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COMMUNICATIONS INTERNSHIPS

IN

MACAU

Meeting the Challenge of Jobs for Communications Majors

Presented by

Ms. Anne Godsey

Communications Coordinator

University of Macau

Asia's Communications Challenges

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COMMUNICATIONS INTERNSHIPS IN MACAU

One of the major challenges facing Communications programs at universities in either developing or small countries such as Macau is the placement of graduates in relevant jobs that will utilize their skills and knowledge. In order to forge links between the University of Macau and the local business community, and to educate local businessmen as to the value and employability of graduates with a Communications degree, an innovative internship program was designed to place fourth-year Communications majors into a variety of companies and organizations during their final semester of study. Although the immediate and ultimate goal of the four-month internship program was jobs for the students upon graduation, the internship also afforded Communications students the opportunity to acquire practical experience in a large number of companies spanning a diverse range of industries, including hotels, utilities companies, banks, and media organizations. This paper will present a step-by-step blueprint as to how the internship program was developed and implemented, and will discuss the comprehensive assessment of the program based on evaluations completed by both the students and the internship sites.

I. Brief Description and Background of the Communications Program

The University of Macau offers students a four-year Licenciatura/Bachelor of Arts degree in English Studies with a Specialization in Communications. The Communications program was first established in 1991 as a Specialization course under the English Studies major of the Faculty of Arts with courses heavily oriented toward language, literature, translation and linguistics. Due to requests by students for additional Communications classes that would prepare them with a pre-professional degree, and the recognized need in Macau and the Pearl Delta region for professionals in Communications, the program was revised and expanded in 1993. Although it remains a Specialization under English Studies, the new curriculum is designed to provide undergraduate liberal arts students with a solid grounding in communication theory and practice. Instruction for all Communications courses is in the English language. The first year focuses on communications technology and fundamental communication skills, while the second and third years broaden the focus to the mass media in a cross-cultural context. Individual courses emphasize practical and technical skills in both the electronic and print media. The fourth year offers "capstone" courses in professional career skills through workshops and the internship. The curriculum requires a core of professional content courses, while offering a substantial number of free electives to allow students to tailor their education to the professional interests and career paths they intend to fulfill.

Enrollment in the Communications specialization has continued to expand, with a current total of 170 students, including 25 in the fourth-year, 21 in the third year, 45 in the second year, and 80 in the first year.

II. Description and Background of the Communications Internship Program

As part of the degree requirements, students must successfully complete an Internship related to their major during the final semester of study. The course description for the Internship states, "Through cooperation of local businesses and agencies, students will be given short-term work placements that will allow them to apply to real-life communications problems the knowledge and skills acquired in their classes. Each internship will be supervised by a faculty member. Performance satisfactory to both the employer and faculty supervisor is required for passing the course ..." The internship is available only to students with fourth-year status in good academic standing. Students receive three academic credits for successfully completing the internship program. Grades are assigned based on the University's four-point scale of A, B, C, D, or F. During the spring semester of the 1995/96 academic year, 20 fourth-year Communications majors participated in the first Internship Program conducted in local businesses.

The methodology of setting up the internship program can be divided into four phases: determining the internship sites, placement of students, the internship period itself, and evaluation of the program.
III. Determination of Internship Sites

A. Request letter to Macau companies and organizations

In order to determine which businesses and organizations in Macau would be interested in accepting fourth-year Communications students as interns during the Spring 1996 semester, a request letter written in the English language was sent in December 1995, to the General Managers or Chief Executive Officers of 36 private companies, media organizations, and government services in Macau. Specifically, letters were sent to local hotels, utilities companies, the government radio and television stations, airlines, governmental organizations, local newspapers, and airport-affiliated companies. In addition, informal personal contacts were made with many of the executives by the Internship Coordinator at social events.

