

Self-Introduction Essay

I am interested in interning at Stratfor this summer because Stratfor's mission to provide thorough and critical analysis of breaking international political and economic news would provide me with a valuable opportunity to apply my academic work and experiences to a professional environment. Furthermore, I would like to explore the possibility of pursuing a career in geopolitical analysis, and a summer internship at Stratfor would assist me in determining the extent to which my skills and interests are compatible with that professional pursuit. I am drawn to geopolitical analysis because it offers an exciting and practical application to political research. Furthermore, it represents an intersection between political economy, business, and international affairs, allowing me to engage a diverse array of interests in a coherent manner.

My interest in international affairs stems from a desire to learn about and understand the world in which I live, as well as a lifelong love for travel and adventure. After graduating high school, I deferred college admission in order to spend a year as an exchange student in northern France, where I improved my language skills and got my first taste of living abroad. I returned to Virginia for the first year of college, but the summer after my freshman year I was traveling again, this time to Chimbote, Peru, a fishing port about six hours north of Lima on the Pacific coast. As my college career progressed, I had the opportunity to work in Morocco in addition to traveling as close to home as Mexico and as far away as India, Cambodia, and China. Interning at the Peruvian Embassy in Washington, D.C. in the spring of 2007 allowed me to incorporate my personal interests into a professional environment, researching the then-pending Free Trade Agreement between the U.S. and Peru. I was able to benefit from my internship and international experiences by applying them to coursework in economics and political development, specifically in Latin America. College affirmed the central role of international politics and economic development in my academic interests; I am now prepared to turn these interests into a professional endeavor.

As a graduate student at Harvard, I have worked to develop a stronger foundation in economics to complement my knowledge of and interest in international politics. Specifically, I have enrolled in graduate-level economic theory work and courses focusing on political economy. I hope to complete a seminar paper this spring on the determinants of foreign direct investment in Latin America, focusing on the causal role of political reform in directing private market activity. Additionally, I am completing a statistical methods sequence in order to help prepare me for quantitative analysis. I expect to receive my M.A. in Government in Spring 2010, at which point I will decide whether I intend to begin working professionally immediately or whether I will first complete my PhD.

I hope that Stratfor's internship coordinators will consider offering me a summer internship in order to pursue a potential career in geopolitical analysis. I believe that the interests, skills, and experience that I bring will result in a mutually beneficial relationship. Furthermore, Stratfor's extensive work in Latin America and the current political climate across the region (see writing sample) make my regional focus particularly relevant. I look forward to a productive summer developing my skills as an intern at Stratfor.