

Overall, I would describe my internship experience as positive. I always viewed it as more of a cultural experience than as a chemistry internship, and this was definitely the right perspective to hold. I feel that some parts of the program could be improved, but it was undoubtedly a great way to spend my summer.

Work environment

Although working as part of a restaurant was predictably somewhat stressful, I found that my coworkers were very friendly, and the work (for the first few weeks) was generally interesting. Of course, it also has to be noted that working in a German Brauhaus has an unconditional "cool factor" that makes the work and experience worth having, if for nothing other than bragging rights.

Although it was not initially the case, for most of my internship I received lunch from the restaurant, and although my lunch break was usually only 20 minutes (I guess I could have taken 30 minutes, but only at the expense of my coworkers), this was fine since I didn't have to go anywhere to get food. I think this was a big plus of this program--I got to try a lot of nice German food.

The hours were a little bit long for me--longer than anyone else who worked there, and longer than any of the other interns, and that was a drawback. More on that later.

Internship activities

I knew that it was totally unrealistic to expect to brew everyday, and naturally there would be other activities to fill my time. It turned out that I was mostly slated to do bar tending along with various other minor tasks like helping to move tables around and setting up the outside area of the restaurant every morning.

Bar tending was really just a matter of pouring drinks and cleaning glassware. There was always a little more work to do than was possible, which is to say it was a little stressful. There were seldom any special drinks to be made, and I was not expected to learn any; instead it was just a fundamentally uninteresting matter of pouring soda, beer, and juice. And coffee. I thought it was pretty funny how much coffee I made, because that's the stereotypical job of an intern who has nothing constructive to be tasked with.

I proposed the idea that I could translate the menu and the website into English, but they simply said "go ahead and do that" without cutting back on my bar tending hours. I felt that since I was already working 9 hours a day, 5 days a week, generally just bar tending, I was already doing enough and if they really wanted me to do the translation they'd make time for it. In the end I was allowed to work a little on translating the menu during hours when there wasn't much business, but it was too little too late and I didn't have enough time to get it done.

Brewing was pretty cool when it happened. It only happened about once every week and a half. I felt that communication here was poor and that if I had made more of an effort to know exactly when they planned on brewing, I could have convinced them to postpone a day or two so that I would be around for it. For example, they brewed the day before I arrived in Eutin (the day before the program officially started). They also brewed on weekends when I had group obligations and travel plans. Despite being aware of these things, they still brewed when I wasn't there. In six weeks I was involved in brewing three times. To put this in perspective, Shane Billig was involved in brewing two times.

The first time I was involved with brewing, a group of students from Lübeck was visiting. This was actually pretty cool because I got to sit outside and chat with the students over beers on UniLübeck's tab. However, I was not really involved in the process; Markus simply did everything and periodically discussed the process with the group. I think this made sense because it would have been unreasonable for him to complicate things by trying to involve me directly for the first time while trying to also instruct the students.

The second time I brewed with Markus, we went through the whole process. I didn't understand everything that was happening, but I was really happy with this experience. I felt like I was directly involved in every part of the process, and although there was not enough time to completely clarify everything, I thought it was really as much as I could have asked for. Markus and I even had a couple of beers at the end.

The third time we brewed happened to be the very last day that I worked. This time I brewed with Wolfgang, and he had a lot more time to discuss what was going on. We even had breakfast together that morning. This was also a very positive experience.

There was also a problem with conflicts with group activities. For example, when I wanted to go to KielerWoche (as was planned on the official schedule, of which they apparently had a copy from the start), I was scheduled to work the whole day. I was actually a little bit shocked at the end to learn that they had a copy of the schedule the whole time, because they treated the situation like it was my fault for not telling them far enough in advance. To an extent it was my fault for not reminding them, but even so, I was still upset with the way the situation was handled. Simply because Martin Vollertsen just happened to show up the day before, I was able to go on the trip because he talked with them directly. Even then, I was told that I needed to come in for work on the weekend since I was missing a day. This was not because I had some important project to do; it was only because they wanted to have someone to do more free bar tending. This made me feel like they were not interested in my education and only wanted to use me as cheap labor. In the end it was also revealed that the 45 hours a week that I had been diligently working without complaint, even when I was sick, were actually six hours more than was formally agreed upon by the internship

providers prior to the beginning of the program.

I think the lesson here is that students should know going in that they are not to work more than 39 hours a week and that the businesses should have a clear plan of tasks for the intern before they arrive. As much as I enjoyed pouring drinks with my fellow 16-year-old interns, I felt like I was capable of a lot more, and they were not particularly committed to making this an educational experience. Perhaps if they are required to give a premeditated list of tasks for their future interns, they will realize that it looks bad when their paper just says "observe brewing three times and pour drinks for the other 42 hours a week."

I did get a nice tour of the facilities when I first arrived, but I thought that they could have done more to walk me through the process. If we had sat down for even a couple of hours at the very start and just discussed the whole process while I took notes, I feel like I could have gotten a lot more out of the process, and after being an observer a couple of times, I could have even brewed on my own, although I would understand if they did not want to take this risk.

Group activities

The group activities were excellent. There were plenty of trips, like the one to Copenhagen, and there was enough flexibility that I was able to go to the Hurricane music festival while several of the other students were taking a tour of Hamburg. The visit to the police academy seemed odd at first, but it turned out to be really cool because we got to learn about Germany's protest culture and the way that the police try to maintain the peace. It was interesting to see things from the perspective of the police officers. The officially planned trip to Kiel was also very good. We got to visit the memorial tower, go through a U-Boat, and check out all of the festival shops and music.

The Web 2.0 meeting was interesting, and I felt like Jan-Malte and Torben did a great job of putting it together. I'm already fairly well acquainted with social media, so I didn't find the presentation that informative, but I still found it well put-together.

Logistics and accommodations

As I mentioned in the group activities section, I thought that everyone was very well taken care of. My host family was very welcoming and very friendly. They ended up letting me stay with them after the internship program ended while working for the Festspiele. This was a really great part of the program.

The Batista House where we all stayed together was also a great part of the program. It was a really cool place to live, and it was good way to get to know the other participants in the program better.

I felt like the group website (eutinlawrence.de) was not particularly useful. It would have been fine if we simply did all of our communication through email. I don't think anyone ever really felt compelled to use the website.