

Internship Reflection

Crim 494: Civic Engagement in Criminal Justice

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The internship I chose to complete was a civic engagement with FLEET services at Longwood University. FLEET services are the employees who work with facilities management and business operations on Longwood University's campus. This internship in particular was peculiar for my degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice with a minor in Homeland Security. The internship did not explicitly relate to the field of Criminal Justice when it comes to the experience, except that the Longwood owned police officer cars got washed, and fixed in the auto shop where my internship was completed. This experience allowed me to reflect on other skills that are cooperated into my field of study, also allowing me to develop a different perspective on campus work at Longwood. Adapting to this different perspective allowed me to thrive in this internship setting, advance my critical thinking, and develop a broader knowledge on Criminal Justice and Sociology.

Before the internship began, I was instructed that the duties I would be performing for my internship position would be; maintaining the new software system modifications, washing the campus vehicles, servicing the golf carts and other matters my supervisor needed assistance with. This was not a “normal” internship experience or an internship that I would have chosen for my desired field of study, but it gave me opportunities to grow individually, as well as opportunities to help me advance in future career experiences. With this internship many of the duties required good weather for, to work outside with washing and cleaning cars as well as working with the golf carts. Since I was not able to help as much, I used the time provided to keep up with school work, as well as build relationships with the people who worked there.

The internship was flexible and well arranged to work with my school schedule as well as any extra curricular activities I needed in between. The employees were sweet and made me feel welcomed and heard during my experience with them. I was unaware that this department had

existed on Longwood's campus until I stepped foot into my supervisor's office. I enjoyed the environment that the employees created while I was there. I was not nervous to be myself and grow individually. I particularly liked that I participated in this internship as a Senior at Longwood University. With this it allowed me to explore other options that Longwood had to offer before I left. There was not much that I disliked while working here, it was not a perfect internship, but it could have been better suited for me. If I had the option to change anything it would be that I helped more in different areas such as emergency management or that I endured more hands-on learning.

Throughout my four years at Longwood, my courses in Sociology and Criminal Justice prepared me for the necessary skills needed to succeed in my internship as well as other future academic careers and future employment opportunities. Skills I applied during my internship included time management, conflict resolution, organization, communication, and perspective. At the time of my internship I was enrolled in 15 credit hours towards classes, as well as 3 credit hours that were applied with my internship, to make a total of 18 credit hours. For the internship to be completed I had to acquire a total of 120 hours throughout the span of 14 weeks. I had to use my time management skills to plan a schedule that allowed me to complete 10 internship hours a week, as well as attend my classes everyday, and stay on top of my course load. This allowed me to stay organized and prepared during each school week with a set plan. Organization was important when I had assignments due for my internship experience. I had a journal entry due after every 40 hours of completed internship time which equaled three separate entries. This allowed me to express my experience on the internship, as well as communicate with my advisors about my progress. Another skill was conflict resolution. There were times when my supervisor was unable to attend my internship hours, as well as myself and we had to

communicate with one another. Developing stronger communication with my supervisor created a more friendly, respectable, and concise work experience. My strongest skill set came from my knowledge of communication and time management. These have been crucial skills throughout my four years at Longwood and will be principal when I advance into the working world once I depart from Longwood University. I can improve on my conflict resolution by keeping with a maintained and known schedule.

For future employment opportunities, I would like to take away from this experience the commitment and knowledge I developed with broadening my different perspectives. This internship allowed me to change the way I viewed Longwood University, and the relationships I built with the employees. Being a student intern and working with adults was interesting and allowed me to see through different lenses. I journeyed through seeing familiar faces on campus to learn the employees jobs, different lifestyles, and personalities. Working in a department that did not necessarily interest me was overwhelming, but it allowed me to put myself out there and acquire new skills to help me in other career paths. This internship was humbling and a good example of not giving up when things do not go as planned. I was able to try something out of my comfort zone, and still succeed with great expectations.

In comparison to my studies at Longwood with Sociology and Criminal Justice, I have excelled in the different attributes for both fields. My point of view for Criminal Justice is about protecting the people in the community and allowing safety. This internship did not focus around Criminal Justice, but from this perceived perspective I was able to watch my supervisor constantly take care of the Longwood community. He was always alert with helping in any way he could, allowing faculty and students on campus to feel safe. The point of view I developed for Sociology is the study of human relationships and how actions reflect those relationships. As a

student I was able to form bonds with different faculty members from the community, and experience the association between the campus community and the community built within FLEET services.

To conclude, working with facilities management and business operations at Longwood University has changed my perspective about the members in the Longwood Community. It has allowed me to incorporate myself into a work experience that I originally would not have been interested in. I was adaptable, and driven to succeed in a placement I was unfamiliar with. This opportunity I received working as an intern on campus was defining for my experiences to come. As I leave Longwood and pursue my career path in Criminal Justice, I know that I am capable of exploring my degree in many diverse ways, with this internship opportunity being a mere glimpse of that success.