About the Fellowship

Snapshot of the Sorensen Fellowship
Tackling climate change. Expanding access to health care. Building peace through the arts. Working for educational equity.

Given the chance, how would you put social justice into action?

Become a Sorensen Fellow and spend next summer working on issues that matter to you in the organization of your choice. As a Sorensen Fellow, you will have the rare opportunity to contribute as an undergraduate to an organization of your choice that addresses ethical issues of worldwide import. Carry your undergraduate learning out into the real world.

We’re looking for applicants with – or without – experience volunteering or traveling abroad.

• Want to explore a field that has nothing to do with your work at Brandeis – or everything to do with it?
• Need to earn money over the summer and want a unique learning experience?
• Care about social justice but haven’t had a chance to act on it? Or maybe social justice commitments inform everything you do?
• Want to go abroad? Or want to engage more deeply with a community in the USA?
• Hoping to build on your efforts and passions? Or looking to try something entirely new to you?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, we hope you’ll apply!

Eligibility
Sorensen Fellows must be
• Brandeis sophomores or juniors in the fall of 2015.
• In good standing.
• On campus during the fall semester of 2016 (after your internship).

Students from any major are eligible

Applicants who are abroad in the fall of 2015 may be interviewed by Skype or phone if selected as finalists.

NEW IN 2016: Sorensen Fellows now can be abroad during the spring semester before their summer internship. Your preparatory spring course can be taken abroad. You can attend the retreat and other mandatory spring meetings via Skype or phone.

We are pleased to consider applications from those who have previously applied. Up to twelve finalists will be selected for an interview; six to eight Sorensen Fellows will be selected.

Award
Sorensen Fellows receive a stipend of $4000 ($3500 if internship is in the U.S.). This stipend is intended to cover travel, basic living expenses, and other expenses associated with an internship. Please be aware that this stipend may be taxable under U.S. law; please consult a tax advisor with questions. Fellows will also receive credit for the spring and fall courses when satisfactorily
completed.

**Summer Earnings Replacement Grant**

Students who need to work to save money over the summer may not have been able to consider applying for unpaid internships, even with programs that cover airfare and living expenses—until now. Applicants for the Sorensen Fellowship may apply for this need-based grant of up to $1,500 as partial replacement for what they would have earned at a summer job. (This grant is in addition to the merit-based award all Sorensen Fellows receive to cover internship-related costs: $4,000 for international internships, $3,500 for internships in the USA.)

Grant decisions for accepted Sorensen Fellows will be based on need, determined by the Sorensen Fellowship program in collaboration with the Office of Student Financial Services. Requesting a Summer Earnings Replacement Grant does not affect your Sorensen Fellowship application, which will continue to be need-blind. Receiving the grant will also not affect your Brandeis University financial aid package in the year in which the grant is received, but simply replaces the summer savings expectation, which is part of the financial aid package calculations for all Brandeis students. If you have extenuating circumstances that are not reflected in your financial aid package, please explain to the Office of Student Financial Services.

You will be notified about the status of your grant request when you learn whether you have been accepted as a Sorensen Fellow. Grant funds will be paid at the end of the summer, pending satisfactory completion of Sorensen Fellowship requirements. Please be aware that this grant may be taxable under U.S. law; consult a tax advisor and financial aid advisor with questions.

This grant is made possible thanks to the generosity of Ethics Center Board Member Gillian Sorensen, former United Nations official and spouse of the late Theodore C. Sorensen (for whom the Sorensen Fellowship is named).

**About Ted Sorensen**

Theodore “Ted” C. Sorensen (1928–2010) was policy advisor, legal counsel, and speechwriter to President John F. Kennedy. He practiced international law for four decades, and was a widely published author on the presidency and foreign affairs. The Sorensen Fellowship program honors Ted Sorensen for his lifelong commitment to public service and for his ten years as founding chair of the Ethics Center’s International Advisory Board (brandeis.edu/ethics/about/bios/boardbios.html). The Sorensen Fellowship seeks to engage Brandeis undergraduates with constructive social change on the international stage, an appropriate tribute to Ted Sorensen.

