

Degree Program: Global Responsibility and Leadership

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## Preface

Throughout my studies in the Bachelor program Global Responsibility and Leadership, I have gained insight into many new fields. Especially the governance track has been eye-opening, changing my awareness of how the world functions and how leaders affect it. This has allowed me to develop a deeper understanding and interest in the field of international relations which has always piqued my attention. The program has equipped me with the knowledge and resources I need to expand my knowledge in this field.

In addition, I have always had a passion for movie-making and creative expression through digital creation. I have also pursued this interest in various forms, for example, in small jobs in video editing, and Instagram designs for small groups as for example, internships in the communication department at WWF. However, I have always followed this passion on a rather amateur level since the aforementioned opportunities went from 2 weeks - 1 month. Thus, I seized the opportunity to do a three-month internship at RAIA. The internship gave me the possibility to combine my interest in international relations and my skill and interest in creative content creation while obtaining useful experience working with professionals in this field. I joined the communications team.

The opportunity for this internship presented itself when I was doing my minor in Amsterdam. One of my classmates turned out to be the general coordinator of the organization and told me about the internship opening in the communications department, where I then decided to apply for various positions and got accepted for an interview, and then hired as a podcast editor. At the very beginning of my internship, I learned that their graphic designer had quit at the last minute and then took on the responsibility of that role as well.

The main assignment was to edit the audio file of the RAIA podcast since this was the position I applied for Raia(ffairs). This includes adding together single audio files and overall improving the quality of the audio. Furthermore, I designed templates for their LinkedIn and Instagram platforms, since the person who was originally planning for the position fell away last minute and I needed the extra assignments to fulfill my 12 hours a week in order to receive 5 credits at UCF. The design also had to follow guidelines by RAIA such as font, colors, and design in order to fit into the brand of the think tank.

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## Introduction

Research and Advisory on International Affairs (RAIA) is a think tank, founded by a group of students and a professor in Madrid, that aims to provide an alternative viewpoint to mainstream news outlets and political commentary. Through demystifying significant occasions, choices, agreements, and conflicts in the political sphere, RAIA seeks to simplify the complex world of policymaking. The aim is to help the general audience to better understand international matters. The organization places a strong emphasis on internal development and collaboration among its members, offering a variety of weekly events and collaborations with other institutions.

My main assignment at RAIA was to edit the RAIA(ffairs) podcast using Adobe Audition and other tools, create graphic designs, and participate in meetings to discuss future ideas. The internship has provided me with the opportunity to produce professional audio files that represent the RAIA brand.

Overall, the internship has been a success, with the first podcast episode published and the second scheduled for release in the coming week. I have gained valuable experience in podcast production, graphic design, and teamwork while contributing to RAIA's mission of making international affairs more accessible to the public. Additionally, the internship has given me exposure to a think tank's operations and internal workings. I have had the opportunity to see how concepts are developed, research is done, and material is produced. The experience has given insight into the difficulties and possibilities that exist in the arena of international relations and policy making. Due to my successful contribution, I have also been invited to stay on for the next term.

## Description of the internship organization

RAIA is a think tank that offers an alternative viewpoint to mainstream news outlets and political commentary. Although the think tank was founded in Madrid in 2018, today the organization is completely remote with students and young professionals working together online mostly from Europe but also from other parts of the world with around 50 people working at RAIA each term. The think tank was founded at IE University by a group of students and a professor because they were sick of hearing and reading the same news all the time. Thus they founded the organization intending to develop a new and improved platform that offers original analyses and insights into the continuously shifting field of international relations. By going straight to the source of the decision-making process, they aim to simplify the complex world of policymaking. They seek to better understand why a person took a specific choice by investigating the person and the spheres of influence around them. RAIA's main objective is to assist people in understanding international relations and how they relate to them. The group is aware that conventional news outlets and political analyses frequently oversimplify complex problems, making it challenging for people to comprehend the subtleties of the decision-making process. RAIA seeks to resolve this problem by demystifying significant occasions, choices, agreements, and conflicts so that people can better understand the complexities of international relations. RAIA brings these analyses across different segments. The main way to share the insight and knowledge is through blog series on the website. Each of the blog series includes articles covering the topic using the RAIA methodology. One of these series is the War and Peace page which divides news stories into positive and negative categories, featuring tragedies or events with negative repercussions that fall under the 'War' section. Stories that focus on positive events fall under the "Peace" section. Furthermore, the RAIA's website offers a

