

Times: Thursdays 9/10, 10/22, 12/3; taught remotely via [Zoom](#) (password = internship)

Instructor: Professor Chris Schlottmann (cps236@nyu.edu). Office hours by appt [here](#)

Description and Purpose: The Environmental Studies Internship (ENVST-UA 800) will prepare students for their professional lives by providing them with experience in environment-related organizations such as non-profits, research institutes, and governmental organizations. At the beginning of the internship, students, the Instructor, and Site Supervisor will agree to a learning contract that establishes specific goals as well as a schedule for achieving them. Interns will meet collectively during the semester to share their experiences and to present brief reports. One of the primary purposes of the internship is to enhance your integrative skills. You will be exposed to new kinds of material and learning and will learn to integrate understanding from across disciplines and between theory and practice. This means that you are expected to perform different work than in a traditional class. The internship is fundamentally different than other undergraduate learning experiences in that it is more experiential, professional and applied. Experiential education is most productive when it is combined with reflective practice. To this end, we require continuous journal entries, and reflective papers for the midterm and final. The learning goals include improved analysis, professionalism, problem-solving skills, as well as basic skills. At the end of the internship, we hope that you will have: improved your ability to synthesize and integrate material from a range of disciplines; deployed diverse methodologies and vocabularies in an applied context; brought theoretical knowledge and skills to bear on practical problems; worked in teams; and communicated with a variety of audiences. Performing such tasks is indispensable in the professional world. Please set up your internship to optimize self-initiation, professionalism, and integration, and share your reflections on this learning process in your journals, midterms, and finals.

Learning Contract: The learning contract should include the following, totaling a minimum of 3 pages, 1.5-spaced, Times New Roman:

1. Name and email address for yourself, your Site Supervisor, and the Instructor.
2. Start and end dates (minimum of 8 hours/wk for the term).
3. Indicate that your internship is for academic credit as part of your ES major.
4. The nature and detail of the internship, including projects, tasks, and skills.
5. Intended learning goals, incl. at least 1 professional and 1 academic SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timely) goal.
6. At least three analytical questions about your internship.
7. How the internship relates to your course of study.

The purpose of the learning contract is to (1) foster reflection on experiential learning, to optimize the learning experience, (2) serve as a contract should the internship change form, and (3) serve as an assessment tool. The learning contract should be approved by your site supervisor, then approved by me, before starting the internship. Please send me an electronic copy when it is approved. It can be revised one time as your responsibilities and goals develop (by the midterm meeting at the latest). Since feedback from your site to me is not shared with you, please solicit qualitative feedback from your site supervisor throughout the semester.

Readings: Please read the articles and chapters before writing your midterm and final, and incorporate any insights from those readings into your verbal and written reflections on the internship experience. For this semester, the readings include: John Dewey, *Experience and Education*, Bain "Learning How to Embrace Failure" and "Messy Problems," Freudenberg "Double Diversion," Kahan "Why we are poles apart on climate change," Lakoff "Why it Matters How We Frame the Environment," Saylan and Blumstein "Between Awareness and Action," Drum "Lead: A Criminal Element," Fennell "Are We all Flint?," Maniates "Individualization," and McDonald "Making the Most of Your Internship or Co-op Work Experience." I might add readings based on

class conversation. Readings are available on [NYU Classes](#), along with the syllabus. *Additionally, you will be required to find and use at least six peer-reviewed sources to complete your midterm paper, and eight for your final paper. Please use Chicago reference formatting with footnotes.*

Journals: You are required to write 1-page reflective journal entries a minimum of twice per month, totaling at least 10 pages, 1.5-spaced. The purpose is to structure the reflective process, so journals can be in draft form. Consolidate them as one document along with your final paper and email it to me by the last class at 11am. Between all of the entries, please describe your professional and personal development. Include new knowledge, insights, values, interests, and aptitudes as well as communication, interpersonal, organizational and other skills. Include perceived strengths and weaknesses of your performance.

Midterm Paper and Presentation: The midterm paper is a 6-page (1.5 line spacing, 12-point Times New Roman font) reflection including (1) what your goals for the second half of the semester are, (2) a detailed analysis of progress on one academic goal from your learning contract, (3) a detailed analysis of progress on one professional goal from your learning contract, and (4) a detailed response to one analytical question, developed over at least 2 pages and including references. *Please number the paper, and avoid introductions and conclusions.* Your class participation will cover all of these points. Midterms, which should follow the numbers above, are due by the midterm class by 11am in my email inbox. You are also required to meet with me by this date to review your progress.