**The Three-Part Experience**

**Part 1: Spring 2016 – Preparatory Course & Workshops**

Take a course of your own choosing as academic preparation for the internship. The course may not be audited or taken pass/fail. Because the fall course taken with the other Fellows draws on
the content of the spring course, language courses do not qualify. (See “Part 3: Fall 2016” below for more information about the fall course.)

NEW IN 2016 – Sorensen Fellows now can be abroad during the spring semester before their summer internship. Your preparatory spring course can be taken abroad. Identify a course at your program that will prepare you academically for your summer internship. If no relevant courses are being offered in your program abroad, you may create a personal reading list for intellectual preparation, subject to approval by the Ethics Center.

You’ll also be meeting with the other Fellows and Ethics Center staff to prepare for your summer experience and discuss internship work, journal-keeping, documentation, etc.

Spring preparation meetings, mandatory for all Fellows, will be held:
• Pre-retreat Wednesday, February 10, 2016, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at Brandeis
• Overnight retreat Friday, March 4 (after classes) through Saturday, March 5, 2016, ending at 6 p.m.
• PAX 89 Workshop – Tuesday, April 12, 2016, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at Brandeis
• Pre-departure Meeting for Summer Abroad – date and time TBA

If you are abroad, you must attend the spring meetings virtually via Skype or phone. If you are unable to attend these preparation meetings, either in person or virtually, you should not apply for the Fellowship.

Deadlines for narrowing your internship choices to one organization (see “Part 2: Summer 2016” below) and confirming your internship:
• Priority deadline: Wednesday, February 10, 2016 (encouraged but not required)
• Final deadline: Thursday, March 17, 2016

Confirmation involves a letter from the organization and a phone conversation between Ethics Center staff and your site supervisor. There will be more information about this confirmation process in your acceptance letter.

Part 2: Summer 2016 – Internship
The summer component is an internship in an organization of your choosing addressing ethical issues of worldwide import. The organization may be located abroad or in the USA.

We invite internship proposals that further the mission and are in keeping with the guiding principles of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life. See brandeis.edu/ethics/about for the Ethics Center mission statement. Find internship ideas and leads at brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html.

NEW IN 2016 – Prospective Sorensen Fellowship applicants now list three possible internships on their application, but need not contact the organizations before applying or being selected as a Sorensen Fellow. The order in which you discuss the organizations in your application does not matter. You must apply with three equally viable organizations in mind.

Within the online application, you will be asked to describe the internship work you’d like to do at each of the three possible organizations. The three organizations can be similar or different.
They can be all in the same country, or in three different countries. After being selected as a Fellow, the Ethics Center will help you narrow your options down to one, and then you will work to confirm the internship by early spring (see above).

The work itself may be modest, but significant; the internship should emphasize hands-on work, as opposed to strictly research, solitary work in a lab, or only office work. Your internship may have elements of some of these, but it should also have some interaction with participants and/or community members. The work should lend itself to personal reflection and/or reflection on ethical issues you might encounter. You’ll be doing a lot of writing to examine these issues in the fall (see “Part 3: Fall 2016” below).

You must intern at least 25 hours/week for at least eight consecutive weeks. If you’re not sure what work would be needed, you can describe the organization and the kind of work you’d like to do.

Tasks of former Fellows have included documenting projects through writing, photographs, and/or video; interviewing; teaching English classes; writing funding proposals, reports, or media press releases; and assisting with exhibitions, publications and conferences.

Your three ideal internship organizations may jump out at you right away, or may require a great deal of research on your part. Talk to your professors, former Sorensen Fellows, Experiential Learning staff, Study Abroad staff, your advisor, family members, etc. Browse the Sorensen Fellowship Internship Ideas website: brandeis.edu/ethics/atbranndeis/sorensenfellowship/internships.html. Check out the Hiatt Career Center’s resources for finding internships at brandeis.edu/programs/internships.html, including the peer-reviewed internship sites at the Brandeis Internship Exchange: brandeis.edu/hiatt/search/internship/exchange.html.

