

# *My Time at UniWorld Group*

*By Pedro Ferreira*



## Week 1

So, today begins the final hoorah of my undergrad and the first class of the day happens to be the Internship course. On the first day, Prof. Mason informs all the students of what to expect of the class and what is expected from us. Basically, the goal of the class is for the students to obtain an internship in their corresponding field.

So far, only a few students have internships, which eases my mind. I have been searching high and low for internship opportunities since I signed up for the class at the end of the Fall 2013 semester. I have lost count of how many places I have emailed about possible internship opportunities. Even though I have not received many replies, besides the ones telling me to re-apply in the summer, I have not lost faith. This is not my first foray into interning. I have previously done internships at galleries and print shops, so I know that it takes a while for things to come around.

Good thing Prof. Mason is willing to help us out by giving us a sheet of paper with a few internships past students completed. On top of that, Prof. Mason sent me an email with a possible internship opportunity via Prof. Davis.

Upon contacting Prof. Davis on Thursday, I find out the internship is for an advertising agency looking to reinvigorate its company. I'm open to any opportunities right now, so I definitely jumped on this one.

I attended the interview on Friday. I got a good vibe from the place. The employees are all young, in my age range, which is a good thing because this means we possibly have more in common. As the interview commences, I find out that one of the individuals interviewing me is familiar with the neighborhood I grew up and lives not too far from where I live. From there on, we all began to click. They mainly asked questions regarding my work experience, personal interests, and what the word "culture" means to me. I believe I adequately replied to all their questions and displayed my knowledge in design. Afterwards, they told me they liked the vibe I gave off and definitely liked my resume and the work samples I showed them. Now, I just sit and wait with my fingers crossed. However, I will continue my search, which will hopefully end soon.

## Week 2

On the second week of internship, I missed class due to the severe storm we had. I haven't let up with searching for an internship. I have applied for a few more internships.

The third week of school, we are off due to Lincoln's birthday. During the week, I emailed a few more places, hoping for some good news. Later in the week, I received an email from a company I interviewed with. They wanted me to forward them a link to my online portfolio, which I did as soon as I could. Also, I went along and emailed two or three of the job sites that are on the sheet Prof. Mason gave us. Among those was the City Tech Visual Arts Department. I received an immediate reply to forward my portfolio to them. That's the last I've heard of both sites, which is making me anxious.

Leading up to the fourth week of school, I get a promising phone call from the owner of a design firm. He told me he liked what he saw and was interested in setting up an interview with me. However, I was at work and did not receive the message till later in the day. I was able to reach him, but he told me he was in the middle of something and would get back to me as soon as possible. I didn't hear back from him. I did leave him a message, so I hope he hears that and gets back to me.

Regardless of the trajectory of the semester so far, I still remain opportunistic. I believe that in time, patience will bring what I desire. In the time being, I will focus my energies on all my classes and continue my search.

## Week 3

It is the third week of internship, and I have yet to find an internship. It is not an easy task. I continue to send out applications, hoping that an opportunity will arise.

Last week, I received a phone call from a potential internship. I missed the call, but I made attempts to contacting him, all to no avail.

The third class of internship is here. I am very skeptic to how far I can make it without nailing an internship. I don't want to be the only person in class who doesn't obtain an internship during the semester. I take things to heart, and not being able to get an internship will be a harrowing experience.

Upon entering class, I see that everyone is cheerfully sharing their internship experiences. As class commences, Prof. Mason goes around the class asking everyone about their internships. Unfortunately, I have to tell the class that I have not obtained an internship at this point in time. However, as we go around the whole class, I find out I am not alone. A few other classmates have had trouble obtaining internships. Prof. Mason told the class that from this point on class will be meeting once every few weeks (as detailed on the new class schedule). This means that the class will meet less during the semester.

As the week came to a close, I contacted the person who left me a message about the internship last week, once again. This time, he responded! His name is Marcus Clark (goes by Marc) and he is the founder and owner of Marcc, a small fashion design company. Upon speaking with Marc, he told me he had relocated from Brooklyn to California. The reason for this is that he is a Stylist for celebrities. This meant that the internship would be a virtual one... Not really what I was looking for. But, for someone who doesn't have anything, this is a blessing. I would be contacting Marc via phone, email, and video messenger.

The first assignment Marc gave me was to create some t-shirt comps utilizing various materials and prints. I did seven comps for him, and now I wait for his opinion.

## Week 4

It is now week 4 of the internship course and I finally have an internship. I am optimistic as to what is to come for me. Marc, my supervisor, sounds like a very nice guy. He is lenient with me and told me that he does not want me to feel in any way, shape or form uncomfortable reaching out to him for anything. That is good to hear, especially since he won't be overlooking my work directly.