"Profiles" page, where users can find information on world leaders or people worth looking into. Additionally, the RAIApedia page can be found under the 'Library' tab, where users can consult a glossary of important events or the definition of a term. Lastly, the RAIA podcast, known as RAIAffairs, where writers explain articles they wrote, which allowed writers to expand their reach and also provides a different platform for distributing the RAIA content

## The structure of the organization

The RAIA Group structure is designed to promote a collaborative and inclusive work culture. While there is a General Coordinator who has the final decision-making power, everyone's opinions and ideas are taken into account and a hierarchical structure is not insisted on.

The organization is composed of several teams, although they often overlap and collaboration is highly encouraged

The organization's **director**, who is also a co-founder, is in charge of the broad picture and developing the creative vision. They determine the organization's strategic course and make sure that all teams are working towards the same objectives.

The organization's daily operations are managed by **the General Coordinator**. They keep an eye on the other team's job to make sure everyone is doing it effectively. Final judgments on crucial issues that have an impact on the entire organization must be made by the General Coordination.

**The Research and Analysis** team is responsible for gathering and analyzing information on global events and trends. This team serves as the "thinking" portion of the think tank and is responsible for writing all of the website material, such as the Hot or Not, War and Peace, blogs, and other, shorter forms of analysis including Daily Updates. The more senior

members of the organization also take the role of editor and help rewrite the articles so they follow the RAIA methodology

**The Communications** team is responsible for managing the organization's image and reaching out and finding an audience. This is done over various communication platforms with the main one being the social media platforms Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Youtube.

**The Project Development** team is responsible for identifying new opportunities for the organization to grow and expand its reach. They are responsible for finding events where RAIA could participate and be promoted. The newest project is the RAIA(ffairs) podcast. Finally, the **Internal and HR team** is responsible for managing the organization's internal operations and ensuring that its employees are well taken care of and are also completing their tasks. They are responsible for finding new interns, distributing the alumni newsletter, and managing the alumni network.

## Internal Development and Collaboration at RAIA

RAIA has a strong focus on internal development and collaboration among its members. One way this is accomplished is through their weekly Afterwork, where everyone who is part of the organization meets on Zoom and gets to know each other through activities and different discussions. This is a crucial component of the organization because it is entirely remote, making it difficult for members to get to know one another, especially when they work in separate areas.

Furthermore, there are Internal Seminars that are for the R&A team but are open to the whole organization. These seminars take place once or twice each month and cover a range of topics related to international relations. Some of the topics covered in the Internal



Seminars include Bias and Methodology, which are essential for becoming an analyst and writing for RAIA. Other topics covered include stakeholder analysis, writing about terrorism, and understanding specific regions such as Asia and Latin America. By offering these seminars, RAIA is able to provide ongoing education and development opportunities for its members. Another key event of the RAIA is the General Meetings which are mandatory for everyone. Three meetings are held throughout each internship round: one on the first day of the internship, one in the middle, and one on the last day. Department coordinators introduce their teams and go over their accomplishments at these meetings. They also introduce new initiatives and opportunities for cross-team collaboration. This allows interns to branch out beyond their outlined responsibilities and pitch ideas for further skill development. In addition, RAIA also seeks to establish collaborations with other institutions to provide real-life working opportunities in the field of international relations. These collaborations include seminars, workshops, and events with like-minded organizations. Past collaborations have included a three-day workshop with the World Youth Academy and an event with Drone Wars UK.

## Description of the assignments, task, result, and output

The primary way that HR kept track of what each intern was doing was through a point system. For each task that an intern fulfills, they get points which they have to fill into an Excel sheet. You can get points for attending a meeting, reaching out to potential partners, or completing a design for example. In order to successfully complete an Internship at RAIA 50 points are needed. I finished the internship with 71 points.