Contents of the letter, divided into titled sections for easier reading, included a brief introduction to the University's Communications program, general guidelines for the internship, evaluation procedures, and general information about the students' academic background. Specifically, the request letter stated that 20 fourth-year students were seeking practical experience through participation in a three-month, non-compensatory internship. The time frame was set from mid-February to late May with students working for a minimum of 15 hours and a maximum of 20 hours per week. Time schedules were to be arranged based on students' course commitments and the internship sites' scheduling requirements. Students were to be selected for each internship site based on interviews between the student and the company.

Although students were not to be paid for their work, it was noted that an informal agreement was to be signed by each student and Internship Director to ensure that both parties fully understood the parameters and expectations of the internship.

Final paragraphs provided contact numbers of the Internship Coordinator for further information. One major oversight, however, was that the letter did not specify a deadline for a response from the companies.

Attached to each request letter was a one-page "Internship Questionnaire" to be completed and returned to the Internship Coordinator by businesses or organizations willing to accept an intern. This questionnaire asked for general information including the name, address, telephone and fax numbers of the company, the name and title of the Internship Director, the proposed number of students to be accepted, the minimum and maximum number of hours per week the intern would work, and the preferred schedule for the intern. Of particular importance was the listing of the intern's job responsibilities, which indicated whether the Internship Director understood the purpose and scope of the internship program and whether the site would be suitable for the students. Respondents could also list specific requests or requirements for the intern, such as fluency in a particular language, knowledge of specified computer software, a background of electives in business courses, etc.

B. Follow-up Request Letter

When response to the original request letter was slow, a follow-up letter was mailed in late January 1996, which outlined some minor changes in the internship schedule and set a deadline for a response by February 2, 1996. A second copy of the Internship Questionnaire was attached, and follow-up telephone calls were made.

Of the original 36 companies sent request letters, positive responses were received from 18. Four companies replied negatively, while the remainder did not respond at all. Because several companies requested more than one intern, not all 18 companies were accommodated, and not all companies received as many interns as requested, i.e. more internship positions were offered than were needed.
C. Thank You Letters

In order to foster goodwill and open channels of communication between the University and the companies participating in the internship program, two different "Thank You" letters were sent in early February. A general letter was addressed to the General Manager or Chief Executive Officer to thank him for his company's participation. A more specific letter was addressed to the person named in the Internship Questionnaire as the Internship Director. This letter enclosed a copy of the University's second semester schedule, suggested a meeting with the Internship Coordinator in early February, and set the dates for the student interviews for the two-week period of February 5-16. The internship itself was to commence on March 4 and continue until May 31.

D. Visit to Internship Sites/Meetings with Internship Directors

Because the Internship Coordinator was not personally familiar with several of the internship sites and did not know any of the Internship Directors, meeting with them personally was an important beginning to the internship program. These meetings allowed the Internship Coordinator to determine each site's suitability for the internship and to establish a working relationship with the Internship Director in order to facilitate good communication.

During the meetings, the internship program was discussed in detail and a schedule of activities was provided. Each Director was presented with "mini-resumes," or short written summaries of individual students' academic background and personal interests, and they were requested to telephone or fax the Internship Coordinator with the names of students they wished to interview. The Coordinator then notified students to contact the Internship Directors to arrange the interview date and time.

IV. Placement of Students at Internship Sites

Early in the internship process, the Internship Coordinator decided that placement would be determined by mutual agreement between the students and Internship Directors based on interviews. Students had the option of accepting or rejecting placement offers, while Internship Directors had the option of interviewing as many students as required to meet their objectives.

A. Student Questionnaires/Summary of Qualifications and Experience

The "mini-resumes," from which Internship Directors selected the students to interview, were prepared from a questionnaire designed by the Coordinator. Questions related to students' academic and personal background, including grade point average, scholarships and awards, work experience, fluency in various languages and computing skills, hobbies and interests. Students also indicated the type of internship they wanted, where they preferred to intern, and what they hoped to achieve as a result of the internship.

