ENGL 40273: Writing Internship
Spring 2013

Instructor: Carrie Leverenz
Office: 126 Reed Hall
Office hours: T 11-1, Th 11-12 and by appt.
E-mail: c.leverenz@tcu.edu
Mailbox: 126 Reed

Overview
Students with 60 credit hours and a 2.8 GPA in English and in all courses can receive workplace experience (and, depending on agency policy, sometimes a stipend) from companies or agencies in publishing, advertising, or other fields. Duties are arranged to fit each student’s schedule, and work opportunities may include research gathering, editing, report writing, social networking, web authoring, or document production. Students need to work a minimum of 8 hours a week during the semester to receive three hours of credit. The internship may help with career decisions; it may lead to full time employment; it answers questions about what certain jobs are like; helps to test writing abilities for various audiences in the workplace; provides on-the-job experience; and challenges certain personal assumptions or views a student may have about workplace behavior. Your work for 40273 is a space to demonstrate and reflect upon the kinds of written and oral communication done in a professional setting.

NOTE: You should set up your internship before the semester begins so you’re ready to start work no later than the second week of the semester.

Course Outcomes:
• Students will gain professional writing and/or editing experience.
• Students will reflect informally with their classmates and formally with their instructor upon their experiences writing and working as professionals.
• Students will assemble a writing portfolio that showcases their writing/editing abilities.

Requirements:
1) Work a minimum of EIGHT hours a week (120 hours/semester) for company or agency: You and your agency supervisor will decide the schedule for these hours, but it should come out to at least 120 hours for the semester. This part of the course will be negotiated between you and your supervisor, but remember that these hours are also a requirement for doing well in the course. Failure to work the full 120 hours will lower your final grade and may result in an “F” for the course.

2) Twelve Online Postings on our eCollege Site: We’ll have an eCollege discussion board, beginning January 21. Plan on checking the eCollege site for announcements and postings at least once a week. Because we won’t meet as a class, we’ll interact with one another on the discussion board. You’ll be responsible for twelve substantive responses (1-2 paragraphs) posted weekly throughout the semester. These responses may be posted any time during the week but are due on Mondays by noon; you will not receive full credit if your posts are late or overly brief. These posts should be thoughtful and help us move the conversation forward—that is, they should be interactive, based not only on your experiences but on your reading of and response to others’ posts. I’ll provide prompts for most of these postings, but at least once during the semester, I’ll invite you to provide a prompt about an issue raised in the context of your internship. For example, you might ask for feedback on writing or other work you’re doing, or prompt a discussion about professional writing as a career (comparing jobs with each other), about
interpersonal issues that can arise in job situations, or about how writing for work differs from classroom writing. You may also wish to share ideas or give feedback on your portfolio.

✓ Three Conferences with Me: Three times during the semester, you’ll be responsible for making an appointment to visit with me in my office about the progress of the internship and the work you’re producing for the course. Mark your calendars now, so you don’t forget. You’re also welcome to contact me at other times throughout the semester, of course, if issues arise you’d like to discuss. You’ll be in charge of our conference—be prepared with any questions, ideas, etc
  o Meeting 1 during the first week of the semester (Jan. 15-22). In this meeting, we’ll discuss requirements for the internship and make sure all forms have been signed
  o Meeting 2 at mid-semester (Feb. 25-Mar 8) In this meeting we’ll discuss your work so far, review at least one piece of writing, and discuss final portfolio requirements.
  o Meeting 3 in the last two weeks of class (Apr 22-May 1). We’ll review a draft of your final portfolio.

✓ Final Project/Portfolio: Due Monday, May 6 by 4pm. Portfolios may be submitted electronically to the course website or delivered to my department mailbox in the English Department office, Reed 314. Late portfolios will be downgraded. The kind of portfolio you produce is largely dependent on the kind of work you’ll do for your agency or company, but each portfolio should include these SEVEN items:

1. A Table of Contents for the Portfolio.

2. A permission form signed by you and your supervisor if you’re willing to let me use your comments about the internship or examples of your work for instructional or PR purposes. The form is available on eCollege.

3. An assessment letter from your agency supervisor unless s/he prefers to email it directly to me. Guidelines for writing this assessment are available on eCollege for you to send to your supervisor.

4. A self-assessment cover letter in which you reflect upon both the work you’ve done throughout the semester and the work in the portfolio. (You may use things you’ve written in your discussion posts to create this letter.) I would also like you to include one piece of advice (label it as such) for future interns. Samples are posted on our eCollege site.

5. A formal, one-page description of your internship on company/agency letterhead (if available). The purpose of this description is to inform prospective interns, helping them decide which internships they’re most interested in. Begin with a description of what your agency is/does—often the agency’s mission statement—followed by a list of typical tasks an intern might be asked to do and a list of any special skills, etc. required for the job. These might include anything from proficiency with specific software programs to weekend availability or willingness to travel to office attire to work habits. This description must be approved by your supervisor. Samples are posted on our eCollege site.

6. A Daily/Weekly Log where you document the work you do. This log should reflect an average of 8 hours work per week
7. **Samples of the writing done for the agency** (PR materials, newsletters, emails, press releases, editing on proofs, articles, research notes and drafts, websites, blog posts, etc.). You don’t need to include every piece of work you’ve done, but **this is the heart of the portfolio and should demonstrate the amount, the range, and the quality** of your writing/editing projects. For instance, if you’re working as a TCU Press editor, include catalog copy or press releases, author queries, any work with photos or illustrations, and a full document or a substantial book chapter (20-30 pp.), showing the edits you’ve done; and if you’ve worked on very distinct projects, say a novel and nonfiction text, include selections from both. The immediate purpose of this portfolio is to show me the work you’ve done this semester, but your ultimate purpose is to collect writing samples that will impress someone enough to hire you. In other words, I am not the only—or even the most important—audience for your writing portfolio.

**Evaluation**
The grade for the internship will be based on the workplace evaluation, your discussion board participation, and your final portfolio; fulfilling the workplace requirements is necessary to receive a good grade for the course as is producing a substantial portfolio of writing. If either of these two is lacking, it will be difficult to get a good grade. A high grade (B+ or A) is achieved with high assessment from your supervisor and an excellent portfolio, which demonstrates both professional writing and an examination and reflection of professional writing. Your portfolio will be graded holistically, meaning that all of the work in the portfolio and your participation in eCollege will be taken into account, and you’ll receive just one grade for the course.

**Academic Misconduct (Sec. 3.4 from the Student Handbook)** – Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. The procedures used to resolve suspected acts of academic misconduct are available in the offices of Academic Deans and the Office of Campus Life. Specific examples include, but are not limited to:

- **Cheating:** Copying from another student’s test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings; Using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test; Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or laboratory without permission; Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release; Substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself;

- **Plagiarism:** The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another’s work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one’s own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another’s work without giving credit therefore.

- **Collusion:** The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

**Disabilities Statement** (approved Fall 2007 by the Undergraduate Council, revised Fall 2010):
Texas Christian University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Eligible students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services in the Center for Academic Services located in Sadler Hall, 11. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-7486.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations and accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact the Coordinator as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are
seeking accommodations. *Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator.* Guidelines for documentation may be found at [http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp](http://www.acs.tcu.edu/disability_documentation.asp).

Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their instructor/professor as soon as possible.