As previously mentioned the main assignment I had was to edit the RAIA(ffairs) podcast. This was done using Adobe Audition, with which I had no previous experience. However, the previous editor had several meetings with me where he took me through the step-by-step process of how the podcast is usually edited. This involved several steps with first cutting the unwanted parts, and where people misspoke, cutting out filler sounds such as "uhm" and "ahm". Then noise reduction is applied to eliminate any background noise. This is important because it helps to improve the sound quality and make the podcast more professional, especially since the podcast is recorded on phones and not on professional equipment. Next, several tools are used such as Parametric Equalizer, Dynamic Processing, De-reverb, Mastering Tool, and Dynamic De-esser to further enhance the quality of the audio.

In addition to audio editing, I learned how to create reels for the podcast and create audio waves, since reels have become an essential part of reaching a new audience.

Furthermore, I also get the chance as an intern to expand my skill set beyond audio editing by taking on graphic design duties. In this field I had previous experience, however, this was the first time I was supervised by someone who had a lot of experience in the field. There are regulations when it comes to design such as which colors and fonts to use. In addition, all designs need to fit into the hero archetype since this represents the brand's main identity. These designs will be used for a range of things, from weekly recaps and games to podcast promotional materials. The design part was done on Canva, the preferred platform of the team to collaborate on. I also used the AI tool DALLE in order to create the background, which was taught to me by someone more experienced in the field since I didn't have much skill to do it myself and it was the most efficient way.

The output of the RAIA(ffairs) podcast is polished and professional audio files, which are published on Spotify, Apple Podcast, and the RAIA website. The quality of the final product

is held to a high standard since it is supposed to represent the brand. Thus the final output of the audio files is checked by my supervisor in the Communications Team and then by the head of the Project Development Team who then publishes the podcast. In total I edited two podcast episodes, which are around 50 min. Since being new to the editing podcast and the program the first episode took around 1 month to complete. The first episode has already been published whereas the second podcast will be published within the next week while this report is being written (see Appendix 5).

In my graphic design role, I have created 4 designs in total during the duration of my internship. This includes a weekly recap template for LinkedIn (see Appendix 2), a template for Instagram games (see Appendix 1), a promotion template for new podcast episodes (see Appendix 3), and an updated design for the podcast image (see Appendix 4).

However, due to being quite inexperienced in creating a design with an archetype every design had around 5 different designs and multiple different versions until I created a layout that was approved. While these designs have not been used yet, they will be implemented in the next term.

Furthermore, throughout the duration of the internship, there have been many meetings. For example, the Communication Team meets weekly to discuss future ideas such as what type of Instagram games could be played, how to improve the process and quality of the RAI(Affairs) podcast, and how to create reels of writers explaining their articles where few of the ideas that have been discussed over the past 3 months. Furthermore, I have also had many one on one meetings where we talk about design and ideas for potential new projects. In addition, every week at the Afterwork session an intern is supposed to hold a presentation about an International Relations topic. Since it is in an Afterwork setting the presentation tends to be more amusing rather than serious, since it's an opportunity for

people in the organization to get to know one another. Thus I did a presentation about the top 10 most awkward handshakes of world leaders.

## Evaluation

When I filled in the Board of Examiners Approval Form, I hoped to learn more about the field of international affairs, understand how a think tank operates, and how to portray it objectively. Although Research & Analysis was not my primary responsibility I hoped to get an insight into their methodology by participating in the seminars. I knew that my primary responsibility was editing the organization's podcast, thus I expected to learn how to record, edit, and publish a podcast. Additionally, I was anticipating acquiring access to the organization's extensive alumni network in order to gain new insight or opportunities for my future career.

I would say that for the larger part, I was able to meet my hoped-for learning outcomes. Through the past 3 months, I have gained a lot of knowledge about graphic design, podcast editing, and producing reels. The biggest learning curve I had was in podcast editing because I came into the internship with zero experience and had to learn everything from scratch. Although the first podcast I worked on was quite challenging, I now have gained a good overview of the processes each episode has to run through. The same is also applicable to my role as a graphic designer. I started this with initially more experience, but I still had quite the learning curve when it came to producing designs for RAIA. In addition, I also managed to get a new perspective on the world of international relations, by reading most of the content produced by RAIA during my internship and attending a few seminars. I

also made several connections while working for the organization, and even though I haven't used the alumni network yet, I plan to in the future.

