

Entrepreneurship Internship



Dr. Robert Lahm

(Last Name Rhymes with “Tom” — Pronounced “Lom”)

Course: ENT 483 Room: NA
Class Times: NA Dates: TBD

Office
Hours: (By Appointment)

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TEXT

None

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is experiential.

The objectives for this course are:

1. To introduce you to the concepts of managing a new venture.
2. To have students put into practice the skills they are learning in their entrepreneurship program.
3. Have students critically examine and reflect upon the operational aspects of a business.
4. To reinforce good communication skills, both oral and written.

COURSE FORMAT

Students will work at a local business approved by the instructor. Through discussion with the leaders of the business and through direct observation of the business, students will create journal entries that demonstrate their understanding of how the business applies in practice the principles taught in the entrepreneurship program. The time commitment involved shall require you, the intern, to work no fewer than 280 hours on behalf of the business/organization which sponsors your internship.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Trust is an integral part of any relationship, both personal and professional. Without trust, there is no relationship. I trust each student to be honorable, and I will do all that I can to earn your trust.

Western Carolina University, as a community of scholarship, is also a community of honor. Faculty, staff, administrators, and students work together to achieve the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense at Western Carolina University because it threatens the quality of scholarship and defrauds those who depend on knowledge and integrity. Academic dishonesty includes:

- a. **Cheating**—Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
- b. **Fabrication**—Intentional falsification of information or citation in an academic exercise.
- c. **Plagiarism**—Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of someone else as one's own in an academic exercise.
- d. **Facilitation of Academic Dishonesty**—Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help someone else to commit an act of academic dishonesty, such as knowingly allowing another to copy information during an examination or other academic exercise. This also includes giving another student credit for a project that they did not materially participate in preparing and presenting or “signing in” for another student on a class roster.

Consequences: Should you be found guilty of academic dishonesty I wish to make you aware that you will be assigned a grade of “F” for the course and I will adhere to WCU policies as stated in the [Student Handbook](#).

ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

Each student is expected to come prepared to fulfill his or her internship and participate in a meaningful way. Students are expected to meet their commitments to the business both in attendance and promptness. This will be evaluated by the supervisor at the business. Further, spending time surfing the Internet, “Facebooking,” gaming, texting, working on assignments for other courses, or otherwise being physically present but not participating due to such distractions shall entitle the supervisor that he or she should be recording you as “missing” relative to your fulfillment of participation obligations and attendance. I will be entitled to make notes in my class records to indicate such behaviors with no obligation to notify you that you should cease and desist. This does not mean that if a business expresses displeasure due to your failure to attend and participate that I might simply allow this to go on:

As a matter of instructor oversight, I reserve the right to personally severely penalize any intern who fails to fulfill his or her responsibilities by imposing a failing grade, thereby saving an employing business the discomfort of doing so as well as to protect the reputation of Western Carolina University and its programs.

Notwithstanding the above, I reserve the right to impose additional point reductions in keeping with a student's overall tendencies with regard to attendance and participation, timeliness, attitude, and professionalism. By the same token, I reserve the right to award bonus points for exemplary performance as evidenced in the quality of assignments themselves, but also with respect to the attitude, and professionalism associated with their execution. I will be the sole judge as to whether bonus points or point reductions are utilized, and to what extent they may apply in either direction.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- *Statement on Accommodations for students with disabilities:*

Western Carolina University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities. Students who require disability services or reasonable accommodations must identify themselves as having a disability and provide current diagnostic documentation to Disability Services. All information is confidential. Please contact Disability Services for more information at (828) 227-2716 or 144 Killian Annex.

GRADES

Journal (50%)

Students will make a minimum of eight entries into their journal. These entries will be the student's reflection on some aspect of the business operations. The first entry will be to describe the company value proposition for customers. Make sure you identify why customers buy from the company, not just what they buy. All other entries should be based upon your work. They may include such topics as how the company manages inventory, prevents employee fraud, manages their cash, what types of insurance they carry and why, etc. The one unifying theme of your entries is that they should indicate how they help deliver the firm value proposition. Also, the topics should demonstrate the application of what you have learned in your business program. This is not a research assignment; it is intended that you will provide synthesis of what you have learned into what you are doing. At the end of this syllabus is an example of a student entry from a recent internship.

Employer Evaluation (40%)

Each student will arrange for their direct supervisor to evaluate their performance during the course of the internship using an approved form that will be provided by the instructor. The criteria for evaluation will include your work ethic, your ability to master the work, your contributions to company success, and your timeliness, among other dimensions of performance.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Employers should be provided with the evaluation form and a copy of this syllabus at the onset of this course, the form will be made available on Blackboard and receipt of the syllabus and form should be acknowledged early in the course by the employer.

