

Course evaluation: Internships (30ECTs)

Course code: GLODE 310

Name of course coordinator: Marguerite Daniel

Year and semester: 2020 Autumn (evaluated in Spring 2021)

Brief summary of the course with a focus on the need for adjustments

This is the first evaluation of the course since GLODE was established. The course involves planning in the Spring semester to secure internship placements and then doing the internship – usually three months of full-time work (37.5 hours a week) in an organization. Students deliver a brief monthly report and a 20-page written report at the end. The supervisor at the organisation delivers a very brief report on the intern.

In 2020 12 out of 20 students did internships. The plan was for four students to travel to South Africa but these plans were cancelled due to COVID. COVID also resulted in several non-Norwegian speaking students looking for internship places in Norway – and we assisted them in finding places. These circumstances are extraordinary and therefore the students' evaluation may not be representative of the course over time.

Has the course been evaluated by students? How was this done and what did the students say?

The students evaluated the course in the semester following the internship – in a focus group discussion after their first GLODE 330 workshop.

The students have high expectations of what GLODE staff will do for them, for example have fixed places available for internships, 'tell' the organisations to take care of the students' wellbeing – the internship is for the student's learning not free labour for the organisation.

There should be better communication with students before the internships occur (so they know exactly what to expect), and during the internship (meetings rather than monthly report); there should be better communication between university and organisations (so the organisations don't overload the students).

The students did find a few benefits from the internships, e.g. learning new skills and receiving job offers.

The students complained that the report is too long.

Was there anything that did not work well enough? Is it necessary to make adjustments or take action to improve the course?

The person responsible for the course went on indefinite sick leave at the start of the autumn semester 2020 so we had to rearrange the evaluation of the student reports – which we did effectively. Already at that point we decided that the instructions for the report writing should be improved – and we dealt with it in a GLODE staff meeting after that. We also decided to communicate better with the students about internships *before* they happen and before we received the evaluation report from last year's students, we had already implemented a workshop to give information, as well as putting up information (including the new format for the report) on the GLODE 307 MittUiB page (as the new GLODE 310 page opens only in autumn). A second workshop is being run during week six to work on application letters and CVs for the students to start sending out.

What is your overall assessment of the course?

The staff feel there were a number of highly successful internships where the students were aware of the enormous amount they learned. Many of the organisation reports indicate that they found the students reliable and productive – and in some cases, outstanding. Some students have high levels of anxiety due to COVID, and not coming in contact with others – including at the organisations. This

may have contributed to their overwhelmingly negative report and demand that GLODE staff do it all for them.

The course has been run by one person for several years, so it has been good for other members of the GLODE team to be involved and many new ideas have emerged which will strengthen the course in the future.

The course is an integral part of 'practice' within the GLODE programme and students, in general, gain invaluable experience through the internships.