



# VIRTUAL GLOBAL INTERNSHIPS

Remote work isn't the future of global business - it's the present. With a virtual internship, students work on projects for an international organization from their home base in the U.S. - while adding a global perspective to their professional work experience. They apply their in-class knowledge to real-world meaningful work, gain hands-on experience, expand their skill base, and learn what it is like to work remotely across time zones and cultures. Although not a substitute for a traditional on-site experience, virtual internships can serve as an important stepping stone for students to build up their skills, resume, and cross-cultural understanding. This can be a great foundation for future internships on-site.

Virtual internships are project-based, with students working remotely on tasks and assignments that meet the needs of their internship organization. Once placed, in addition to gaining work experience, students will receive mentoring and instruction on topics including: establishing one's personal brand; intercultural communication; remote communication challenges; and navigating the world of expanding digital opportunities. Upon completion of their virtual internship, students produce a final video, presentation, or similar deliverable which presents the outcomes/results of their internship experience.

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

**As a result of their virtual internship experience, and in combination with the program curriculum, students will:**

- Have actively engaged in the learning process, both within and outside of the internship placement.
- Be able to apply their academic learning to practical experiences.
- Have explored, examined, and/or clarified career goals.
- Have identified the basic nuances of working in a cross-cultural context.
- Gain practical skills, technological savvy, and an understanding of the remote work environment.
- Be better able to approach life with a high degree of adaptability, independence, and self-confidence.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically, solve complex problems, and cope effectively with ambiguous and unfamiliar situations.

## PROGRAM CURRICULUM

**Session 1: 170-290 total contact hours**

**Session 2: 140-230 total contact hours**

**The curriculum is structured around six main elements:**

### **1. PRE-PROGRAM CULTURAL ORIENTATION**

*5 contact hours*

Students will participate in an online, interactive cultural orientation with CIS Abroad staff located in the country where their internship organization is based. This orientation will focus on topics such as the impact of the local culture on business etiquette, improving cross-cultural communication skills, and adapting work styles accordingly, giving students tools for success working within that culture.

### **2. PRE-PROGRAM SEMINAR: OWN WORKING REMOTELY**

*10 contact hours*

Students explore each of the four Remote Work modules individually, learning the fundamentals of working in a remote environment and across cultures at the same time. The seminar is followed by an online reflection session with other virtual internship participants, facilitated by a CIS Abroad teaching assistant. Students reflect on their learning, share their progress and challenges, and discuss what

## PROGRAM CURRICULUM continued

cultural differences they have encountered to ensure that they are getting the most out of their virtual internship experience. The modules include:

- Remote Roles & the Future of Work
- Communication & Client Management
- Productivity
- Work-Life Balance

### 3. MENTORED, HANDS-ON LEARNING

*Session 1: 120-240 contact hours | Session 2: 90-180 contact hours*

Guided by the on-site supervisor, students work on tasks and assignments that meet the needs of their internship organization. Deliverables are specific, relevant to the industry, demonstrate application of classroom learning, and can be shared with potential future employers. Upon completion of their virtual internship, students produce a final video, presentation, or similar deliverable (to be determined in consultation with their internship supervisor) which presents the outcomes/results of their internship.

### 4. INTERNSHIP SEMINAR SERIES: BUILD YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

*Minimum 10 contact hours*

This online seminar provides students an opportunity to reflect on their personal drivers, their values, and how they want to be perceived as professionals entering the workforce. They will also be exposed to the critical skills necessary for the dynamic future of work, including communication, networking, and technology.

### 5. INTERNSHIP SEMINAR SERIES: WORKING ACROSS CULTURES

*Minimum 10 contact hours*

While we're familiar with our own culture, what happens when we shift across cultures and the rules suddenly seem to change? From the entrepreneur seeking to launch a product in a different country, to the U.S.-based engineer working on product design with counterparts in India, to the social worker assisting individuals from a range of backgrounds – the exposure to other cultures is all around us. To be successful in navigating both international and domestic cultural differences, students need an understanding of what culture is, how it affects their interactions with others, and what skills they must develop in order to be successful intercultural leaders.

### 6. CROSS-CULTURAL DEBRIEFS

*10 contact hours*

CIS Abroad site directors will facilitate live cross-cultural debriefing sessions each week via remote learning technology. Students will have the opportunity to discuss in real time, with staff in-country, what is happening in their virtual internship placements; come to understand the whys behind the culturally-based interactions they are having; and learn what other virtual interns are working on and experiencing.

### 7. POST-PROGRAM SEMINAR: OWN YOUR CAREER

*Minimum of 5 contact hours*

CIS Abroad teaching assistants guide students in individual reflection utilizing the STARR framework: Situation, Task, Action, Result, Relates<sup>1</sup>. This process helps students understand how: a) they can translate their experience into content for their digital profile and augment their self brand; b) to frame their experience for potential employers; and c) these experiences are transferable to other fields - helping them to articulate their experience in order to increase their employability.

[www.CISAbroad.com](http://www.CISAbroad.com)

<sup>1</sup>[Studied or Worked Abroad This Summer? There's 1 Thing You've Probably Forgotten To Do](#)