Self-Evaluation, Reflection (10%)

Each student will create a self-reflective self-evaluation paper of no less than 3 double-spaced pages in length (3 to 5 pages recommended). Students will also submit a log of their work time at the end of the internship.

ALL MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED

All major assignments above under "GRADES" must be fulfilled to receive credit for and complete the course, regardless of cumulative points earned. For example, even if missing the number of points associated with the self-evaluation or employer evaluation would not cause you to lose enough points to fail the course on a percentage basis, you still must complete the significant activities listed.

WRITING STYLE (QUALITY REQUIREMENTS)

I will not accept spelling errors or poor grammar. If I find these problems with a written submission, I will return it without a grade for your revision and resubmission.

IMPORTANT CAVEAT: *Such an occasion as indicated above is very likely to subsequently result in a grading penalty for an unsatisfactory first attempt, so as to discourage the idea that you may repeatedly enjoy the benefit of “do-over” chances (thus you should avoid trying your luck with an insufficiently prepared original submission).*

Poor spelling or grammar are the “kiss of death” for a business plan with investors, a résumé, an advertisement, correspondence, and most other forms of communication since readers will assume you will be no more professional in your behavior and endeavors than you were in your writing style. If you need help with writing, please let me know, but do understand that I will expect you to arrange for and receive the appropriate help from the [Western Carolina University Writing Center](#).

NOTES

Composition-Condition Marks. A student whose written work in any course fails to meet acceptable standards will be assigned a composition-condition (CC) mark by the instructor on the final grade report. All undergraduates who receive two CC grades prior to the semester in which they complete 110 hours at Western Carolina University are so notified by the registrar and are required to pass English 300 or English 401 before they will be eligible for graduation. This course must be taken within two semesters of receiving the second CC and must be passed with a grade of C (2.0) or better.

WAIVERS AND MODIFICATIONS

Any exception or waiver of the description or terms and conditions of this course shall not constitute a precedent or give cause for any student or the class to expect additional exceptions or waivers in the future. Further, I reserve the right to modify this syllabus and any associated aspects of this course (e.g., scheduling changes, point values, grading and assignments) based on class needs and/or circumstances as they may develop, and in order to meet instructional objectives.

Example of a Student Reflection

Entry 3: *Scheduling*

Employee scheduling is the process of developing an arrangement that lists each employee by name accompanied by the time each employee is required to work for a given time frame. The employee schedule is made at the end of each pay week for the following pay week. At Company Name, the pay week starts on Wednesday and ends the following Tuesday, therefore the employee schedule is made every Tuesday.

Making a schedule is quite time consuming and difficult because there are many different factors to include. First of all there are part-time employees, full-time employees and employees who mandatory need days off. Therefore, keeping the schedule organized and well-maintained takes quite a bit of effort especially if you have a large number of employees. Many businesses, as Company Name, invest so much time and effort in ensuring that the business is properly systematized for customer quality and satisfaction. Businesses like these cannot afford the time and effort they put in scheduling employees, especially large businesses. The agony of factoring in several scheduling restraints and painfully trying to avoid conflicting shifts is way too exhausting. For these large corporations that carry 50+ employees, manually scheduling each and every employee would be a task impossible to complete anyways. But most of the large corporations only run on business days, therefore all employees have a fixed schedule. They are to come in within a certain timeframe and cannot leave until a certain amount of work is completed. These employees also have a certain fixed period they have to work. For instance if a company's criteria is that each employee must work 8 hours a day, then the employee can come in at 9 and leave at 5 or the employee can come in at 8 and leave at 4. This eliminates the dreadful process of scheduling each and every employee every week. But for large businesses that are open seven days a week, unfortunately a schedule is absolutely compulsory. For these types of businesses, there are hassle free and uncomplicated programs that will actually create the schedule for you. They are designed to alleviate you from the daily and weekly stresses of creating shifts, coverage for absences, rosters, daily tasks and duties. It allows you to computerize and examine staff schedules efficiently. With these software's, costly errors are eliminated and adjustments are made easily. Schedules are practically made in seconds

Statistics state that when scheduling part-time employees, it is important to track time and labor costs by the hour and week while scheduling. It is also a good idea to see when the employees are available for work. Many major companies also publish their schedules on the web for employees to see them on their days off, or if an employee had forgotten what time they work on a certain day, they can easily asses it on the web 24/7. It's a very simple, easy and convenient way to keep tract of when employees work and avoid statements such as ,”I didn't know what time I had to come in today,” or “I tried calling but no one picked up.” Schedules that are made on the web through programs can easily be transferred onto a web page but schedules that are made manually will have to be scanned, saved to the computer and then uploaded onto the web page.

