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Reflective Essay

In my position as an Editorial Intern for *Southeast Review*, I feel that I have intensely improved my understanding of the publication industry and managing internal logistics for a creative company. Before entering this internship, I had the most experience with copyediting for publications and social media management for technology-focused companies. I learned how to tailor my designs and trending content to target audiences in my work with *Southeast Review*.

My prior collegiate experience with Florida State University publications prepared me for working with submission-based processes. As an Intern for *Nomadic Noles*, the student-run publication through the FSU: Valencia Study Center, I edited peers' articles for the Summer 2026 magazine. This process prepared me for reviewing creative submissions and providing macro-editing suggestions, a task that heavily dominated my internship with *Southeast Review*. Additionally, my role with *Nomadic Noles* introduced me to the balance between objectivity and subjectivity when reviewing Young Adult submissions to *Southeast Review*. Acting as a reader for the literary magazine allowed me to recognize the marks of a technically advanced creative piece while also allowing me to base subjective preferences on technical observations. Furthermore, I was prepared for formal writing and social media assignments as a Program Intern for the FSU: English Department. My work with the English Department primarily consisted of creating graphic and video content for English student, faculty, and alumni achievements. This work translated well to the design aesthetics that best represented *Southeast*

Review, especially when designing the Writer's Regimen newsletter flyer. Assisting in research and writing for the English Department also aided my comprehension of weekly essay assignments during this internship.

With this being said, my previous internship experiences differed heavily from my experience with *Southeast Review*. When working with *Nomadic Noles*, I only read pieces for editing purposes; all of the materials I read were going to be published in the magazine. As a reader for *Southeast Review*, I was forced to weigh creative pieces against each other and reject the majority of what was placed in front of me. While this task seemed daunting at first, I slowly learned that rejection is necessary for the survival of a literary magazine with strict page limits. As such, I read pieces not just as an editor, but as a non-profit manager and fellow writer. To retain our community of writers, I employed empathy and communication with rejected authors by providing editing suggestions. I also took on a larger managerial role in my social media team for *Southeast Review*. While I participated in content creation for the FSU: English Department, I assumed a leadership role in my social media team, drafting consistent posting schedules, branding principles, and a streamlined content review process. I gained a better understanding of how to tailor trending content and branding to target audiences as a result of my greater control over the magazine's social media accounts.

After participating in this internship with *Southeast Review*, I recognized the importance of transparency and communication between writers and literary magazines. In researching the publication industry through weekly essay assignments, I learned about the social and financial limitations imposed on literary magazines. As a result, I found that rejection is crucial for meeting production deadlines, ensuring financial stability, and maintaining a large submission pool. However, from the outside looking in, all writers see are a stream of constant rejections,

detering participation in magazine submissions. I feel that a publication editor should be a champion for writers while also balancing the needs of the magazine. One way to cure disillusionment for writers would be for literary magazines to reveal their processes to interested applicants. Maintaining procedural and financial transparency would allow writers to make informed decisions on which magazine to submit to. As a writer myself, I would want to know where my money, time, and energy are going before I submit them for possible selection by a magazine. Additionally, learning about the editing process altered my perception of writing as a profession. Being a writer comes with the inherent risk of rejection, but rather than be terrified by it, I can embrace it as an opportunity to strengthen my work and find the right audience for it. Intentionally submitting to literary magazines can also advocate for a thoughtful restructuring of the publication industry.

Moreover, this internship helped me expand my graphic design practice. This was my first experience establishing an online identity and platform for an organization from scratch. By spearheading *Southeast Review*'s Pinterest and YouTube accounts, I created consistent production and review schedules to build new audiences. When creating video content for YouTube and Pinterest, I also improved my video editing skills and understanding of trending algorithms. Additionally, I experimented with collaged design styles that differed heavily from my work for Florida State University's technology clubs, such as the Association of IT Professionals (AITP) and Social Spear. Taking on a managerial role in my social media team simulated a full-time social media position, allowing me to balance drafting, creating, and maintaining content across multiple platforms.

Ultimately, working with *Southeast Review* has set me up for professional success in any field that I decide to pursue. As a professional with career interests across multiple disciplines, I

believe in constantly expanding my skillset to be a jack of all trades for any team or organization that I work with. The internship with *Southeast Review* is designed to give students transferrable work experience in copyediting, social media management, graphic design, and event planning. Learning to balance these tasks simultaneously has increased my confidence that I can pursue managerial roles in the near future. Working with the literary magazine has also expanded my career horizons to include working in the publishing industry. *Southeast Review* stressed creative collaboration and growth across textual, graphic, and videographic mediums. Contributing to a human-centric business was highly rewarding, both personally and professionally, and I aspire to lend my services to organizations that prioritize creative empowerment.