Final Paper: In 8 pages (1.5 line spacing, 12-point Times New Roman font), please reflect on your semester's internship and your success in reaching the learning goals spelled out in the learning contract. *Please number your final paper, and avoid introductions and conclusions.* Please include the following: (1) a detailed description of the skills and insights you have acquired. Please specifically discuss the areas of (1a) integration, (1b) self-initiation, (1c) professionalism, and (1d) application; (2) respond to three analytical questions in your learning contract (min. of 1 page each); (3) how this educational experience differs from others (reference all of the readings on experiential learning); (4) make three explicit, referenced links to content or concepts in your ES classes; (5) discuss how environmental groups operate, succeed (or not), and their place in resolving environmental problems; (6) name one learned trait that would apply to a different professional context; (7) detail areas for professional improvement, and as it relates to your academic course of study; (8) describe how the internship has informed your post-graduation plans.

The goal is more than just describing what you did, but also reflecting on how you've learned from your site (including any insight on your own learning style and strengths), what you have learned about how environmental projects are undertaken (and how environmental groups operate), and how you see this experience relating to your classroom-based understanding of environmental studies. Finals are due by the last class day by 11am in my email inbox. I will confirm receipt. You will also be asked to complete an online form intended to help future interns select sites. All written assignments are read only by me, not your site supervisor.

Final Presentation: In 15 minutes, please present on at least three of the following:

(1) your learning successes and areas for improvement this semester, (2) any insights about how environmental groups operate, succeed (or not), and their place in resolving environmental problems (using the analytical questions below), (3) what the strengths and weaknesses of the site were (i.e., what students want to intern there?), (4) outcomes of your analysis resulting from the analytical questions.

Practice your presentation with a timer at least once, to ensure that you cover your key points in the allotted time. As always, please feel free to send me any feedback at all on your internship experience - including reflections, sharing an interesting experience or project, thoughts on your site-specific experience, and any

advice you have for future interns on improving the internship experience. Future interns might be invited.

Analytical Questions (examples): How is your group structured? What scale does it work at? How does it conceive of environmental change? What assumptions, strengths and weaknesses does this have? How do they approach, frame, communicate and solve environmental problems? What are their conceptions of nature and environmental goods? How is your group financed/supported? How does that impact the pursuit of its mission and staffing? What is the group's relationship w/ the community? How is performance assessed (is it)?

Assessment: The purpose of the internship experience is more than just to expose you to the experience of working on a project, however important this is. John Dewey writes that:

The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative....Any experience is miseducation that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience....A given experience may increase a person's automatic skill in a particular direction and yet tend to land him in a groove or rut; the effect again is to narrow the field of further experience. (Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 1938, p. 25–26)

The learning contract, presentations, and writing assignments are designed to foster reflective analysis on your experiential learning. This includes integrating the experience into your academic studies (by comparing it to your classroom-based understanding of the environment), applying your academic studies to understanding the problem, and advancing your understanding of interdisciplinary subject matter. These insights, including specific references to the reading, should be integrated into your assignments.

Your grade is constituted by: timely placement (10%), learning contract (15%), midterm meeting (10%), written midterm (15%), final meeting (10%), written final (25%), and journals, including the online form (15%). Sites give me descriptive feedback of student performance relative to your learning contract which, per CAS guidelines, cannot be graded, but which will inform your written work. Assignments should reach the required length and be handed in on time; you will lose points if they are shorter or later (.3 grade points per day late) than assigned, or don't follow the prompts precisely. Since these are brief assignments, it is of the utmost importance that they are excellent, complete, and reflective in order to receive a high grade. Please remain in constant contact with your site supervisor to solicit feedback on your performance relative to your learning contract, especially around midterms.

Methods of Evaluation: Please note that a grade of "A" is for exceptional work that not only meets, but exceeds, the expectations of your NYU and supervisors. This is not an easy class! The internship is a hybrid professional-academic course, so is assessed somewhat differently than normal class. We have very high expectations of ES majors, and assess you accordingly. The instructor will assess learning progress mid-semester by discussing your performance with your site supervisor. Interns will also be assessed at the end of the semester by the Instructor and the internship site supervisor, and through the completion of journals, midterm and final papers, and presentations. Grading is based on your progress towards your goals as spelled out in the learning contract.

Plagiarism and Academic Support: Plagiarism results in failure in the class and referral to your academic dean. It includes: copying sentences or fragments from any source without quotes and references; not citing a source used in your papers; citing internet information without proper citation; presenting someone else's work as your own; or inadvertently copying verbatim from any source. More detail can be found at cas.nyu.edu/content/nyu-as/cas/academic-integrity.html. NYU offers academic support and tutoring at the ULC (nyu.edu/cas/ulc; 212-998-8085). Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should

please register with the Moses Center (212-998-4980; 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor; www.nyu.edu/csd).