Attached to the mini-resumes was a covering sheet that included an outline of the University's four-point grading scale, a caution that the information presented was based on student responses without independent verification of accuracy, and a list of the compulsory Communications courses students had taken during their course of study. The Grade Point averages for each student were confirmed with Registry.

B. Student Interviews with Internship Directors

Student interviews were scheduled for the two-week period between February 5-16, 1996. Students' names were faxed or telephoned to the Internship Coordinator, who notified students by telephone or pager. Dates and times of the interviews were arranged directly between students and Internship Directors.
A total of 90 interviews were arranged at 16 internship sites. Each internship site averaged 5.6 interviews. Two internship sites interviewed only one or two students, while others elected to interview seven to ten students before making a final decision. In most cases, students were interviewed individually, but several students were interviewed as a group. In the event an Internship Director agreed to accept a particular student who had agreed to intern elsewhere or rejected the internship offer, the Internship Director either selected another student who had been interviewed or resumed the interviewing process.

The number of interviews attended by each student also varied widely. Twenty students attended an average of 4.7 interviews. Six students attended only one or two interviews, while four students interviewed with seven to nine companies before accepting an internship offer. Students with higher grade point averages tended to receive more interview appointments and internship offers, and it was not until late in the interview process that a few students had their first interview. However, as students accepted internship offers and were no longer available for interviewing, the remaining students had an opportunity to be interviewed and placed. There were some indications of resentment among students who were not selected for interviews by the companies they thought most desirable as internship sites.

C. Finalization of Student Placement

By March 4th, the starting date of the internship period, all but two students had been placed. These two students continued to interview and were finally placed by mid-March. With the exception of the government Chinese-language television station, all students were placed in private companies. Although governmental institutions, such as the tourism department, municipal agencies, and Communications office, were approached for internships, the requests were either ignored or they were so slow in organizing interviews that students had already been placed at private companies. It should be noted that several of the participating private companies are joint ventures with foreign interests, including American, European and mainland Chinese, and they were particularly interested in accepting students with fluency in English and/or Mandarin.

Five students were placed in the public relations, public affairs, or Consumer Services departments of the electric, telephone, water and trash collection companies, seven were placed in hotels in either public relations departments or Front Office, four interned in Passenger Services at Macau's new airport, one was placed at the Jockey Club in the Personnel Department and one at Hong Kong Bank in the Client Services department. Only two students were placed in media organizations - one in the production department of the government Chinese-language television station, and one as a reporter at a Chinese-language newspaper.

V. The Internship

During the three-month internship period from March 4 - May 31, 1996, students acquired a wide variety of experiences. Although several worked under supervisors assigned by Internship Directors, the Internship Directors were ultimately responsible for the students' internship program and evaluation.

A. Internship Job Responsibilities

The types of work that students performed can be divided into two areas: the routine work of the department to which they were assigned and special projects. All of the participating utilities companies and several of the hotels have senior-level Western expatriate managers who are not fluent in Chinese or Portuguese, so as part of their routine work the students clipped relevant newspaper and magazine articles and translated them into English. They also wrote press releases, attended press conferences, worked with advertising agencies, wrote articles for in-house corporate newsletters, took photos, responded to letters of complaint, escorted visitors around the facilities, updated media contact lists, and attended informational programs at local schools. For special projects, several interns worked on organizing exhibition space at the
first Macau International Trade Fair, held in mid-April. Other special projects included conducting surveys of either employees or customers, preparing monthly or quarterly reports, writing and designing consumer leaflets and brochures, working on promotional videos, updating and consolidating the company's database, preparing press kits, and organizing in-house seminars. One company rotated two interns through several departments to give them a broader range of experience.

Students who interned in the Front Office of hotels, in the Passenger Services department of the airport, in the Personnel Department of the Macau Jockey Club or the Client Services department of HongKong Bank were called upon to utilize the skills they learned in their interpersonal and intercultural communication classes. They spent most of the internship working with people in such tasks as conducting customer surveys, handling room assignments, perfecting telephone skills, and dealing with customer problems.

