

Project internship course at cand.mag. in journalism studies

- Agreement between study programme, students and any co-operation partners

The course forms the 3rd semester of the cand.mag. journalism study programme (equalling 30 ECTS). The course consists of three elements: a teaching and a supervision period, which is scheduled flexible during the entire semester to fit 2) the internship period, which constitutes the largest part of the period during the remainder of the semester. The course ends with a 3) exam at SDU in January. The actual project period can take many forms; but it is not taking over the production, which is usually handled by journalists, freelancers or journalism interns from, for example, the SDU bachelor programme. If any work made during the project period is to be published, this work should be paid. This should, to the extent possible, be arranged with the co-operation partner before beginning the project. The project's aims, means etc. are described more thoroughly in the course description, and, furthermore, SDU has prepared a Q&A, a co-operation agreement etc. This is all available through the study programme website.

The teaching period is completed with a couple of days of intensive teaching in the beginning of the course period and then 3-4 teaching and supervision days a month during the semester. This will ensure flexibility towards the project period. The teaching period focuses on digital journalism and extends the first semester's teaching in written journalism craft and the second semester's teaching in sound and images (radio and TV). But the students – and their potential partners – are free to decide whether they will produce for writing, sound, images or a fourth option, which can form part of a digital frame.

The project-oriented course continues for the remaining part of the semester, and, here, the students should, on the basis of the qualifications they have acquired during the various academic courses of the cand.mag. in journalism studies (craft courses, language courses, reflection courses, media law courses etc.) – and preferably matching their academic background from their preceding bachelor studies (e.g. law, political science, biology, technology, nursing etc.) – plan and complete a project in which they contribute to developing one or more elements within journalism. This could, for example, be analysing the material within a particular area, a special methodology or similar, and developing examples, prototypes etc. for how to work within this area in the future. As always, if any of the work from the project course is to be published, the terms of the current collective agreement apply – equalling, for example, freelance payment from the external partner.

The students of this course are not included in the main internship agreement for journalists, in which the internship is paid and where the internship period lasts 12-18 months. Furthermore, during this course students of cand.mag. in journalism studies are not allowed to perform functions that permanently employed journalists, freelancers and journalism interns perform for the potential co-operation partner. For example, cand.mag. students are not allowed to fill a temporary position or a position which has previously been salaried. Additionally applies that if any of the work made during the project period is to be published, the terms of the current collective agreement apply – equalling, for example, freelance payment from the co-operation partner. However, cand.mag. journalism students may – if this matches the academic expectations of the third-semester course – fill university internship positions (according to the Q&A description from the study programme website). This should always be arranged with the supervisor at SDU in order to ensure that the internship meets the academic demands, rules and agreements etc.

Concretely, the project course may be in the form of: 1) independent work – for example when the student establishes his or her own media company, creates an app, develops a subject area, works to establish oneself as a correspondent or similar – or 2) co-operation with external partners who either already work journalistically or are interested in working journalistically. It could be classic media organizations (newspapers, radio or TV stations etc.), but also new media, authorities, organizations etc. that are increasingly working journalistically. In both types, the student can complete the course with the use of connections and relations abroad.

Whether the student works independently or in co-operation, the project idea and period must be approved by the course responsible at SDU. This will ensure that the internship and project period remains within the regulations and frames internally at SDU and externally among co-operation partners. The process for this is that the student, within the first few weeks of the semester, submits a project description and a co-operation agreement (following this standard contract from SDU), if you co-operate with media etc.

If the student co-operate with external partners, it is usually the student him- or herself who establishes contact. This will ensure more flexibility in relation to the project's focus and the form of co-operation. However, SDU will assist in creating the contact and establishes a catalogue which presents suggestions for potential projects with external co-operation partners. Furthermore, SDU will provide a supervisor, who will manage catalogue updates, regular supervision of students, arrange internship seminars etc. to ensure a sound, continuous coordination and clarifications. The foundation of coordination and clarification begins as early as the 2nd semester, in order for any co-operation agreements to be ready when the course begins in the 3rd semester.

When entering into external co-operation projects, it is of importance to SDU's approval that the project description is supplemented with a co-operation contract, for which SDU has prepared a standard template. The contract contributes to a clear balancing of expectations between the external part, the student and the study programme in relation to what each part is expected to contribute to the co-operation. Including aims and means such as supervision, supply of material etc. from the external part, preparation of a statement about the internship.

If the description is approved – whether the student works independently or co-operates with an external partner – SDU will provide a supervisor and the internship period can begin. It will conclude with an exam consisting of two parts. A written report containing a product, concept etc. and an oral exam where the student, after completing the course – by late January – must explain and defend his or her work. The academic demands are found in the course description available from the SDU website.

Further information is available by contacting:

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and

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