

Elizabethtown College

Department of Business Administration

**AC 471 Internship in Accounting  
Course Syllabus**

**Instructor:** Terrie L. Riportella, MBA, CPA  
225 Hoover Center  
(717) 361-3753  
email: riportellat@etown.edu

**Office Hours:** Vary by semester - Check the schedule card outside my office or contact me to schedule a time to meet if necessary

**Required Text:** None

**Pre and/or Co-requisites:**

Generally students seeking to receive course credits for an accounting internship must have either Jr./Sr. standing. The student should be either an Accounting major or a Business Major with a concentration in accounting and must have a GPA of at least 2.75 in the major. Exceptions to these guidelines need to be specially approved by the internship coordinator. The student must receive the consent of the Instructor and the placement must be pre-approved.

## Course Description

Classroom education cannot teach all the elements of knowledge required for a successful career in accounting. On the job experience can clearly enhance the students' learning and is a valuable supplement to classroom instruction. The purpose of this course is to engage students in the learning processes of reflection and analysis. It requires them to integrate the experiences and insights gained through their internships with the academic theory, principles, concepts, and social and ethical dimensions of the discipline and subject area. In addition to academic goals, this course, which combines abstract/theoretical and experiential learning, is intended to: further students' lifelong learning skills, enhance their professional and public speaking skills, strengthen their personal and professional values and ethics, clarify their personal and career goals, and develop their self-confidence.

## Student Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this internship, students should be able to:

1. Articulate not only their duties as interns, but also those of entry level professionals in the departments in which they were working
2. Describe how their internship projects related to their course work.
3. Describe the organizational structure of their internship site
4. Identify personal strengths and weaknesses to better prepare for initial employment
5. Express in writing how the internship experience relates to career/lifelong goals.

## Course Requirements

It is clear that the work done or a description of the field experience is not sufficient for academic credit; there must also be evidence of reflective analysis and interpretation of the experience which relates it to the basic theory in related areas. More specifically, students in this course must be able to connect different aspects of their internships with their prior academic preparations and to analyze, compare and evaluate these experiences. Students also need to demonstrate observation and recording skills, interpersonal communication skills, analytical skills, report writing skills, and oral presentation skills.

The specific requirements for the course are:

1. **Learning Contract:** Each student will develop a Learning Contract to be approved by the instructor. The Learning Contract will state the student's learning objectives, as well as itemize the specific types of experiences the student will be engaged in or will encounter through the internship. The contract must be submitted to the registrar after it is signed by 1) the student intern, 2) the employer/supervisor and 3) the supervising instructor. Deadline for approval and submission is the third Friday of the regular fall or spring term and early July for summer internships. For specific dates, see the Academic Calendar for the appropriate semester on the Registration and Records Website @ <http://www.etown.edu/offices/registration-records/index.aspx>. Instructions and examples to help you complete the Learning Contract can be found on the business department website at <http://www.etown.edu/depts/business/internships/coursework/index.aspx>
2. **Hours Required:** Each internship experience can be taken for up to 12 credits. The major factors in determining the internship credits that can be awarded are the amount of time spent at the internship and the academic work expected. To be awarded academic credit, students must work a minimum of 40 hours for each credit awarded. A student cannot earn more than 12 credits in total for all internships completed.
3. **Employer Information Sheet:** During the first week of the internship (or sooner), the student should have the employer fill out the employer information sheet and return it to the faculty sponsor.
4. **Bi-Weekly Reports:** Students should keep a daily journal exhibiting their internship experiences. (A brief note is attached to this syllabus to guide you in journal preparations). Each student should submit a copy of this journal to the faculty sponsor on a bi-weekly basis either electronically (preferable) or via hard copy. The bi-weekly report should reflect an analysis and synthesis regarding observations and experiences gained through the internship. The bi-weekly report is not just a record of what happened, but should include your own interpretations and analyses. In other words, when you observe something

and record it in your journal, also ask yourself: "What do I make of it? Why? How does it relate to other experiences? How does it relate to my courses?" Bi-weekly reports should be typed and about 2 - 3 pages in length. Each report should cover the preceding two weeks and is due by the Wednesday following the end of each 2 week employment period.