The two students who interned in media organizations were more focused on media skills. The student with the Chinese-language television station served as a Production Assistant and spent most of her time on electronic field production and post-production tasks such as editing and checking tapes and doing voice-overs, while the student reporter worked on the local news desk, with the airport as her specific beat, and interviewed foreign visitors, usually in English or Mandarin. The newspaper also sent her to Taiwan to cover the presidential election there.

B. Communication between Internship Coordinator and Directors

In order to facilitate a harmonious relationship between the University and the internship sites throughout the internship period, the Internship Coordinator kept in close contact with the Internship Directors by telephone and fax, and encouraged Internship Directors to notify her of any problems. Periodic faxes were sent by the Coordinator apprising the Directors of current matters.

VI. Student Requirements for Internship Credits

Students had two major areas of responsibility for the internship: attendance and participation in class at the University and attendance and participation at the internship site. Grades were equally weighted, with 50% of the final grade determined by the Internship Director and 50% by the Internship Coordinator.

A. Class Requirements for Internship

On the first day of class, students received a syllabus outlining course requirements and grading criteria for the internship. Class requirements included attending a weekly class on campus, writing a Daily Log of activities at the internship site, writing a Final Report summarizing and analyzing the internship experience, and completing an evaluation of the internship program.

During weekly classes, students read selections from their Daily Logs, summarized their weekly activities, discussed their best and worst moments during the week, analyzed their feelings toward the internship site, described their colleagues, discussed their problems, and gave an overall opinion as to how the internship was progressing.

The Daily Log, a type of journal, served as an ongoing point of reference for students to determine the manner in which the internship experience was developing for them over a period of time. It also provided a basis for discussion at the weekly class meetings.

The Final Report was submitted at the last class meeting, and required students to summarize and analyze the entire internship experience and put it into a perspective that was relevant for them. The structure
and organization covered five major areas of discussion: 1) An overview of the internship site, e.g. name of company, type of business, number of employees, etc. 2) A summary of the intern's duties and responsibilities, and specifically, a discussion of actual projects, 3) An analysis of the student's best experience and worst experience on the job, 4) A discussion of what the student learned as a result of the internship experience, and 5) How the internship experience will help the student in a future career. Work samples were to be included with the Final Report.

B. Requirements at the Internship Site

Students were expected to participate at the internship site for a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 20 hours per week, and they were to fully comply with all assignments given to them by the Internship Director or supervisor assigned to them.

Before students began working at the internship site, an "Internship Agreement" was signed between students and Internship Directors to ensure that both parties had a firm grasp of the requirements and expectations of the internship. Specifically, it was designed to prevent the internship site from taking advantage of the students' free labor, while ensuring that each intern fully understood his or her responsibilities. The Agreement stated the beginning and ending dates of the internship, the intern's exact time schedule, and the department in which the intern was assigned. Most importantly, it listed the intern's job responsibilities and any special conditions or requirements. In one or two cases, the internship site also required students to sign a separate company agreement.

VII. Evaluation

Two types of assessment were made for the internship: 1) Evaluation of each individual intern by the Internship Director and the Internship Coordinator in order to assign students a final course grade, and 2) Evaluation of the internship program by the students and Internship Directors.

A. Evaluation of Students

As noted earlier, students' final course grades were weighted equally, with 50% determined by the Internship Coordinator and 50% by the Internship Director.

1. Evaluation by Internship Coordinator

Students' class grades were based on the Coordinator's evaluation of four items:

- Attendance at weekly internship class: 10%
- Written Daily Log of activities: 10%
- Written Final Report: 25%
- Written evaluation of program: 5%

Attendance records were maintained for weekly classes. Both the Daily Log and Final Report were read and assessed by the Internship Coordinator, with letter grades assigned according to the completeness and scholarship of each assignment. The written evaluation of the program was not assessed for content, but students were automatically given full marks if the form was submitted with their Final Reports. Students were advised the evaluation would not be read until after final grades had been submitted.

