Explain the interrelationship between one's own profile as a learner and one's strengths and weaknesses as a

learner.

5. Explain the nature and outcomes of this particular learning experience.

These specific criteria make clear that the emphasis in Externship is on thoughtful reflection about how learning occurs from an individual's interaction with an environment. The learning environment you choose for the basis of your Externship can vary with your own needs and preferences.

How the Competences will be Demonstrated in this Course

- L-10: Can reflect on the learning process and methods used in an experiential project.
- L-11: Can design and execute an experiential learning project related to the culture of Ireland.

Externship is a unique part of the SNL program. As students move through the program, they are encouraged to become more aware of themselves as learners with both natural talents and challenges. One theoretical underpinning of the SNL program, the Kolb Learning Cycle, is used in this class to encourage student understanding of themselves and others in terms of learning styles and to provide a framework for analyzing ways of improving learning efficiency and efficacy.

Externship requires that a student select a specific area of interest and design a learning experience encompassing that area of interest. The learning experience must employ a new learning style, one different from the one typically used. In addition, the subject the student learns must be something new, because one learns differently in an area of expertise.

Finally, the Externship student keeps two linked journals about the experience, both employing a free-writing style to encourage exploratory rather than expository writing. In other words, the student writes about experience as it is being experienced, seeking meaning from it, rather than waiting until the process is complete and reporting on it retrospectively. The two journals both record the process, with one focusing on the external (Learning Experience Journal) and the other, the internal part of the process (Learning Reflection Journal). During the final portion of the Externship, the student edits the private and personal journals into public documents.

Externship is designed to prepare students for the final project that SNL students undertake: the Advanced Project. Because the Advanced Project is entirely self-designed and produced outside the structure of a class, this Externship helps prepare the student for that final project in three ways.

- First, its structure (proposal, exploratory writing and research, final editing) roughly parallels the Advanced Project process.
- Secondly, the writing required of Externship students gives them experience in creating a lengthy document without a pre-existing format.
- Finally, the requirements of creating and executing a self-designed learning project prepares students for the unstructured experience of the Advanced Project in the Focus Area.

Learning Activities

Kolb Learning Styles Inventory

The inventory should be taken within the last two years. This test is taken as part of Foundations, but if you took that class more than two years ago or cannot locate the scoring sheet, you must re-take it within the first week of Externship. This test provides the theoretical basis for the development of the learning activities for this course.

The test booklet is available from the online bookstore at <http://www.MBSDirect.net>

Learning Experiences Journal

This should contain approximately 15 pages of description of your learning experiences. You should plan on five learning experiences, so the journal will be based on approximately three pages of description of each. This assignment develops analytic and descriptive writing skills, provides an opportunity for personal reflection, and provides data for group discussion and analysis. It also enables experiential learning through writing as a means of exploration rather than just as a way to report findings. You will begin the journal as a piece of private writing and develop it by term's end into a public document. Students who participate in the travel portion of this class will probably engage in most learning Experiences while on the trip, which is typically between ten days and two weeks long; they should plan to document the selected five Experiences.

Learning Reflection Journal

This should contain approximately 15 pages of reflection on learning styles based on the Kolb Learning Styles Inventory, following guided writing prompts found in this course guide. This assignment develops analytic and reflective thinking as well as exploratory writing. In addition, it provides data for group discussion.

Group Discussion Project

Each student will be assigned to a group depending on preferred learning styles. Each group will develop a list of benefits and challenges of each learning style. This assignment develops collaborative learning as well as enhancing analytic and critical thinking.

Course Structure

This course consists of ten modules. The estimated time to complete each module is one week.

To view the course schedule, click on the Schedule link on the left-hand navigation bar. This page contains the most recently updated listing of the topics and assignments due for each week of the course.

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Assessment

Assessment Criteria

General Assessment Criteria for All Assignments

The following are criteria for receiving a passing grade. The criteria for passing require that:

- You participate consistently and constructively by completing all learning activities, the readings and assignments by their due dates.
- You submit your final papers by the due date.
*Note that, for each, a first submission and a revised submission are required. The first submission is considered a draft that has been re-written and revised by the student before it is handed in. It is not considered an initial draft. Instructor will comment on content and may require revisions, either substantive or minor.
- You consistently, actively, and in a timely fashion, participate in the online discussions.

