Communication Practicum

Fall 2016
Copenhagen
3 Credits

Major Disciplines: Communication

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Tuesdays, 13.15-14.35, N7-C22

Course Description
What is it like to work with communication in Denmark? This practicum is a unique chance to build your resume and gain hands-on experience in the field of communication. You will become part of a professional workplace in Copenhagen and get a rare chance to apply your knowledge and skills, while engaging in an extraordinary learning experience.

This course is a site-specific practicum combined with a seminar forum. In short, it is a chance for you to combine time spent in class with time at your designated company. You meet periodically with your DIS faculty and peers to reflect on your practicum and compare the different experiences and companies. Our seminars include supervision and are a safe space for continuous critical reflection through theoretically informed discussions that build on your professional experience and your hands-on experience. The seminars enable you to analyze and explore the current Danish communication field and put your own work experience into a broader perspective.

The practicum is framed by an individual reflective journal that you create and maintain during the practicum. The aim is to develop your professional communication skills, enhance critical thinking and give you a cross-cultural learning experience in a professional Danish work environment.
Course Faculty: Dorte Mari Aggergaard

M.A. in Modern Culture and Communication (The University of Copenhagen), BA in Educational Studies and Art History (The University of Copenhagen, Roskilde University and University of Leeds, UK). Dorte Mari Aggergaard has been a visiting research scholar at Brown University and her work experience include the Safer Internet Programme under the European Commission, the Media Council for Children and Young People in Denmark, The University of Copenhagen, Roskilde University, start-ups, consultant work for EU projects and being a member of an advisory board network.

Guest lectures and field studies can include

- Newspapers and media providers, including broadcasting companies
- Journalists, bloggers and editors
- Digital and media agencies

Learning Objectives

- To gain professional experience
- To gain hands-on insight into the professional communication culture in Denmark
- To reflect upon practice as compared to academic learning
- To test skills and methods learned in academia in a professional environment
- To prepare you for an effective transition to practice in the future
- To compare working cultures and practices of Denmark to that of the US

Note

- You practicum times take place outside of your DIS course schedule
- The total amount of practicum hours for the semester is forty hours (10 x 4 hours)
- You meet with your DIS faculty eight times during the semester

Course Readings

Relevant supplementary reading materials are uploaded onto Canvas.

Journal

You will maintain a journal that documents and analyzes your work experience. Journals are reviewed during the semester by your instructor. The purpose is for you to reflect and summarize your practicum experiences through writing both open-ended and directed analytical reflections. Every visit to your company is followed by a reflection in your journal with your key takeaways, observations, ideas, suggestions or perhaps something you found puzzling, surprising or gave you new perspectives and insights.

Expectations of the Students

The first time you meet with your practicum site, you and the site will agree on your working times for the semester. You are expected to work for the company at the times you have agreed upon and to conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times. You should see yourself as a representative of both of DIS and your home institution and behave accordingly. The journal is actively maintained throughout the semester and you should be well prepared for each class and participate actively.
Evaluation and Grading
Grades are based on the following:
• 20% Participation and engagement
• 30% Journal
• 20% Article about the practicum site including interviews with colleagues (3 pages - 900 words) Deadline November 15 (upload pdf to Canvas)
• 30% Final reflection paper (4 pages, 1200 words - 25%) and an outline (1 page - 5%) Deadline December 5 (upload pdf to Canvas)

**To be eligible for a passing grade in this class you must complete all of the assigned work**

Participation & Engagement (20%)
Attendance is mandatory for all scheduled classes, field studies and forty practicum hours. Each un-excused absence will result in deduction of half a letter grade. **This includes regular class sessions, evening events, and field studies, as well as guest lectures and at your practicum site**

Before class: You are expected to complete the required readings prior to each class and keep track on the hours you have worked at your practicum site.

During class: Classes will be very hands on and you are expected to bring your talent, experience and thoughts to the table. Please be well prepared for active and verbal participation in theoretically informed class discussions, activities, field studies and in-class exercises. You will be asked - individually or with partners in our class - to lead assigned tasks e.g. presentations, discussions and activities during the semester.