Some applicants ask whether we prefer that they select a new internship site or an internship site in which Sorensen Fellows have worked before. The answer is whatever best suits YOUR journey. We’ll be looking for a match between the site and your interests, academic and otherwise.

**Part 3: Fall 2016 – Course**

The fall component of the Fellowship is PAX 89 (Internship in Peace, Conflict, and Coexistence Studies), which is a course designed specifically for the group of Fellows and others who will have similar summer experiences. The class will meet once a week for two hours, at a time to be arranged by the instructor, usually Thursdays from 2 to 3:50 pm. The course will be offered for a letter grade and will generate full credit. The workload for this course is considered equivalent to other Brandeis courses and usually includes research, a lot of writing, reading, group discussions, a final presentation to the Brandeis community, and one-on-one meetings with the professor. The course qualifies for the Brandeis Writing Intensive requirement. This course is an essential component of the Fellowship and must be taken in person. For this reason, **students who will be abroad in the fall of 2016 are ineligible for the Sorensen Fellowship.**
Application Process

Draft Application – due Oct. 1
If you’d like to get feedback on your ideas before the deadline, you are invited to submit a Draft Application. A Draft Application is not required, and it will not become part of your final application. It’s fine if the proposal is incomplete or in rough form, or even if it’s just your idea so far. Draft Applications are submitted online (brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html) no later than Thursday, October 1, 2015 at 5 p.m. In addition to the online Draft Application, we appreciate a double-spaced, hard copy of your essay, delivered to the Ethics Center office, ASAC 310 (Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex – across the loop road from Heller), by 5 p.m. on October 1. However, hard copies of application materials are optional for the Draft Application.

Application Support Weeks – Oct. 14-29
Sorensen Fellowship director Marci McPhee holds regular office hours throughout the semester. In addition, she’ll have extra office hours during Sorensen Fellow Application Support Weeks – Oct. 14-29. 2015. Make one ½ hour appointment anytime this fall to discuss ideas, questions or concerns about your application. Contact ethics@brandeis.edu, or sign up directly here: http://tinyurl.com/nsww87s

Summer Earnings Replacement Grant (SERG) Info Session – Oct. 13
Attend this brief information session about the Summer Earnings Replacement Grant (SERG) to find out more about this need-based grant of up to $1,500 as partial replacement for what you would have earned at a summer job. Tuesday, October 13, 2015 from 5:00 to 5:30 p.m. in the Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex (ASAC) Atrium.

Proposal Writing Workshop – Oct. 14
We strongly encourage you to attend the optional Proposal Writing Workshop on Wednesday, October 14, 2015 from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex (ASAC) Atrium. This workshop will offer specific suggestions about how best to present your ideas and write a compelling proposal. It’s particularly aimed at those who have submitted Draft Applications, but all are welcome.

Application – due Monday, November 2, 2015 by 5 p.m.
The final application consists of the following pieces:

1. Online application (including essay) (see brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html). Polish your essay in a Word document first so you can paste it into the correct field online.

2. Hard-copy materials, handed in to the Ethics Center all at once. Emailed pieces – including recommendations – will not be accepted, except for students who are abroad. Materials received after the deadline will not be opened.
* Printed copy of your essay, double-spaced and paper-clipped (SINGLE-SIDED, NO STAPLES). Note: The essay will be pasted into the online application, but we’d also like this additional printout.

* Transcript (unofficial or official) – To obtain an unofficial transcript, go to brandeis.edu/sage/. Contact the Registrar’s office if you need assistance.

* Current resume (include honors, special programs, extracurriculars, etc. Can be 1-2 pages.)

* Two letters of recommendation – NEW IN 2016: Previously both recommenders needed to be affiliated with Brandeis. Now only one letter must be from a Brandeis faculty member; the second letter can be from staff or faculty, from Brandeis or elsewhere.