2. Evaluation by Internship Director

In order to simplify evaluation of the interns by the Internship Directors, the Internship Coordinator
prepared a two-page "Evaluation of Intern" form which consisted of three parts. Part I asked for general responses, such as the dates the internship began and ended, the number of days or hours per week the intern was expected at the internship site, the number of days the intern was absent, and the specific duties the intern actually performed. These may have been different from those originally specified in the Internship Questionnaire.

In Part II, Internship Directors were required to evaluate the intern on 32 items in two sections: Personal Qualities and Job Performance. Responses were based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Excellent (5 points) to Poor (1 point). Under Personal Qualities, the intern was evaluated in terms of attendance, dependability, attitude toward the job, cooperation, personal appearance, appropriate dress, initiative, and leadership skills. For Job Performance, interns were evaluated for their job knowledge, quality and quantity of their work, speed and accuracy in performing the job, analytical and organizational skills, productivity level, ability to follow directions, plan and complete work, meet deadlines and schedules, and develop constructive ideas.

Part III requested Directors to write a general overall evaluation of the intern, to state whether the intern could be a potential employee, and to give reasons for their response.

To calculate a numerical value for the responses on the evaluation form, letters from A-F were assigned a value based on the 5-point scale, with 5 points equal to an A and 1 point equal to an F. Then, each student's numerical score was totalled and divided by 32, the total number of responses, and letter grades were assigned based on the scale.

Grades submitted by the Internship Directors were relatively high, with 17 out of the 20 students receiving an A or B, an indication that Internship Directors were satisfied with the interns' performance.

B Evaluation of Internship Program

Two evaluations of the Internship Program were made - one by the students and the other by the Internship Directors.

1. Evaluation of Internship Program by Students

Before the end of the semester, students were given an "Evaluation of Internship Program" form to be completed as thoroughly as possible and submitted with the Final Reports. To avoid any influence on the students' final grades, these evaluations were not read until after submission of final grades to the Registry. Students were automatically given the full five points for submitting the completed form.

The "Evaluation of Internship Program" form consisted of 14 open-ended questions for students to comment on the interview process, the internship agreement, class requirements and attendance, the parts of the program they enjoyed the most and least, grading criteria, the range of companies that participated, the names of other companies for future years, and how the program could be improved.

The first three questions dealt with intern placement. Nearly all (16) students agreed the interview process was the best method of selection because it is the "reality of looking for a job" and gave them the "opportunity to experience a real-life situation" for their job search after graduation. It also gave them the opportunity to see the job site, meet the Internship Director, and ask questions about their responsibilities during the internship. Students who responded negatively said interviewing took too much time and they were not interested in some of the companies that selected them for interviews.

Suggestions for alternative methods of placement fell into three general areas: 1) Assignment of
students by the Coordinator or by lottery, 2) Selection of the internship sites by the students for placement or interviews without any choice by the companies, and 3) Matching of students and internship sites based on preference lists provided by both parties. To improve interview procedures it was suggested that all Internship Directors come to campus on one day and interview all students, either individually or in groups, and to limit the number of interviews each student could accept. As several of these suggestions limit input from the companies involved, it is unlikely they would agree. Students also requested more interview training in class, especially role-playing, more instruction in resume-writing, and encouragement to take interviewing more seriously.

Because organizing nearly 100 interviews between students and Directors required a substantial amount of time and effort by the Internship Coordinator, students suggested other notification methods, e.g. by an appointed student representative, by e-mail, or through the Faculty's General Office. Direct communication between the Internship Directors and students was another suggested alternative. Two questions dealt with the Internship Agreement. All students agreed it was necessary for their protection. They commented that the Agreement served as a good guideline of their responsibilities and helped to avoid any misunderstandings. Although most students felt both parties had honored the agreement, two students said the internship sites wanted them to work longer and/or different hours. Students suggested the Agreement specify times for lunch, number of public holidays, and conditions for sick leave.