Late Policy: If you arrive to class 10+ minutes late, or leave before the class is ended, you will be counted as absent for that day.

Teaching methods
This course will be taught using a combination of methods. There will be a strong emphasis on participation and discussion. While your instructor is responsible for the overall structure of the class, all of us will contribute to the production of knowledge. Your engagement will play an important role, and you will be encouraged to reflect actively on the practicum experience.

Overall, the aim is to create a classroom space characterized by respect and willingness to listen/consider other’s perspectives, where it is safe to explore ideas together and individually, even if they are not fully conceptualized or thought out. This requires a great amount of trust, as well as the willingness and curiosity to consider each other’s arguments.

IMPORTANT - General Notes Regarding Assignments
Papers must be correctly formatted and referenced. At DIS, one page equals 300 words. Papers not adhering to these guidelines will result in point deductions.
You are expected to use correct citing formats (either APA or MLA) on all assignments. See http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/ for guidelines concerning the two different citing formats.

Useful websites/ info

http://www.dis.dk/study-abroad-students/library/database/ (DIS library database of journals)

Practicalities

Attendance
You are expected to attend all DIS classes when scheduled. All classes, evening events and field studies are mandatory unless marked otherwise in the course plan. If you miss multiple classes, the Director of Academic Support and the Director of Student Affairs will be notified and they will follow up with you to make sure that all is well. Absences and tardiness for class will jeopardize your grade and your standing at DIS. Allowances will be made in cases of illness. However, in the case of multiple absences, you will need to provide a doctor’s note.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and Violating the Rules of an Assignment
DIS expects that you abide by the highest standards of intellectual honesty in all academic work. DIS assumes that you do your own work and credit all work and thought taken from others. Academic dishonesty will result in a final course grade of “F” and can result in dismissal. Your home universities will be notified. DIS reserves the right to request that written assignments to be turned in electronically for submission to plagiarism detection software. See the Academic Handbook for more information, or ask your instructor if you have questions.

Late papers
It is essential for your learning to stay on track with readings and assignments. All work must be completed in order to pass the course. All late assignments will be deducted half a letter grade for each 24 hours they are late.
Course Plan - discussion sessions and supervision

*Schedule is subject to change.*

1. Tuesday August 30 - Introduction
   
   *Introduction to the course, practicum sites and to Danish work culture*
   

2. Tuesday September 6 - First impressions from the sites
   
   *Your learning experience - a journey of participation and growth*
   
   Reading + TedTalk:
   
   - TedTalk: [https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_how_to_escape_education_s_death_valley](https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_how_to_escape_education_s_death_valley)

   September 12-16: Core course week

   Wednesday September 21 - Mandatory field study 13.00-17.00 TBA

3. Tuesday September 27 - Get to know your colleagues (part 1)
   
   *Today we will talk about your work experience and begin the preparation for your article with an interview guide workshop.*
   
   Readings:
   

   October 8-16: Long study tour / Break

4. Tuesday October 18 - guest lecture by Moussa Mchangama
   
   *Today we are joined by Moussa Mchangama, the Digital Director of Cover Magazine, one of Denmark’s leading fashion magazines.*

   Wednesday October 26 - Mandatory field study 08.30-12.30 TBA

   October 29- November 6: Long study tour / Break
5. Tuesday November 8 - Get to know your colleagues (part 2)
   We will work with your interview findings and your article

6. Tuesday November 15 - Cultural differences DK vs. the US
   Your key takeaways and reflections
   Reading:

   Article about the practicum site including interviews with colleagues (3 pages - 900 words)
   Deadline November 15 (upload pdf to Canvas)

7. Tuesday November 22 - Communication Practices as opposed to Academic Study
   We examine your observed characteristics of practices at your site and relate the findings and discussions to your outline for your final reflection paper.
   - Please bring an outline for your final paper to class

   November 23-27 Break

   Final reflection paper (4 pages - 1200 words)
   Deadline December 5 (upload pdf to Canvas)

8. Tuesday December 6 - Final class
   We evaluate the course, your practicum experience, and talk about how you can transfer this experience towards your future dreams and goals.