Assessment Criteria for Reading and Writing Assignments

- Your participation and advance in terms of concepts and competencies will be assessed in the weekly discussion forums and assignments.

Course Grading Scale

Externship is graded on a PA/F basis. There are no letter grades for this course. To complete the two competences that comprise Externship, you must complete all the work assigned during the course of the term. Those who do not complete their work are given an F unless there are mitigating circumstances.

Externship is a competence that asks students to learn how to learn efficiently and how to appropriately document that learning. Students who have difficulty organizing their time for Externship are likely to have a very difficult time completing Advanced Project, which is an entirely independent project with no structure other than that built by the student. Students who cannot complete Advanced Project cannot be awarded a degree. By the time of Externship, students have come far along their learning journey and should be aware of the need to prioritize time for learning. Thus no "R" grades are awarded in this Externship class.

For SNL courses taken for PA/F, a grade of PA represents an "A" for the purposes of employer reimbursement and financial aid.

Online Discussion

Assessment Criteria for Online Discussion Participation

- In the online discussions you should clearly and consistently link what you are learning in the course to your real life experiences.
- Specifically, in order to receive credit for your participation in the online discussion parts of the course it is important that:
 - You are able to contribute to the online discussions in a collegial fashion. Begin your contributions by addressing your peer students, maintain a kind and collegial tone, and close with your signature.
 - You regularly demonstrate good "listening" skills and active inquiry skills in the online discussions. This means that you pay attention with openness to the commentary of others and you offer constructive and interested commentary, whether in the form of questions or statements.
 - You contribute your own original ideas to the online discussion in ways that facilitated learning for other people.

Online Participation Guidelines for this course

The following guidelines may encourage you to be active and critical in your participation, only together we will make this course a significant and pleasant learning experience:

- Post your response to the discussion assignments in the first part of the week, in the second part of the week post comments to the other students.
- Discuss critically, give support to your peers, provide own ideas and experiences, challenge the ideas of others in a friendly fashion. You should not consider it sufficient to simply say "I agree" or "I have had the same experience" without following that comment with details and specifics.

The role of the instructor, to make it easy for you to interact, is to promote significant discussion, to give feed back on your postings and offer help where needed.

At the beginning of the quarter, your instructor will set up two discussion forums. These two forums will help you and your classmates get off to an immediate start on the course, by providing conversational spaces for necessary, ongoing discussion and administrative activities. These discussions are:

- Introductions
- Course Q&A

The Q&A discussion is where the management and administrative tasks of the course are conducted, and where you can ask 'process' questions and receive answers. You will also find the schedule of specific dates for your course in this discussion.

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Policies

Academic Integrity

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html> for further details.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a major form of academic dishonesty involving the presentation of the work of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following:

- The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else's.
- Copying of any source in whole or part with only minor changes in wording or syntax, even with acknowledgement.
- Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment that has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency.
- The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

Plagiarism, like other forms of academic dishonesty, is always a serious matter. If an instructor finds that a student has plagiarized, the appropriate penalty is at the instructor's discretion.

Disability Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis. The Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) determines appropriate accommodations through consultation with the student. For certain learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders, the Productive Learning Strategies Program (PLuS) determines the appropriate accommodations. See the instructor for more information or call OSD at 773-325-7290 (phone) or 773-325-7296 (TTY); or call PLuS at 773-325-1677.

Incomplete Grades

The intent of the Incomplete grade is to allow students extra time to complete their final assignments. This need arises because, in the closing weeks of the course, they have an event of significant magnitude that adversely affects their ability to complete the course, e.g. serious illness, death in the family, overseas deployment, or natural disaster.