Marc told me to come up with a few t-shirt comps last week to showcase the type of work I am capable of, especially since this is a fashion-design agency. I sent him seven t-shirt comps via Dropbox. On last Friday, Marc took a look at the comps. He liked my approach and concepts. For my next task, Marc told me to come up with some comps for a client who is creating an apparel line for their company.

The company is called Rainier Arms. They are aimed towards those who are into guns, shooting ranges, and game-hunting. The approach I took for this project was to incorporate animal and camouflage prints into the t-shirt designs. Marc liked the comps, and after a selection process, he asked me to further elaborate on one of the shirt comps. I came up with a few more comps and sent it his way.

On Tuesday, the 25th of February, I received an email from a company I had interviewed with, UniWorld Group. I have been selected as one of three individuals to intern with them. I am ecstatic! The email states I must attend a meeting the next day, which will be recorded.

Its Wednesday morning and I have arrived at UniWorld. Upon entering, I meet one of the interns. His name is Matt and he also attends City Tech. Later on, I meet the other intern, Ben, who also attends City Tech. It seems that Prof. Davis has strong connections here at UniWorld. At the conference room, I meet a group of people, including the head marketing personnel, Michael, the art director, Chris (who also interviewed me) and my supervisor, Jarek. The meeting consists of us discussing the importance of culture in our society. At its conclusion, we discuss what our roles will be. The interns will assist UniWorld in accumulating information on culture and branding, which in turn will be formatted into different media and will go up on their Culture Labs page.

## Week 5

As week 5 commences, I now have 2 internships. At first, I thought it might be too much, but as the week goes on, I feel more and more comfortable. I feel as though I am taking much from both.

With the Marcc internship, I am working without any supervision. This compels me to manage my daily activities, allowing myself time to work on projects for Marcc. Time management is definitely something I've struggled with in the past, so it is good to be working on that.

Marc took a look at the last comps I did for him. He liked them very much and told me he would be taking all the comps I gave him to a design conference with some clients. I look forward to hearing what type of comments he got from presenting my work. Also, Marc gave me another assignment. He wants me to develop t-shirt comps for the Marcc brand. According to Marc, he is currently in talks with clothing store chain Urban Outfitters. This means I may possibly be designing clothing that may end up on store shelves.

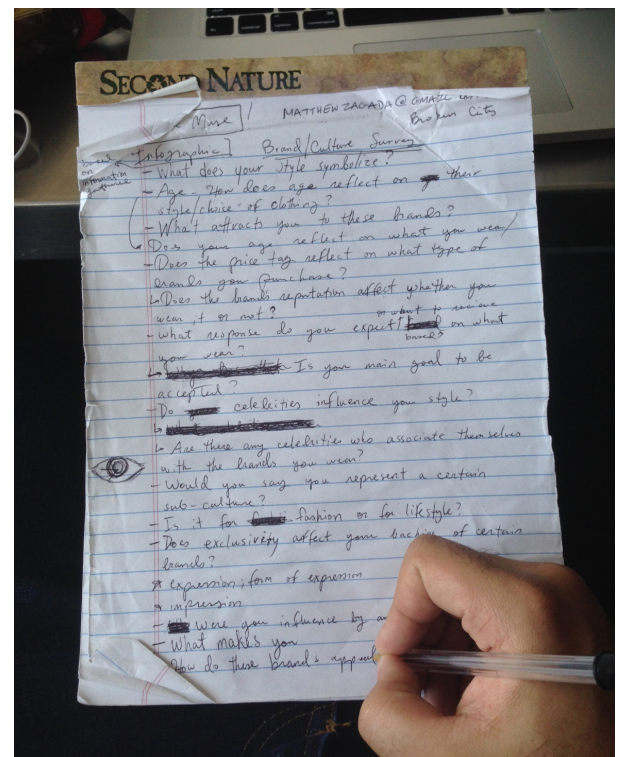
As for my UniWorld internship, the other interns and I decided on a set schedule to come in. As Culture Lab interns, we will be gathering data to utilize on the UniWorld website. So far, we have decided that we will create video, photographic, and info-graphic media. I will be handling the info-graphs with a modern twist. As the week kicks off, we are coming up with questions that we can utilize to survey people. We are focusing on individuals between the age ranges of 18-24. As of right now, we are trying to see whether people associate with others who use the same brands.

## Week 6

For the sixth week of internship class, we are to attend class. However, due to my internship schedule it looks like I will have to miss class. I am trying to see how I can avoid missing either school or the internship. I have emailed Prof. Mason about it. Hopefully, I will not be reprimanded, as I will be at the internship site completing the requirements for the internship class.

I have been working a lot lately at my job, which has been very stressful. I spoke to my boss about limiting the amount of hours I am working. After thinking about my circumstances, I decided that it would be best to drop one of the internships. I don't think I can fully concentrate on two internships, all the while balancing time between work and school. I feel as though the UniWorld internship has more to offer me in regards to my career path. With that said, I announced my departure from Marcc.

