1. What are the application requirements?

Applications include student information, special skills, essay questions, résumé, and one letter of recommendation. Application forms and recommendation letters must be submitted by Sunday, November 4, 2018 at 11:59pm (Central Time). Letters of recommendation can come from a professor, supervisor, or other non-family member who can speak to the applicant's interest and qualifications for a human rights internship.

2. What are the essay questions?

Essay Question 1: Please explain how you have demonstrated a serious interest in human rights. Include influential academic, work, volunteer, activist, or personal experiences that have (a) influenced your decision to apply and (b) prepared you for a summer human rights internship. (500 word limit)

Essay Question 2: Describe your ideal 10-12 week summer human rights internship. Where might you work? What issues would you work on? What do you hope to gain from this experience? You can include specific tasks that could be accomplished as part of your ideal internship. (750 word limit)

Essay Question 3: Consider your ideal internship proposal from Question #2. Reflect upon one or two challenges you foresee during your internship experience. How would you plan to address these challenges? (500 word limit)

3. What is the selection committee looking for?

Above all, the committee is looking for maturity and flexibility. Strong candidates often have a history of engagement in activism or involvement with social justice, although formal work is not necessary. Candidates should be familiar with human rights principles and be able to propose a realistic project for a 10-12 week full-time summer internship.

4. I have experience in ____ , but I don't know if it qualifies as "human rights."

The definition of "human rights" is constantly under debate. Strong applications do not just define the problem in terms of human rights, but also conceive of the solution in a human rights framework. We recommend that you consider the intersection between your interests and material found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, other international human rights instruments, or human rights scholarship. Think about how your proposed internship differs from a research or service project. Demonstrate that you have considered how your previous and/or future work furthers the field of human rights.

5. How specific should I be in responding to Essay Question #2, "Describe your ideal internship experience"?

Be flexible, but not flighty. The committee is interested in your capacity to describe a human rights issue or geographic area where you might want to work. The selection committee wants to see your ability to plan out a feasible project. You may suggest some organizations or types of organizations that interest you, but identifying a specific host organization is not necessary for the application. Your answers can be
as specific as you want them to be – but remember, a lot can happen between now and when you secure your placement!

6. **Can I use the grant to fund an independent, personal, or research initiative?**

No. The selection committee is looking for a proposal that involves supervision from a non-governmental or not-for-profit organization, government agency, international body, social movement organization, or similar entity.

7. **I have experience in ____ , but I am interested in exploring a new topic or region. Is this OK?**

It could be! Strong candidates are able to explain the connection between their past experience and proposed project. Some students use the internship to deepen their interest in a certain topic or region, and others use it to explore a new but related topic, strategy, or place.

8. **Are there any countries that are off-limits for travel?**

All internship placements (including the host organization and location) must be approved by the Pozen Center. College students who are considering travel to countries with a U.S. State Department Travel Warning are also required to file a petition through the annual Study Abroad Risk and Security Assessment Committee (SARSAC). SARSAC has approved some petitions in the past, but not all. While each case is different, we generally encourage students filing petitions to work on an alternate plan in case their proposed travel is not approved.

Human Rights Interns are responsible for securing the appropriate visa prior starting their internship. The Pozen Center will provide appropriate verification for visa applications, as needed. All Human Rights Interns traveling outside of the U.S. are required to register their travel with UChicago Traveler.

9. **Can I see a list of past intern placements?**

Sure! Our website allows you to search the list of past internship host organizations by name, region, or topic. You can also look at past intern profiles to see the types of projects they worked on during their internships. We also encourage you to come to office hours to talk with our Peer Leaders.

10. **Is there anyone who can offer help with the application process?**

Past interns, called Peer Leaders, and Pozen Center staff are available to provide answer questions and provide feedback on applications during office hours. Note that Peer Leaders will not evaluate submitted applications. See our website for all office hours during weeks 2 to 6.

11. **Can I apply even if I am abroad?**

Students who are abroad during Autumn Quarter 2018 may apply. If you will be away during either Winter 2019 or Spring 2019, we can make arrangements to work with your schedule while you are away from campus. However, if you will be away during both Winter and Spring Quarters, you are not eligible to apply.
12. Can first year College students apply?

While first year students are technically eligible, most undergraduate awards are to third year students, with a few to second year College students. We have yet to award an internship to a first year student. First year students are encouraged to attend Info Sessions or office hours to talk about potential applications.

13. I heard that I have to pursue a minor in Human Rights to apply. Is that true?

No. A minor in Human Rights is not required.

14. I have not taken a HMRT course with the Pozen Center. Will that hurt my chances as an applicant?

Interns come from a variety of backgrounds and should be able to demonstrate a serious interest in human rights. Previous coursework in human rights generally provides a helpful background, but is not required. Selected interns are required to take one approved Human Rights course before the start of their internship.

15. Can graduate students apply?

Yes! Graduate students are eligible if they will be on campus during the 2019-20 academic year. Since we expect returning interns to be able to share their summer experiences with the broader campus community, students graduating in 2019 are not eligible to apply for the 2019 cohort.

16. Does the selection committee have a preference for students going abroad, or can I pursue something domestic?

No preference is given to those who plan to go abroad. Each year, up to two thirds of the intern cohort chooses to work in the U.S.

17. How should I format my application for online submission?

Since the applications are submitted online through a webform, we strongly encourage you to draft your essay responses in plain text before you copy/paste in order to avoid formatting errors. You can:

- Use a plain-text editor to save your essay responses.
- Use your regular word processor and “Save As” plain text (*.txt).
- Use block paragraphs (i.e. line between paragraphs) to separate text.

18. What does a good recommendation letter look like?

The selection committee wants to know how well you will work in an NGO setting, or its government, union, or social-movement equivalent. Can you perform independent tasks, while also fitting into an organizational structure? Can you learn from difference, in a new and challenging setting? Will you be able to leave behind something that will be meaningful to the people with whom you work? The committee also looks for evidence of your capacity to reflect deeply on important questions, and to consider the implications of your experiences. Ideally, letters should be uploaded on letterhead. Please remember that it is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that their letter of recommendation is submitted by the deadline. The recommender and applicant will receive a confirmation email when the letter is submitted.
19. When will selection decisions be announced?

Applicants will receive an email in mid-November indicating whether they will be invited to interview with the Human Rights Internship Selection Committee. Applicants are notified of the results by mid-December.

20. Who is on the committee? What will the interview be like?

If you are chosen for the interview round, you will be interviewed by a panel of up to four faculty, staff, and alumni of the Pozen Center who are knowledgeable about human rights issues and organizations. Interviews are relatively short (about fifteen to twenty minutes). Casual or business casual attire is fine.

21. After interns are selected, how does the internship search and placement work?

Some interns choose to work with organizations that have hosted our students in the past, while other interns identify new placements. Each awardee will be assigned to a Peer Leader for assistance and accountability throughout the search process.

22. If I’m selected, what are the program requirements?

- **Weekly check-ins** with an assigned Peer Leader.
- **Training sessions**: participate in six required group meetings in Winter and Spring Quarter, including the January Internship Symposium.
- **Work Plan**: complete an agreement with a [host organization](#) by mid-April 2010.
- **Coursework**: take one approved human rights course in Winter or Spring Quarter 2019, if you have not already taken a course. Human rights coursework is not a requirement for application.
- **Reports**: send reports to the cohort and Pozen Center throughout the summer, and a final report upon return to campus. All returning interns present at our annual [Internship Symposium](#) to share their experience with the university community.