Since my main assignment was graphic design and podcast editing I hope that my work at RAIA helps to better promote their content and reach a wider audience by designing eye-catching templates and producing high audio quality podcast episodes to promote the organization. Although the designs have not been implemented yet into the social media pages I am very much looking forward to them being used next term. In addition, I hope that my inputs during the brainstorming session have made an impact, such as naming the Instagram game series "Trivia Tuesdays" and giving design ideas for different channels I was not involved in. Thus, I hope that the content I have created and my creative input have contributed to RAIA's success during my term and in the future. One of the most significant things I learned was a new way to look at political issues by examining the individuals involved and how things truly operate behind the scenes. This approach will be very helpful for my thesis, which also deals with international relations.

At the beginning of the internship, I was anticipating gaining a deep understanding of the world of international relations and a more hands-on interaction with the content. Although as previously mentioned I have gained a new perspective, I have not reached the insights that I initially wished for at the beginning of the internship. For example, in one of the seminars I attended, I felt very out of place since I seemed to be one of the only people there who did not have a lot of background knowledge of the conflict we were discussing. Although since I am staying on at RAIA I hope that over time and with more of my own effort I will be able to fill the gaps I feel I still have in this field. I have also learned that when it comes to this topic it is a continuous process of staying informed and the best way to learn about it is by concisely reading the news and staying updated. Furthermore, although I have come quite far with my podcast editing skills there are still certain issues I am not able to

resolve on my own, and then have to rely on someone with more experience to help me solve the issue. I have recognized that my biggest issue is with eradicating microphone pops and although it is a continuous problem I still have not been able to find a solution on my own. But I hope with more practice I will be able to solve these issues and continue growing my skills. Furthermore, I also thought that within 3 months I would be able to produce more content for RAIA. However, it was quite the learning curve to see how much time and effort go into a final draft for editing and design. In addition, working in a think tank there is also a lot of waiting for approvals or further instructions especially since no one works full-time at RAIA. For example, the director once asked me to do a reel for the podcast, which I ended up working 2 days on. However, later I found out that there are guidelines and restrictions, of which I was not aware or informed and the work I produced in those 2 days was useless. Thus, I also learned that it is important to find a balance between your own initiative and waiting for concrete or further instructions from your superior, in order to be most productive.

I also have an idea of how I want to spend the remainder of my career at RAIA. I'm excited to stay on as a podcast editor for the future term with the intention of becoming a permanent member of the team. This internship has given me a lot of motivation, especially in the areas of teamwork and collaboration. For example, I have now gained an interest in project management as a future career after seeing how the think tank operates. This is because I am genuinely interested in seeing and understanding different branches of the organization and also believe I have the skill to keep an overview. Furthermore, I believe that University Campus Fryslan has provided me with the leadership skills that I would require for a project manager position since a position of such authority seemed like a nightmare to me two years ago. But after the leadership lab and countless opportunities to practice a leadership role in group works I feel that I quite enjoy delegating tasks and see that I have a talent for

still being fun and friendly whilst also making sure that the work gets done. This inspiration for my future career would have not been possible without the Global Responsibility and Leadership bachelor and my experience at RAIA. My hope is to work my way up the ranks at RAIA to have this experience or find an internship where I could try my hand at such a position.

Overall, my time with RAIA has been a huge learning opportunity and also rewarding in its outcome. I've gained a lot of knowledge that I believe will be useful to me in my future career. In addition, I now clearly see my future, both inside and outside of RAIA. I am grateful for the opportunity and excited to continue growing and learning.

# Appendix

## Appendix 1: Template for Instagram names





## Appendix 2: Template for weekly recaps on LinkedIn



## Appendix 3: Template for new Podcast announcement on Instagram



Appendix 4: Updated podcast image



Appendix 5: RAIA(ffairs)

Under this link the published podcast episodes can be found: <https://raiagroup.org/podcasts>