Three questions dealt with the classroom requirements specified in the syllabus. Nineteen students thought attending class each week gave them a good opportunity to discuss their internship experiences with their peers. Four students suggested meeting every two weeks, and one student commented she spent too much time at the internship site and didn’t want to attend any classes. No student suggested additional class time. Eighteen students found it helpful to keep the Daily Log as it provided the necessary detail to write the Final Report, and allowed them to check their progress. Four students suggested keeping a weekly rather than a Daily Log because some days were too similar. Two students commented that keeping the Daily Log was “boring.”

Students felt that writing the Final Report was a “good tool to collect our thoughts,” “good to generalize our internship experience,” “a good conclusion to the internship,” and “helped to organize important ideas learned from the internship.” In particular, several students found the organizational guidelines for the Final Report to be very helpful. One student complained the Final Report “was too much work, just doing the internship was enough.”

Students’ answers varied widely, depending upon their particular experiences, as to which part of the internship they enjoyed the most. Among the positive experiences were: going to China and Taiwan to cover stories, going through an entire company project from start to finish, learning how to interact better with people, working at the Macau International Fair, having a lot of interesting work to do, meeting many different kinds of people, interviewing, working with my colleagues. One student simply commented, all of it!

Some negative comments, typical of students, included: having to get dressed up every day, getting up early, writing the Daily Log. Other comments were more job-related: not having my own computer at the company, interviewing, having nothing to do, waiting to be selected for the internship, the first two weeks when I didn’t know anyone, and not being hired by the company at the end of the internship.

Commenting on the type of companies that participated, most students felt there was “a good range of companies,” and “we were lucky to have so many choices.” A few students said there should be more jobs related to public relations and advertising or directly to communications courses. Two students felt there were too many hotels. Suggestions for companies to approach for the next year included airlines, more Chinese newspapers, insurance companies, World Trade Center, fast-food companies, more banks, the bus
company, Yaohan department store, and advertising agencies in Macau. It should be noted that letters were sent to several of these companies, but they either rejected participation or did not respond.

Suggested improvements for next year fell into three broad areas: timing, payment, and conditions. Some students felt the internship should be arranged during the summer holidays because they are too busy with course work during the academic year, while others said it should be for an entire semester, not just 3 months, so they can gain more work experience. On the other hand, one student thought the internship should be less than three months and less than 20 hours per week. Several students felt they should be paid for their work, or at least provided with a transportation allowance. Other suggestions for improvements included: settling all placements before the semester begins, specifying holidays, sick leave and lunch times in the Internship Agreement, matching more closely students' interests and career choice with the type of job, providing a wider choice of business fields for internship sites, requiring each internship site to prepare a job summary to give students before interviews, and rotating students through several departments within a company.

As for the grading criteria, although eighteen students were satisfied, with the most frequent comment being it was “fair,” several students suggested changes. One student thought the evaluation by the Internship Director should be weighted less than 50%, while another student said the internship site should not provide any evaluation at all. Conversely, several students said the evaluation by the Internship Director should be more than 50% since so much time was spent at the internship site. One student complained that the Internship Director's evaluation was "too subjective," and the grade for the Internship should be only a Pass/Fail, while another student said the Internship Director's evaluation form was "too objective" and should allow more opportunity for personal comments. Four students complained that although the Internship Director completed the evaluation forms, because they did not actually work with him, the evaluations should have been done by their supervisors. Some students thought the Daily Log should be a higher percentage of the final grade and the Final Report should count less. Overall, there was no consensus for any change.

