INTERNSHIP ASSIGNMENT HRDS: Professional Capstone Thesis (4+6 CR)

Master of Science in Human Rights and Data Science students who register a 4-CR internship with AUP are REQUIRED to submit a 6-CR Professional Capstone Thesis to clear the incomplete grade for their internships[1].

The purpose of the Professional Capstone Thesis is to give students a framework to summarize what they learned and observed at the internship, and to connect their future goals and endeavors with their internship and academic experience. If students run into difficulties completing a part of the Professional Capstone Thesis, they are encouraged to propose a creative or original solution when confronted with this challenge and to contact the internship office (internship@aup.edu) and their assigned faculty reader for guidance.

Submission Deadlines
Internship assignments are due one month after the internship's official end date. For example, if the internship ends on March 15, the assignments are due on April 15 at the latest.

Once the internship is approved and started students should:

1. Keep a daily/weekly journal
2. Submit a mid-point note
3. Informational interview and information collection
4. Write the Professional Capstone Thesis and Reflection Report
5. Submit all necessary pieces of information
6. Defend the Professional Capstone Thesis

Plagiarism: The report and all related documents may be inspired in part by the organization's corporate literature, but the bulk of the project must be the student's own. Students who draw heavily from other sources without proper citation will be subject to university disciplinary action.

AUP Library Resources: AUP students benefit from remote access to AUP library databases, but these databases are intended for non-profit educational use and are for the student's personal research only – NOT for research requested by the employer as part of the student's internship duties. Please contact the AUP Library for further clarification: library@aup.edu

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[1] Internship assignments are required of all students by AUP academic policy and by French law.

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1. Daily or weekly journal

Keeping a daily or weekly journal will help students remember about assignments, issues encountered, people met, etc. They should focus on process and, eventually, outcomes; could also question colleagues to gain more insight. Reflective notes on the experience will help writing sections of the thesis.

Questions students could ask themselves when filling the journal:

- What are your expectations as you begin?
- What are you learning?
- How does your company fit into the field at large, in terms of its competitive strategy and goals, operations and products?

The daily/weekly journal must be included as an appendix of the Professional Capstone Thesis.

2. Mid-Point Note

Length: 1-2 pages
To be sent to: faculty reader
To be included as appendix of the Professional Capstone Thesis.

Five weeks into the internship (normally at week 5), students must submit a **mid-point note** outlining the nature of their responsibilities and their initial thoughts on the organization in which they are working.

Based on the daily/weekly journal, the mid-point note should discuss:

- The projects the student is working on and explain how they relate to issues covered in their courses.
- The projects the student will be working on during the rest of the internship (if known)
- Any goals the student would like to achieve during the remainder of the internship.

3. Informational interview and information collection

Informational interviews (see guidelines in annex 1) involve a critical account detailing an interview of two or more key employees in the organization; if possible a person from senior management and a co-worker or immediate supervisor. These interviews should be scheduled early at the beginning of the internship. The aim is to get a feel for the career paths of individuals working in the company. How did they develop their chosen careers? What advice do they have? As a conclusion to these interviews, students should report what they learned and indicate whether they see these individuals as mentors. Note: Students will not be held academically responsible if the employer refuses to participate in the informational interview.

Other information to collect: Any materials specifically related to the student experience (analysis reports, marketing materials, operational standards, printouts of web pages, etc. that the student helped produce, etc.) should be collected. Photographs may also be taken.

4. Professional Capstone Thesis and Reflection Report

The Professional Capstone Thesis and Reflection Report should be presented as a single document however, the Professional Capstone Thesis should be stand alone and make no reference to the Reflection Report. The reflection report is an internal document (for faculty and the internship office) and may refer to the thesis. The thesis maybe made public if there are no non-disclosure agreements preventing it, the report will remain an internal document

4.1. Professional Capstone Thesis

The Professional Capstone Thesis is the culmination of the internship experience and connects the student's professional experience to their academic experience. It is a descriptive, empirical and analytical document

in which students specifically connect the knowledge and skills acquired during the MSc degree to their experience in the workplace.

