

Summer Internship Report 2017

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**World Affairs Council of Atlanta
Atlanta, GA**

(Alex is on the far right)

Provide an overview of the organization/research project and a summary of your responsibilities, tasks, and/or projects.

RCII research team primarily pulls data from different authoritarian sources online and put those data into RCII based on its unique formula. In addition to this, RCII research team adapts RCII into the pedagogy of an IR intro course that's been taught at GSU. Moreover, RCII research team is collaborating with an online course website(RealizeIt) to incorporate RCII and other course materials into an online course that will be accessible from all over the world. This part of the project is new this year, and it has been our primary focus for my second half of the internship here. My role is to 1) check and verify the data points in the RCII (unlike interns from previous years, we don't need to pull data and put them into our index); 2)update RCII visuals and other course materials for the IR course; and 3) assist Dr. Brown to develop the new online course.

During your internship, what did you accomplish or how did you make a difference? In what ways did you grow in your professional and technical skills?

I helped improve the accuracy of the RCII 2017 by verifying errors in the Index. I worked with the entire team to update all visuals and information for the RCII and the course. Moreover, I helped develop questions and found materials for the new developing online course.

I familiarized myself with the RCII and other indexes online. I now know how to pull data from the most worldwide authoritarian data sources. I also gained a great amount of knowledge on event organizing by attending all World Affairs Council of Atlanta events since I got here.

Describe a problem that you helped to solve at your internship. What skills or knowledge from your education at Sewanee helped you address the problem?

I am good at finding anomalies in data using visuals (charts and graphs). Image reading is a type of training I have from Sewanee.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

If anything, I learned that I need to befriend with the people I work with in such a small working group. Among the interns, we take turns leading small projects with natural contents. But most of the time we work together as the projects require.

How did your internship affect your career plans?

I am more convinced that I want to be in the IR field, but I may not be in a non-profit organization. In other words, this internship helps me narrow things down a bit more.

In what ways did your internship cause you to encounter people of different backgrounds from your own? What steps did you take to communicate effectively with such persons? What did you learn from such persons' perspectives?

World Affairs Council of Atlanta primarily organizes events for its members. I go to all the events they had since I start in the office and the guests or members who come to the events are from various fields in Atlanta. The greatest thing about these events, aside from interesting speakers and free food and drinks, is that people come here to socialize with a goal to improve or to help their career. I met many people on those events and I learned that the more active I am in those events, the more likely I will find the right connection for myself. People like to help each other at this level.

Words of advice for future interns (housing, transportation, etc.)?

Try to go to as many events as possible and be good friends with the programming team, that way, you will have a lot more connections. Almost everyone in the offices in the IR field, so you will have a lot to talk about world affairs. Dr. Brown and Michael are both very nice, don't be intimidated in the beginning. If you wanna save money, learn how to cook, so maybe bring some utensils with you when you pack.

Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:

Thank you for helping me with this internship. This is a very meaningful position for the student in the IR field. We have a very international group this year. We have interns from France, England, deep Southern US, and China(that's me), and I am the only one who receives funding from the school. This is my first internship in the US and it only happened because of you, so this means a lot to me. And because of this internship, I haven't been back home for two years, but I think this is more meaningful for my future so I am happy with that. Wish to meet you someday in the future after I find my career. Thanks again.