At UniWorld, we, the interns, have come up with a definitive list of questions to use for our survey. My colleague Ben suggested we create an online survey and use social media to get the survey out. Even though social media sounded like a good idea, we really haven't had much luck. So far, we've only garnered less than 10 replies. As a second option, we have decided to walk around socially dense areas in the city to get more input. However, the vast change in weather hinders our opportunity to survey people. Hopefully next week will be better for us.





## Week 7

This week is midterm week. This semester is going by so quickly. It feels like it was only yesterday that the semester began. Now things begin to pick up pace.

At UniWorld, my supervisor, Jarek, takes us out around campus to interview people on our topic of culture. Jarek has brought his camera to record. Each of the interns will take turns recording, interviewing and shooting stills of the area and interviewees. We are walking around in 18-degree weather. Nothing fun about that, however, one must make strides to gather information for our projects. I have begun to sketch up some possible layouts for how to go about with the info-graph. I have also shared some ideas with my fellow interns about creating the content for the Culture Labs webpage.

Recently, I spoke to a neighbor of mine who has been designing for close to 15 years. He gave me some pointers on how to approach the design world and gave me some backdrop on how design has impacted the culture we live in. That had me thinking, I might ask him to contribute to our Culture Labs page. So I asked him about potentially letting me interview him and using his likeness as an expert in culture. He agreed, so now I must get the approval from my supervisor.

Jarek showed us mockups on the new UniWorld webpage, including mockups for the Culture Labs webpage. Also, we got a glimpse at the video footage that was recorded the first day at the UniWorld meeting. It was funny seeing myself on video. Jarek has expressed to us that the page will go up by within the next month or so. This means that the interns have to gather up the information we have and begin to put it all together. We will be having another conference meeting next week to share with the board members. I am working on the mockups for the info-graph.



## Week 8

Entering this week, we were expected to make a presentation of the work we had so far. However, many circumstances led to the meeting being cancelled. For one, both the CEO and CCO were out on business meetings with clients, so they would not be around to go through things with us. Also, we ran into some difficulties with recording more people for the project due to the ever-changing weather we have had these past few weeks. Because of this, we were a bit short on the amount of work we had. The HR Director decided to push back the meeting. This gives us ample time to collect more information for the project.

Myself and the other interns at UniWorld Group went out again with our supervisor on another round of interviews. This time around, we found a lot more people who were open to being interviewed. Everyone we interviewed gave us a lot of info and backdrop on their views of brands and what drives them to support these brands. Individuality is a large topic amongst many, and their representation of certain brands did nothing to solidify that aspect of them. However, some of these individuals really stood out based on their responses and we feel good with the way the interviews went. It looks as though with this we will have enough content with which to work with.

## Week 9

This week we are taking the information we have so far and pulling the whole project together. We all took turns interviewing various participants on branding and how it relates to culture in our society. Responses varied from person to person, so proving the hypothesis can be a bit of work. It was mind-boggling seeing how much one might feel they differ from others, not knowing others unconsciously influence us. However, we are comfortable with the conclusions we arrived to.

For the info graph section of the project, I went ahead and did deep dives on certain individuals we interviewed. These were people who I felt stood out from the group of people we interviewed. Primarily, the way they responded to our questions lead to my selection of them for the info graph portion. I selected one male and one female, so as to be fair on the field. I followed the original set of questions with questions that dove into their personal lives, asking them about their upbringing and how that could've shaped who they are now or what they support nowadays. Doing the deep dive meant I had to interview the individuals I selected for a second time. After interviewing them, I had to take pictures of them to utilize for the info graph. Selecting the right photographs for the info graph was difficult because there were many pictures I felt came out great. However, I had to utilize pictures of the individuals that portrayed them in similar poses/stances. This created some cohesion between both info graphs.

Once the right pictures were chosen for the info graph, the only thing left to do was to come up with a way to design both pieces.

## Week 10

Coming into the new week, I was very anxious to finally begin designing the info graphs for the UWG Culture Labs.

Approaching the info graph, I want to take the information gathered from the two individuals I selected and compare it with general statistics. This is so the audience can see that sometimes certain things we consider unique about ourselves might not be so. I know this will take a lot of researching to find information that is adequate for the project, but its just part of the process. Since the project has to do with branding and culture, I decided to use statistics that mainly pertained to fashion and technology. This was based on brands that the individuals associated themselves with.

The first concept I mapped out for the info graph initially got the green light from my supervisors. The concept tied in very well with the new UWG website layout, however after some input and considerations, we decided to treat the info graph in a different manner than the site. With that, I had a clear direction in which I wanted to go with this project. I began to do some heavy research on info graphs. I wanted the info graph to be interactive and eye-catching.