The Professional Capstone Thesis integrates three important aspects of the HRDS master experience. First, it should highlight what students have learned in the many encounters they have had with the **profession**: these include the internship, but also the Data-Industry Practicum and the exchanges with professionals invited to courses or public lectures. Second, as a **capstone**, it should demonstrate the knowledge and skills students have gained in their courses through the discussion of opportunities, challenges and issues related to human rights and data science in a real-world setting. Third, as a **thesis**, it should demonstrate students' ability to think critically, creatively, and rigorously about interesting questions/issues/opportunities in this field of study. The *Critical Data Analysis* section of the Capstone Thesis achieves this purpose. Using existing research, students should articulate their position with respect to a question/issue/opportunity related to the data use of the organization.

4.1.1. How to organize your Professional Capstone Thesis

Students should use the checklist below to make sure they include all required information.

Cover Sheet	See Annex 2 for a template. The cover sheet does not count towards the overall page count.	
Table of Contents	Should include the major sections of the report (sub headers are optional). The ToC does not count towards the page count	
Executive Summary	A short summary which outlines the subject of the Professional Capstone Thesis and the contents of the analyses. It should be written in a style that is accessible to an informed non-academic audience.	1 to 2 pages
Background and Organizational Overview	Should include: • The name of the company or organization and a detailed description of its activities, and the function of the department in which the student is working. • A description of the student's role as an intern, the number of hours worked per week, the number of credits to be earned, where and when the work takes place, and the sorts of practical skills and tools used. • A presentation of the *Critical Data Analysis* project the student intends to undertake, and whether this is part of the internship or an addition to it.	2 to 4 pages
Organizational Analysis	Through critical reading of the organization's literature this section should describe: • Its main outputs and its strengths and weaknesses. • The data used and the main data sources. Particular attention should be paid to the organization's approach to human right protection in relation to data use.	4 to 8 pages
Critical Data Analysis	This is the core part of the Professional Capstone Thesis. It should include: • Objective(s) of the analysis: identify one or more key concern or potential in data use within the organization. Students may use examples from their internship experience or realistic foresight scenarios that they create (target time length, less than 5 years). • Findings and analysis expressed in narrative statements, charts, and images to relay investigations and interpretations. • Based on the above, students should make recommendations providing implementation guidance where necessary. Students may consult with their faculty supervisor to determine specific approaches that may be most relevant.	10 to 20 pages

| Appendices | • Confidentiality Agreement (compulsory if confidentiality applies to the report and is indicated on the cover sheet): copies or scans of the confidentiality statements pertaining to this report should be attached. At a minimum, the faculty supervisor must have access to the report. See annex 3 for more details.
• Supplementary material: This section is not compulsory. Any materials specifically related to the student experience (analysis reports, marketing materials, operational standards, printouts of web pages, etc. that the student helped produce, etc.) should be attached. Photographs may also be included.
• Mid-point note as it was submitted to your faculty advisor five weeks into your internship.

Appendices don't count towards the page count | |

4.1.2. How to format the Professional Capstone Thesis

Layout and specifications

i.   Written in English
ii.   A4 paper format
iii.   1" margins top, bottom, left, and right
iv.   Calibri, Helvetica, or Times New Roman font size 11-12
v.   Line spacing of 1.5. Do NOT add extra spaces between paragraphs.
vi.   Add page numbers to the footer of the document
vii.   Save in PDF format

Footnotes and bibliography should follow the format required for research in your field.

4.2. Reflection Report

The report reflects your internship and its relationship to your studies: namely, how has the theoretical and practical knowledge you have acquired in your courses prepared you for this professional experience and your desired career track? What frameworks and theories are applicable, and which conventional approaches are perhaps less relevant or not applicable to the context in which you find yourself working? How has this professional experience impacted your understanding of the subjects you studied?

The various sections of the internship reflection report are outlined below. This will be shared only with the faculty supervisor and the internship office.

4.2.1. How to organize your Internship Reflection Report

Students should use the checklist below to make sure they include all required information.