While handling the scheduling process myself manually, I did encounter a few complications and problems that involved careful, vigilant focus to fix. Although we don't have a big group of workers, I still managed to come across conflicting shifts, employee shortness and unequal hours. First / morning shift (10 or 11 til 2 or 5, times vary), we normally keep 4 employees including my parents. Since we have a drive-thru, at least one person is required to handle that, one person required to cut the bread, one person to put vegetables on sub and one person to stay on the register at all times. Second / afternoon shift (2 till 5), we normally keep two employees and finally Third / evening shift, we normally keep 2 people unless we have a new employee then we keep three for training. As of now, we have 8 employees, 2 of which are my parents, one of which is my sister and another of which is I. All the employees at Company Name are part-time employees.

I prepared the schedule the easiest way possible. First I listed each employees name in the column to the left in alphabetical order, then I went to the bulletin board for the "requested off" list and marked those employees off who requested certain days. Then I scheduled those who can only work mornings/afternoon and tried to give each person at least two days off. Once morning shifts are scheduled, I use their "leaving" time to schedule the next shift. For instance, if an employee is scheduled to come in at 11 and leave at 5, then the next employee will be scheduled to come in at 5 till close. Normally, we merely have two shifts working but sometimes, on certain occasions, we have three because my parents work from 8:30 till 5, Monday thru Friday only. But on certain times, they have certain places they have to go to between the hours of 2 to 5 then in this case, they may either schedule someone from 11-2 and then someone from 2-5 or they may just schedule someone from 11-5. But other than that they usually work from 8:30 – 5 and will schedule the entire morning shift from 10 or 11 till 2 and they will work the 2-5 shift till the next scheduled employee comes in. So while scheduling, I have to consider these points. So with this, I asked my parents if they had any appointments or places they had to go this week. My dad said he had a hair appointment on Thursday at 2:30 and had some other place he had to be at 5 pronto. My mum replied she wanted to get off at 3 on Monday to catch up on some house work. Therefore, with these points in mind, on Wednesday I scheduled one employee from 11-2 and another from 10-2, while my parents work the 2-6 shift for that day. On Thursday, my dad had his hair appointment at 2:30, so I scheduled one employee from 10 till 2 and another employee from 11 till 5, this way my dad can walk out the door at 2. Friday's schedule was very much identical to Wednesday's schedule. Saturday and Sunday's schedule are almost always alike in that we only have 2 shifts. First shift has two people working from 11-5 and second / evening shift has two people working 5-close. Many people had requested Saturday and Sunday off so I did have a few conflicts that I had to fix. Monday's schedule was very much like Thursdays except my mum was leaving at 2 instead of my dad. Tuesdays schedule was also very similar to Wednesdays. While scheduling Monday's shifts, I came across employee shortness. I noticed later that two people had requested the afternoon shift off so I had to come in myself at 2 and work the second shift as well as the evening shift. Once the schedule has been revised and is good to go, the next and final step is to count and total all employee hours; it turns out that I had one employee working 33 hours and another working only 17. I found that it is very difficult to give employee hours who have asked for many days off to begin with. I also found that this particular employee had asked for 3 days off during the week and can only work morning shift. Therefore, on my behalf, I gave her as many hours as possible on the remaining four days she could work and managed to bring her up from 17 to 23 hours, which reduced the other employee from 33 hours 27 hours. The reason this employee's hours are still higher than the other employee's is because she has not requested any days off therefore she only been given one day off, as requested. The other employee hours were equaled.

In conclusion to scheduling, I must admit, scheduling is a lot more difficult than I described and anticipated it to be. There are a ton of things that need to be checked off such as double checking the employee "request off" list because if two or more people have requested the same day off, then you know you have a problem that has to be solved ASAP. Also, you have to be sure all employee hours are equal. It's very common to give one employee too many hours and another employee too less hours so we have to be very careful. Another thing is you have to be very careful you don't make any mistakes on the schedule. I found it much smarter and easier to write the schedule in pencil first, then as soon as the schedule has been revised and is ready to display, write over it in pen. After revising the schedule over and over again, it was finally ready to be posted.