You should give your essay to your recommender so s/he can comment on it and evaluate your potential to accomplish your proposed internship work. If you have applied before, new letters of recommendation are encouraged but not required. It is always helpful to the selection committee to have the most recent evaluation of your work.

Instructions for your recommenders can be found at brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html. Students must collect recommendations in signed and sealed envelopes and hand deliver them to the Ethics Center as part of the completed application packet. As noted above with other materials, recommendations will not be accepted by email or fax, except for students who are abroad. Recommendations received after the deadline will not be opened.

Applications must be complete in the Ethics Center office by 5 p.m. on Monday, November 2, 2015. Hard copy materials should be brought to the Ethics Center office in room 310 of the Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex (ASAC, across from the Heller School). Only students who are abroad in fall 2015 may email their materials to ethics@brandeis.edu, or fax to 781-736-8561. The Selection Committee will meet by Thursday, November 12 to select finalists. All applicants will be contacted via email by the end of the day on Friday, November 13. Up to twelve finalists will be selected for an interview; six to eight Sorensen Fellows will be selected no later than Friday, November 20, 2015.

Application Details

Essay (to be pasted in your online application and also printed out - single-sided, double spaced, no staples) and handed in with your hard copy materials)

In 1000–1750 words (3-4 pages), please describe the work you might do as an intern in each of the three possible internships you have in mind, and your personal and academic reasons for choosing these internships.

Your essay should describe three main things: the work, yourself, and your proposed spring course. Questions such as these may get you thinking, but you need not answer them all:

• Tell us about your preferred internship work and your three proposed organizations. The order in which you discuss the organizations does not matter. You must apply with three equally viable organizations in mind:
What do you want to do and how do you want to do it?

WHY do you want to do it?

What are some ethical questions that come to mind when you consider your proposed internship? (For example, previous Fellows have asked, “This internship has me teaching English in a country where English is not the first language; is that fair? What are the possible positive and negative effects on the population?” Or “This internship will require me to work among people whose religious views are very different from mine; how might this affect me positively and negatively?”)

Has anything in your studies or reading shaped your thinking in relation to these issues?

How might the political, economic, racial, or educational situation in this part of the world affect your experience?

Tell us about yourself:

How has your life experience prepared you for this Fellowship? What insights and questions will you bring from your own background and identities? How might living among this population change your views and beliefs?

How would you describe yourself in terms of qualities like maturity, flexibility, respect, and sense of humor?

How does this Fellowship relate to your educational, personal and professional goals? What do you think you might learn as an intern?

Tell us about your spring course:

What course do you intend to take in spring 2016 to prepare you for this experience? In 1-2 sentences, identify the course and describe how it fits into your proposed internship work.

If you will be abroad in spring 2016, identify a course at your program that will prepare you academically for your summer internship. If you can’t find anything relevant in your abroad program, you may create a personal reading list for intellectual preparation. List books, articles, and/or videos, and why you included them. (Note that Ethics Center staff and/or other Brandeis faculty members will work with you to complete your list and decide on writing assignments related to your list once you are chosen as a Fellow.)

Be creative! Show, don’t tell. Instead of rattling off a list of accomplishments, describe a moment that demonstrates your background or thinking. Make your essay come alive!
Helpful Hints

This sounds challenging! Where do I start?
The application process is intended to be challenging but doable – because a successful Sorensen Fellow is the kind of person who can rise to a challenge! We are happy to give you guidance, but as you can see, this is not a “fill in the blanks” kind of application. Your creative problem-solving skills will be enhanced by the application process alone.

Begin by reading the mission and guiding principles of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life (see brandeis.edu/ethics/about). Decide on an area of interest, a region or possible internship organizations. Some Fellows are interested in a specific region; others are passionate about a particular kind of work (e.g., refugee issues), regardless of the region of the world.

Think about what you’d like to learn; maybe there’s a subject you haven’t had much time to engage in during your Brandeis career so far, or maybe it’s a subject that has informed everything you do. Or maybe you’d like to expand your personal views in some way.