Cover Sheet	See Annex 2 for a template. The cover sheet does not count towards the overall page count.	
Relationship of Internship to Course Material	This section should relate the student's experience in the workplace to the material covered during the HRDS master. Students should contextualize their internship experience not only in relation to the practical skills learned, but also in relation to theories regarding the role that data play in society. How did the course material covered relate to the internship work? How might one theorize or conceptualize the kind of work the students was asked to carry out? Students should consider how the MSc courses might help them analyze their position in the workplace. They should discuss the material's relevance to their work experience. They are are expected to make specific connections with and references to material covered in the courses.	3 to 9 pages
Conclusions	Students should detail what they have learned from the internship and provide an overview of the company from their perspective as MA students soon to be seeking	1 to 2 pages

	employment. How has their experience in this company had an impact on how they see themselves, any aspiration they may have to work in this industry, and the direction for their future career.	
Appendices	These should include: • The Informational interviews • The daily/weekly journal	

4.2.2. How to format your Internship Reflection Report

Use the same format as the Professional Capstone Thesis

5. Submit all necessary pieces of information

Students should submit the Professional Capstone Thesis and their CV via the Internship Evaluation and Assignment Submission Webform available here.

NOTE: Emailed assignments will not be accepted for grading.

The webform will also ask a set of evaluation questions, including the following:

- Major duties performed
- Specific projects you would like to mention
- Comments regarding the time commitment
- Skills applied during internship other than languages. Please indicate if you used any other skills during your internship (designing skills, communication skills, entrepreneurial skills...).
- Did this internship help you acquire professional skills? If so, which ones? Did you learn about a career?
- Was your internship what you expected? (Please compare your expectations with the actual results)
- Do you feel better equipped to enter your chosen industry/field as a result of this internship? And/or, will the internship contribute to your future choices (graduate school, career, etc.)?
- Details regarding the relationship with your supervisor.
- How was the work atmosphere within the organization? Did you have fruitful work relationships with your colleagues? Did you feel supported and/or guided?

Students should answer the prompts with full sentences.

By submitting the evaluation form, students trigger an automatic email to the internship supervisor prompting him/her to fill out the online employer evaluation and comment on the student's performance during the internship.

Students should write to their supervisor after submitting the form to let them know that they will receive an employer evaluation, and request that they fill it out.

Note: Faculty readers do not grade the employer evaluation. Students will not be held academically responsible if the employer does not complete the employer evaluation.

6. Defend the Professional Capstone Thesis

The Professional Capstone Thesis will be defended in front of a small jury of faculty and/or professionals. Relying on the expected Learning Outcomes for the Master (see annex 4) the jury will assess the skills and knowledge demonstrated by the candidate in their thesis and presentation to the jury. The objective of the jury is to ensure that the required knowledge and skills are well mastered by the candidate. The jury will

likely seek additional information on the overall work of the candidate during the degree program and question them on the subjects mentioned in their thesis. The jury can also propose case studies to assess the candidate knowledge.

Student grades will remain as Incomplete until their assignments have been graded.

6.1.1. Evaluation criteria

- Meeting administrative and academic (learning objectives) requirements.
- Meeting academic writing standards.
- Meeting professional and ethical behaviour expectations.
- Meeting the deadline.

Grades: The internship portfolio is a serious piece of academic work. The importance of the internship does not necessarily correlate to the student's specific tasks and responsibilities, but rather with what the students has learned about the organization and how they transform what they learn into a thoughtful, reflective piece of research. Specific grading scales are included in annex 5.

7. Annexes

7.1. Annex 1: Guidelines for the Informational Interview

This section of the report should be approximately six pages long.

7.1.1. Recommended Procedure

1. Call or write to request permission to interview your contact. You should inform them of the interview's purpose and approximately how much time it will take. Schedule an appointment.
2. Prepare the interview by making a list of questions (see below). Avoid personal questions.
3. Be on time for the interview. Ask for permission to take notes or record the interview should you wish to do so. If discussing confidential information, make sure that the contact understands the written summary will be read exclusively by members of the AUP community.
4. Within a week following the interview, send a note to your contact to express thanks for their time, consideration and ideas. Send them a copy of the interview if they wish.
5. It is important to create a written copy of the interview that is informative and interesting, and which clearly sums up the interviewee's responses.