You must request an incomplete grade in writing two weeks before the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades will be considered only after you have satisfactorily completed at least 75 percent of the coursework, and you have such an unexpected, uncontrollable event that prevents you from completing your course. Do not assume that you will qualify for an incomplete. Students who are failing the course at the point where they request an incomplete will not receive one, nor will they be granted after the end of the quarter. Incomplete grades are given at the discretion of the instructor.

If you do receive permission from the instructor to take an incomplete in the course, you will be required to complete a contract with the instructor, specifying how you will finish the missing work within the next two quarters (excluding summer). Incompletes not finished by the end of the second quarter (excluding summer) will automatically become an F grade on your transcript.

Instructors may not change incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee.

NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the incomplete must be resolved within the four week grace period before final degree certification.

Protection of Human Subjects

For more information see: <http://research.depaul.edu/>.

Demonstrating the acquisition of competences in this course can involve “interactions”—interviewing and or observing other people—discussing those interviews or observations with other class members and writing them up in one or more final report(s). As such, these activities qualify as “research” with “human subjects” and are subject to University and Federal guidelines. Because it takes place in the context of this course, your research is exempt from approval by the School for New Learning’s Local Review Board only under the following conditions:

1. The information you collect is EXCLUSIVELY for the purpose of classroom discussion and will NOT be used after the term is over. If there is any possibility that you will EVER use it in further research or for publication, you must obtain approval from the Local Review Board before you begin.
2. You assess and ensure that no “harm”—physical, mental, or social—does or could result from either your interviews and/or observations or your discussion and/or reports.
3. The privacy and confidentiality of those that you interview or observe must be protected. Unless you receive specific permission, in writing, from the person(s) you interview or observe, please change their names, and make sure that their identity cannot be readily ascertained from the information you provide.
 - a. If you want to use real names and relationships, they must sign an “informed consent” document. For information on creating an “informed consent document” see, for example, <http://www.research.umn.edu/consent>.

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Course Expectations

This is not an independent study course, but a paced online group learning experience. This study guide indicates 6 hours per week of your time to be spent on this course of ten weeks.

Please accept the challenge to work with others, to construct knowledge in negotiation with others. Working individually on the assignments and just posting them might not lead to significant knowledge and skills.

Time Management and Attendance

SNL's online courses are not self-paced and require a regular time commitment EACH week throughout the quarter.

You are required to log in to your course at least four times a week so that you can participate in the ongoing course discussions.

Online courses are no less time consuming than "face to face" courses. You will have to dedicate some time every day or at least every second day to your studies. A typical four credit hour "face to face" course at SNL involves three hours of classroom meeting per week, plus at least three to six hours of study and homework per week.

This course will require at least the same time commitment, but your learning activities will be spread out through the week. If you have any problems with your technology, or if you need to improve your reading or writing skills, it may take even longer.

The instructor should be notified if your life events do not allow you to participate in the course and the online discussions for more than one week. This is particularly important when there are group discussions or you are working as part of a team.

If you find yourself getting behind, please contact the instructor immediately.

Your Instructor's Role

Your instructor's role in this course is that of a discussion facilitator and learning advisor. It is not their responsibility to make sure you log in regularly and submit your assignments. As instructor, s/he will read all postings to the general discussion forums on a daily basis but may not choose to respond to each posting. You will receive feedback to assignments.

The instructor may choose to designate "office hours" when s/he will be online and available and will immediately respond to questions. Depending on the instructor, this response may be by e-mail, instant messenger or telephone. Otherwise, you will generally receive a response to emailed or posted queries within 48 hours.

Your Role as a Student

As an online student, you will be taking a proactive approach to your learning. As the course instructor's role is that of a learning guide, your role is that of the leader in your own learning.

You will be managing your own time so that you can complete the readings, activities and assignments for the course, and you will also be expected to take a more active role in peer learning.

Final Note

Participating in SNL courses can be an enriching, rewarding experience, and a chance to share ideas in a safe environment.

Some difficulties at the beginning of an online course are quite normal; solving them is part of every distance learning experience.

Enjoy the journey into lifelong learning!

Credits

This course was designed and produced by Dr. Patricia Monaghan and staff at the Center for Distance Education of the School for New Learning of DePaul University.

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