You’ll also want to contact your recommenders early to give them plenty of time to meet the deadline. Remind them that you need the recommendation in a signed and sealed envelope, and that late materials will not be opened.

Who else can coach me on my essay and resume?
- The Writing Center has drop-in hours to work with you on your essay. Visit brandeis.edu/writingprogram/writingcenter
- Hiatt Career Center is poised to help you polish your resume and think about how you present yourself in writing, etc. Visit brandeis.edu/hiatt

Safety and Security Considerations
As you consider your preferred internship location, think carefully about safety issues. Current travel warnings and alerts from the US State Department are at travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html. Current travel health notices from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) are at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices. PLEASE READ THESE CAREFULLY. Having your destination country on a State Department or CDC list may not preclude your application from being considered, but it is a cause for concern. If you choose to proceed with your plans in one of the listed countries, you’ll be asked to explain how you will address the issues raised in the travel advisory. You’ll find this question in the online application. You may want to ask someone at the potential organizations about safety and health issues.

After your internship is confirmed, you should continue to monitor the State Department and CDC advisories and news from your intended destination as well. Should circumstances change between the time of your selection and your departure in such a way that we are concerned for your safety, regardless of State Department or CDC warning or alert status, the Center reserves the right to ask you to find an alternative location. We will work with you to find a suitable alternative site.
What is the Ethics Center looking for in an applicant?
Bright, motivated, energetic undergraduates who are committed both to service and to their own learning are the students we’re looking for to be Sorensen Fellows. Specifically, we’re looking for:

- Emotional maturity. This is critical. Fellows need a great deal of personal resilience and good judgment to deal with the challenges of an independent international internship, away from the support of a college structure.
- Ability to prioritize, follow through, and keep commitments. Experience suggests that Fellows are very busy and involved. A successful Sorensen Fellow makes the Fellowship one of his/her top commitments – which may involve giving up something else.
- The capacity to envision, implement, and clearly articulate a well thought out internship.
- Academic achievement that will prepare you intellectually for your summer internship. (We have no GPA minimum.)
- An interest in writing. During your summer internship and in the fall PAX 89 course, you will be crafting and re-crafting serious, sometimes lengthy reflections on your internship experience. You don’t need to be a prize-winning author, but you do need to enjoy communicating through the written word, with a willingness to revise your work more than once!

What if I haven’t done anything like this before?
Yes, we’re looking for some Fellows for whom this will be another award in a long string of accomplishments. But we’re also looking for Fellows for whom this might be a first-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Perhaps you’ve never been abroad, or perhaps the application process might seem like a stretch, maybe even a little out of reach. If you’re willing to work hard, we’ve put together a lot of support systems – workshops, info sessions, resources, etc. – to help you succeed in making your application the best it can be. The application is a lot of work, but well worth it – not only for the hoped-for end result, but also because of what you’ll learn about yourself and about your possibilities in the very process of applying.

Contact Information

Questions?
International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life MS 086, x68577, ethics@brandeis.edu
Office: 3rd floor Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex (ASAC), across from Heller School
Follow us: Facebook.com/EthicsBrandeis
Follow us on Twitter: #ethicsbrandeis

Resources

Check out the online resources at brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html before beginning the application process. You’ll find:

- Due dates and Ethics Center contact info.
- A summary of Changes to the Sorensen Fellowship for 2016.
- Information about previous Fellows and their internships.
• The 2014 Fellows’ final papers, compiled in a publication entitled *From Looking to Bearing Witness*.
• PAX 89 course syllabus for fall 2014 (Note: the syllabus will change, as the instructor of the course changes periodically.)
• Safety and security considerations as you choose an internship site.
• Resources on religion, sexual preference, dietary needs, and ethnicity concerns in various regions.
• Internship ideas and leads.
• Recommender’s Instructions.
• The Ethics Center mission statement and principles.
• The award-winning application essays of the 2015 Sorensen Fellows (flaws and all!). Note that the program has changed significantly this year, so previous Fellows’ application essays will be different.