In addition to the journal, you also need to submit a running total of the hours you have worked at the internship each week. This hours log can be prepared in a simple excel spreadsheet that you add to each week. This report is used to be sure that you are on track with meeting the hours requirements for the credits that you are registered

5. **Internship Paper:** See separate guidelines for paper requirements which can be found on the business department website at <http://www.etown.edu/depts/business/internships/coursework/index.aspx>. Please note that if your internship is for 6 credits or more, there is a research component required as part of the paper. Your paper is due the **Wednesday of the last week of classes** so that there is time for review and revision (if necessary) before the end of the semester. For summer internships, papers are due the **Wednesday before the fall semester starts** at the latest.
6. **Supervisor Evaluation:** Your supervisor at your internship location will be asked to complete at least one evaluation of your performance throughout the internship. In order to pass the internship, this evaluation will need to exhibit that your performance was, at a minimum, satisfactory.
7. **Instructor Meetings:** Students may be asked to meet with the instructor throughout the internship. If deemed necessary, the instructor will contact you to schedule an appropriate time. You are always free to stop by your instructor's office or schedule a time to meet if you are having any concerns or issues related to the internship.

### **Course Assessment**

The internship will be graded on a pass/no pass basis. Credits for this course will count toward general electives, but not toward business core. If your specific curriculum requires an accounting elective, 4 credits may be applied to fulfill that elective. No credit will be given for an internship course on a retroactive basis.

To pass the course, you need to successfully fulfill the following requirements:

- 1) Meet the minimum hour requirement for the number of credits you applied for in the Learning Contract (40 hours for each credit)
- 2) Submit Bi-weekly logs and hours reports to the professor's satisfaction
- 3) Performance Evaluation – employer must indicate that you demonstrated satisfactory performance at a minimum
- 4) Paper – must complete to the professor's satisfaction. Inadequate reports may require a re-write prior to passing the course

### **Statement on Disability**

Elizabethtown College welcomes otherwise qualified students with disabilities to participate in all of its courses, programs, services, and activities. If you have a documented disability and would like to request accommodations in order to access course material, activities, or requirements, please contact the Director of Disability Services, Lynne Davies, by phone (361-1227) or e-mail [daviesl@etown.edu](mailto:daviesl@etown.edu). If your documentation meets the college's documentation guidelines, you will be given a letter from Disability Services for each of your professors. Students experiencing certain documented temporary conditions, such as post-concussive symptoms, may also qualify for temporary academic accommodations and adjustments. As early as possible in the semester, set up an appointment to meet with me, the instructor, to discuss the academic adjustments specified in your accommodations letter as they pertain to my class.

## **A Guideline to Keeping a Journal**

Keeping a journal will be an important part of your learning experience as an intern. By forcing you to think about what you are doing and what you are learning from it, the writing of a journal can increase the amount you actually learn. It can also make you aware of what you don't know, so that you can direct your efforts toward finding out.

You should write in your journal, at least briefly, every day that you work at your internship. Keeping current in your writing is important because it lets you keep track of how your perceptions and understanding change from day to day and week to week, thereby documenting your learning.

Your journal should include all of the following elements:

1. A daily log of what you do. This should be as brief as possible, but try to be precise rather than general. E.g., "research at the library on consumer attitude toward beer advertising" is better than "research on beer." If you worked on the same project or types of items several days in a row, I don't need you to list that repeatedly. Instead your journal for that period could indicate that "this week I worked on ....."
2. Questions. If there's something you want to know, write it down. If you later learn the answer, write that down, too--not necessarily on the same day. Curiosity is the first essential for learning, so the more questions, the better. Try to have at least one question every day that you work.
3. Insights, observations, perceptions, interesting incidents. After you have logged your day's activity, think about what it meant to you, what you got out of it, new things you noticed, etc.
5. Likes and dislikes--about the work, the office, the political system, the world, yourself.
6. New words. Once a week, write down any new terms you've learned during the week--or, if you've heard them but not understood what they meant, write that down. Learning specialized vocabulary is a big part of any field.