Become a “Democratic Erosion Data Team” Intern

Are you a UChicago undergrad interested in conducting research to strengthen democracy? The Chicago Center on Democracy seeks up to three University of Chicago undergraduate students to serve as paid interns the summer of 2019. These students, along with one or two students from Brown University, will collectively be the “Democratic Erosion Data Team,” and will:

1. **Work as a team to develop recommendations for how to expand, restructure, or find new uses** for the data in the Democratic Erosion Event Database. This database was created in 2018 by a team of master’s students from the Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University. The database is a collection of data points related to the “precursors and symptoms of, and resistance to, democratic backsliding” around the world. As part of this process, you will build your expertise on the database by reviewing the information contained in it, interviewing those involved in its creation, benchmarking against similarly structured databases in other fields, and applying your creativity to develop ideas for its improvement. In this way, you and your peers will serve as something of a consulting team for those who maintain the database.

2. **Expand the contents of the database by coding new case studies.** By the time the summer begins, there will be many new case studies (perhaps 200 to 300) available to add to the database. You will learn how to “code” these case studies into discrete data points; at the beginning of the summer, they will participate in an intensive workshop covering coding and other topics.

3. **Expand upon the Democratic Erosion Event Database,** by conducting activities such as: building a complementary sub-national U.S. dataset, updating Democratic Erosion course lesson plans and lectures, reviewing literature related to democratic erosion, and planning a conference on related topics.

4. **Conduct other activities related to democratic erosion for the Chicago Center on Democracy.** The specific activities are to be determined, but might include conducting research for projects such as a new Democratic Erosion Index to track democratic backsliding across countries over time. You may also partake in activities related to the operations of the center—such as event planning, building a guest speakers database, or financial planning—in order to get real-world experience in the functioning of an academic center.

**What we offer:** Each intern will receive:

- A $5,000 stipend.
- Extensive training at the beginning of the summer on topics related to democratic erosion and methods of coding case studies into databases.
- The opportunity to work on multiple projects, to ensure that you will never be bored.
- The opportunity to work remotely for much of the summer. Aside from the in-person training at the beginning of the summer and an in-person session in August, we are fine with you working from wherever you choose.
- Guidance from professors at the University of Chicago, Brown University, and Texas A&M.
What we ask of you:

- This opportunity is only available to University of Chicago undergraduate students. Some familiarity with quantitative methods and political science topics is desired, but not required. We will provide all training necessary.
- These are full-time internships, starting either the week of June 24 or July 1, to be determined.
- Apply your creativity, energy, ideas, and work ethic to create excellent results.
- This is not a typical internship, as it involves advanced work and uses remote collaboration tools. Self-starters are required.

About the Chicago Center on Democracy: The Chicago Center on Democracy was established in October 2018 at the University of Chicago to use the power of academic research and discussion to support democracy worldwide. We provide a space for students, professors, and others to discuss and refine their work on issues related to democracy. We share their findings with the broader community of citizens, civil society organizations, and policymakers by building a community around democracy, guiding discussions on key issues, and engaging the public.

To apply: Please send your resume and cover letter to democracy@uchicago.edu. There is no strict deadline, but we will give preference to those who apply by April 5, 2019.