Once I had the principle layout in mind, I began to execute. I wanted to bring an artists' influence onto the project, so I illustrated icons for the general statistics on branding. I tied everything together by creating a sort of road map throughout the info graph. It directed viewers from the information on the individuals, to general information of branding in society, to how the individual would brand himself or herself. With that, the info graph was complete and ready to present to the companies' board.



## Week 11

This week we are presenting our work to UWG's board. I was expecting to present my work to everyone in the board, which gave me slight jitters. Upon arriving to the conference room, I found out that my supervisor Jarek would be presenting our work to the board. That gave me some relief because I didn't want to mess up or get stuck on explaining something.

Before the presentation commenced, the interns were informed that we would be taking a behind-the-scenes look at the new UWG website before it launches. It was awesome looking at the newly redesigned site. It comes a long way from the old site, which I don't think was that bad. It just lacked content. However, this new site would include the newly formed Culture Labs section, which is dedicated to informing the public on how advertising and media can have a great impact on society in regards to culture.

During the presentation, we get a run down of the new features in the site and then we take a look at the Culture Labs section of the site. We also saw the finalized video that was developed from the footage we collected during the interviews. Looking at the work we produced, I am amazed with what we did. Our work added some flavor to the new site. Seeing my info graph up on the website was a great feeling. Immediately after the presentation, the board congratulated us.

## Week 12

After the presentation last week, the interns were tasked with making further corrections to the work we produced. My supervisor Jarek had the legal department at UWG contact the companies that were mentioned in the project. This was to assure that those companies don't try to sue us for unauthorized use of trademarks. Unfortunately, one of the biggest sneaker companies in the world, N\*\*\*, refused to let us use their likeness our project. That was a huge let down, especially since we were giving them their proper dues.

With that said, I had no choice but to eliminate all and any brands mentioned in the info graphs. That definitely took away from the hype surrounding the project because it lost its flavor. Branding and culture was the epicenter of this project. However, the show must go on.

I made the corrections and handed everything in before the said launch date, which was towards the end on April. However, due to legal issues and revisions needed, the date for the website's release got pushed to late May. For the most part, all the content is ready to go up, but the web developers are tightening things up to assure the launch goes off without a hitch.

## Week 13

Now that we have concluded with the branding project for Culture Labs here at UWG, my supervisor suggested we come up with ideas for a new project. For this new project, we want to make a documentary on an underground topic. One that rung a bell within my mind was the extreme sports underground culture here in New York City.

A few days later we held a brainstorming session with our two supervisors and went over some topics for the next project. Some of the ideas we tumbled through were things like the aforementioned extreme sports, individuals who self harm, and the art of tattoos. Out of the blue, one of the supervisors blurted out handball. That was genius. Handball is so underrated in New York City, so much that people don't recognize it as a sport. In fact, handball can be considered New York City's unofficial sport. Handball courts can be found in many neighborhood parks.

We plan on getting together for a brainstorming session to discuss how we will execute it. Also, we decided it would be in our best interest to designate roles amongst ourselves. This allows us to keep the project in check as we progress from point A to point B. However, this doesn't mean we will only work on one specific thing. We will assist each other through out the process.



## Week 14

Coming into the week 14 of the internship, I am close to reaching the time necessary to meet the internship course requirements. However, that does not necessarily mean that I will be done at the conclusion of this week. As I have stated in previous journal entries, we, the interns, at UniWorld Group have begun the process of working on another project. The new project we will be working on consists of a documentary based around the sport of handball and its obscurity here in New York City.

For this final journal entry, I don't really want to focus on what I am currently working on with UniWorld Group, but I want to talk about my experience with the company.

Finding an internship was no easy task and getting selected to be one of three interns for UWG was an ecstatic moment for me. I thought this would be a similar experience to those I've had with previous internships: the typical going under someone's wing and assisting them with ongoing projects. However, with UWG it was a completely different experience. As an intern, I was tasked with going out into the real world and conducting research via surveying. The information gathered would be used to cultivate information that we would use as the foundation to Culture Labs. Culture Labs is a section of UWG dedicated to collecting information on the impact culture has in our society.

Working side-by-side with the creative directors at UWG, I was able to get a first hand glimpse of the advertising world. Nothing is easy, and that was evident here at UWG. Everyone working here spends countless hours going back and forth with clients on projects. However, what really stood out to me at UWG was the teamwork. Everyone here works in unison. The balance and cohesion within UWG is not only visible in their work, but also in their attitudes. Everyone is upbeat and very fluid in the way they carry themselves. All egos are kept in check. Everyone gets along well and they make sure to interact with one another outside of the workplace. With projects passing through everyone's hands, this is key.

With that said, when I leave UWG I will be leaving a great group of people. Since I got here, all I've been receiving is love and knowledge. I will be leaving with an understanding of how to properly conduct research in order to create solutions for advertising.