7.1.2. Possible questions for informational interview

Select the questions most appropriate to the person you are interviewing, and/or create some of your own.

6. How did you get involved in this line of work?
7. Are any degrees or qualifications required or recommended for this position?
8. In your opinion, what are some key skills and personality traits needed to succeed?
9. How many hours a week do you work? Is it common to bring work home?
10. How much variety is there in your work? How much specialization?
11. What is a typical day like? A typical week?
12. What are the most difficult problems and decisions you have ever faced? What about weekly decisions/problems?
13. Does this job have any travel obligations?
14. Are there any civic or social obligations that go with this job?
15. Is it easy for someone in this field to move to another location?
16. In your opinion, what is the best thing about this job? The worst?
17. How visible are you in this job?
18. What trends do you see happening in your field?
19. What is a typical starting salary? What can someone expect to earn after five or six years of experience?
20. Are there ways to "try out" this line of work, i.e. internships, summer jobs, part-time work?
21. What is the supply/demand situation in this field?
22. What do you wish you had known when you began your career?
23. What advice would you offer to a recent graduate interested in working in this field?

7.1.3. How to format your informational interview report

Use the same format as the Professional Capstone Thesis

7.2. Annex 2: Cover sheet

(include at the front of your report)

HUMAN RIGHTS AND DATA SCIENCE

4-CR INTERNSHIP – Professional Capstone Thesis (6-CR)

First name, last name:

Student's ID number:

Internship semester & year:

Number of credits: 6-CR

I am submitting the assignments in order to obtain credit for my internship at: .

Confidentiality:

☐ This report has confidentiality concerns (see confidentiality statement).
☐ This report is open to a variety of interested audiences.

Check-list:

☐ Professional Capstone Thesis (pages) (with annexes   pages).
☐ Reflection report (pages) (with annexes   pages).
☐ CV/Resume

Date :

7.3. Annex 3: Confidentiality

When preparing their reports, students should be aware of any confidentiality or non-disclosure agreements they may have signed with their organization. Indeed, employers may ask interns to sign confidentiality statements, which may have a bearing on what information students may disclose in their internship report and elsewhere. If this is the case, individuals and client corporations may be described rather than named, and projects may be recounted in general terms rather than specific details. Students with this type of agreement are encouraged to discuss any questions that may arise with the Internship Office and/or their faculty reader to make sure they fully understand the terms and conditions of the agreement.

7.4. Annex 4: HRDS Learning outcomes

➢ Students will demonstrate a robust foundation in international human rights law with respect to technology, data management and data protection.
➢ Students will demonstrate a comparative understanding of the European Union's General Data Protection regulation (GDPR) with respect to other jurisdictions.
➢ Students will demonstrate a robust understanding of data science processes, techniques and tools and their ethical and lawful use.
➢ Students will demonstrate to have acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to serve as a Data Protection Officer or Data Manager.

7.5. Annex 5: Grading Scale

A – Excellent. The assignment demonstrates a comprehensive and solid understanding of the relationship between human rights and data science, and how it applies to the organization's industry. The work presents thoughtful interpretations, well-focused and original insights, and well-reasoned commentary and analysis. The work includes skilful use of resource materials, anecdotes or examples, and clear writing, and contains no grammatical or typographical errors.

B – Good. The assignment demonstrates a complete and accurate understanding of the relationship between human rights and data science, and how it is applied in the organization's industry. The work presents a reasonable degree of insight and broad levels of analysis. The work reflects competence, but remains at a general or predictable level of understanding. Use of resource materials and examples is appropriate, and writing is clear.

C – Adequate/Fair. The assignment demonstrates some understanding but remains superficial, incomplete, or expresses some significant errors or weaknesses. Human rights law or data science methods may be used inadequately or inappropriately, and arguments lack concrete, specific examples. Writing may appear vague, hard to follow, or loaded with typographical or other technical errors.

D – Unsatisfactory. The assignment demonstrates a serious lack or error in understanding, and fails to express the most rudimentary aspects of human rights and data science. Sources may be used entirely inappropriately or not at all, and writing is seriously deficient.

F – Failed. Work not submitted by the deadline or indicates plagiarism.