Internship Written Report

It was my pleasure to get enrolled into CLIT 3019 summer internship program and work as an intern editor at City Magazine. City Magazine is one of the most historical monthly magazines in Hong Kong. It was created by legendary writers Chan Kwun Chun, Yau sai Man and Tang Shio Yu in 1976, miraculously lasting for more than 35 years and is famed by being daring, fresh and bourgeoisie-bohemian. In 2003, City Magazine was purchased by Modern Media Ltd in Guangzhou and continue striving to be one of the most high-caliber lifestyle magazines. One of the major reasons why I chose this organization is that I am interested in writing and would like to try out in the media industry. Besides, it is also a golden opportunity for me to work in such an established lifestyle magazine.

During my three-month duration here, I have learnt surprisingly lots and amazingly fast. On my first day of work, I was brought to the cover people shooting of the singer Eason Chan. Starting from the first week; I was given several writing tasks by the editors. My roles include writing articles for lifestyle, culture, design and fashion sections, conducting interviews, and researching background information for the editors to put them in their articles. What have surprised me were the trusts that the editors have put in me—they never seemed to doubt my ability in writing and interviewing and grant me opportunities to try on my own. It was thrilling and self-satisfying to first see my articles with my names published on the magazine. In terms of my writing skills, I have improved the commercial writing skills. To my surprise, lots of articles include some branding work, like introducing a designer chair and help selling the product. The most difficult part is to strike a balance between hard selling and a prose. Having never written any commercial writing before, these articles are definitely new challenges for me. Besides writing skills, I was so glad that I could interview a number of people on my own. I interviewed a dancer, a guitarist, a director, a musician, designers and artists…etc. I was nervous every time when I had to conduct an interview, because you cannot predict if they like the questions that you asked and how deep can you get into the conversation. Though being nervous, I enjoyed the process a lot as it is the fastest way to know a person and get inspired. My favorite interview was the one I did with a dancer from Hong Kong Dance Company,
in which he shared his inner conflicts in pursuing his attitude for life. What has
surprised me in the work environment was the flexibility in the company. We do not
have to follow any dress codes. Basically we come to work and leave work as we like
as long as we have finished our work. I really appreciate the self-discipline and the
overall relaxing atmosphere in the office.

I am also glad that I am able to apply what I have learnt from the Comparative
Literature courses in this job. The cover story of July issue was architecture, which
immediately reminded me of the reconciled differences of the old and new in
Postmodernism course and the relationship between people and architecture in Hong
Kong Culture course. The critical theories that I have learnt helped me a lot in
researching information for the cover story. The cover story of the coming issue will
be Fashion. The editors have also added sections revealing the relations between
fashion and society and culture. The editor decided to elaborate a bit on Roland
Barthes’s *The Fashion System* and I was more than happy that the familiar canon
often mentioned in Comp Lit. would be brought up in the magazine.

I would also like to assess my work performance in the past two months. First of
all, I should score high in on punctuality. I always come back on time and only
requested a 3 day holiday for a weekend trip once. My articles are also always sent to
the editors before the deadlines. But I do believe that I can be more socializing --- I
still cannot recognize all my colleagues after two months of work. I also get to know
that an editor has to deal with lots of people relations, like the advertisement clients,
PR from brands and editors from other magazines. In addition, interviewing someone
is the most difficult task for me. You need to be very good at observing people’s
reactions and getting deeper by questioning. I have a problem of being too nervous
that I cannot react to the people’s answers properly. These are the qualities that I think
I ought to improve if I decide to pursue a career in magazines in the future.

What I like about working in a magazine is the excitement, ongoing
challenges and flexibility. But there is also something that falls short of my
expectation, like the commercial writings, the branding work and the rather bleak
future of paper media in the electronic world. But the internship experience is fruitful
and valuable to me no matter if this is going to be my future career or not.