2. Evaluation of Internship Program by Internship Directors

After the internship was completed on May 31, "Evaluation of Internship Program" forms were mailed to all 16 Internship Directors. The form consisted of 16 open-ended questions concerning the timing of the internship, the amount of time students spent at the internship site, the interview process, the Internship Agreement, the skills and training level of the interns, evaluation procedures, and the success of the program for the company. Twelve of the 16 Internship Directors completed and returned the evaluation.

Three questions dealt with the timing of the internship program. Most of the companies considered the timing suitable, although three hotels preferred November - January, June - August, or October - December, respectively, since these are their busiest times. Two companies suggested six months as a minimum time period, while one company said three months was too long. In almost all cases, companies said 20 hours per week should be a minimum, not a maximum. Four companies specifically stated the internship should be full-time for five days per week, while another company said students should attend full days (not half-days) for at least three days per week.

Ten companies felt that interviews were the best method for selecting an intern, while two companies suggested students be assigned. Several companies specifically commented they like the interview process because it gave them the opportunity to know which students were most suitable for their organization. The companies felt they had sufficient information about each student to decide which ones to interview. Two companies suggested the information include students' secondary school grades, more information on academic performance in the English and Chinese languages, and addresses and telephone numbers to contact students directly to arrange interview appointments.
When asked to comment on the necessity of the Internship Agreement, several Directors were specifically favorable, making the point the agreement made clear to both parties the expectations of the internship. One company suggested adding a confidentiality clause requiring students to keep sensitive information confidential.

Three questions related specifically to the suitability of the interns in terms of placement, training and special skills. All agreed the interns were suitably placed and had appropriate training. For special skills, directors specified it was important for interns to have flexibility, an eagerness to learn, fluency in oral English, proficiency in English and Chinese writing, organizational skills, creativity, interpersonal skills, computer knowledge, and personal manners on the telephone and with people.

The Internship Directors rated Communication between the company and the university as very good. One company commented, "I am impressed on how the university followed things through." Two companies suggested interns provide written feedback or the companies be given a copy of the intern's evaluation form. All agreed the "Evaluation of Intern" form was appropriate.

The overall evaluation by the Internship Directors was highly favorable. All 12 companies agreed the Internship Program was beneficial to their organizations and they would participate in the program the next year. Several companies specifically mentioned their appreciation of the interns. Other comments and suggestions made by the Internship Directors included: the program was very well-organized, there should be more feedback from the students to the internship sites, the company should be contacted at least six months in advance of the internship, a workshop or meeting should be held with all of the interns and the Internship Directors to discuss the students' experiences. Some of the suggestions and comments made in these evaluations will be implemented for the Spring '97 internship program. Not all suggestions can be implemented for practical reasons, especially with respect to the timing of the internship period.

VIII. Concluding Activities and Overall Assessment

A. Appreciation Program and Luncheon

As a small token of appreciation and to bring the interns and Internship Directors together, a program and luncheon were organized on Wednesday, June 12, 1996. Held in the University's Senate Room, the program included the introduction of each Internship Director and intern, followed by a brief history and background of the University of Macau and the Communications Program. The Internship Directors received a copy of the Communications program Study Plan along with a request for input as to the types of courses that would be the most appropriate to train students for jobs in their respective companies.

Following the program, a light luncheon, catered by the University canteen, was held in the Student Union. The luncheon gave everyone an opportunity to meet, compare notes about the internship, and discuss plans for future programs in an informal setting. Each Internship Director received a small souvenir as another token of appreciation from the University and the interns.

B. Overall Assessment of Internship Program

From the evaluations completed by the 20 interns and 12 of the 16 Internship Directors, the first year of a diversified Internship Program was a success for the participants. Much has been learned from the evaluations and personal discussions with the students and Internship Directors, and some recommendations will be implemented for the Spring 1997 internship program. It is sincerely hoped, that as a result of the Spring 1996 Internship program and future programs, communication between the University and the Macau business community will strengthen, so we can work together as a team to train the educated and skilled workers that Macau will need in the future to be a vibrant and successful economy.