

# Sorensen Fellowship 2012 Information Packet



INTERNATIONAL CENTER for  
ETHICS, JUSTICE, and PUBLIC LIFE

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Brandeis University

# About the Fellowship

## **Snapshot - Sorensen Fellowship**

Conserve the rainforest. Help fight AIDS. Spread literacy. Teach art to orphans.  
Given the chance, how would *you* change the world?

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 constructive social change on the international stage.

## **Eligibility**

Sorensen Fellows must be:

- Brandeis sophomores or juniors in the fall of 2011.
- In good standing.
- On campus during both the spring and fall semesters of 2012. Students who are abroad in the fall of 2011 may be interviewed by telephone if selected as finalists.
- Students from any major are eligible.

We are pleased to consider applications from those who have previously applied. Up to ten finalists will be selected for an interview; up to six 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. Fellows will receive credit for the spring and fall courses when satisfactorily completed. Please be aware that this stipend may be taxable under U.S. law; please consult a tax advisor with questions.

# About Ted Sorensen

Theodore C. "Ted" 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](#). 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 2012 – Preparatory Course & Workshops**

Take a course of your own choosing to prepare for the rigor of 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.

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. For this reason, **students who will be abroad in the spring of 2012 are ineligible for the Sorensen Fellowship.** However, it is possible to schedule a Study Abroad experience and a Sorensen Fellowship during your time at Brandeis. Read "Brandeis and the World" at <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html>

Spring preparation meetings, mandatory for all Fellows, will be held:

- Pre-retreat Thursday, February 16, 2012, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Ethics Center
- Off-campus overnight retreat Friday, March 2 (after classes) through Saturday, March 3, 2012 at 6 p.m.
- PAX 89 workshop Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Ethics Center
- Pre-departure Meeting for Summer Abroad Thurs, April 26, 2012, 5:00 – 7:30 p.m. at Brandeis

If you are unable to attend these preparation meetings, you should not apply for the Fellowship.

## **Part 2: Summer 2012 - Internship**

The summer component of the Fellowship 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 <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/about/> for the Ethics Center mission statement.

Within the online application, you will be asked to describe the **internship work** you'd like to do at the organization. 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.) You must intern full time for at least eight consecutive weeks. If you have a preferred organization, but you're not sure what work would be needed, you can describe the organization and the kind of work you'd *like* to do.

Actual tasks of former Fellows have included documenting projects (in writing, photographs, and/or video), interviewing, teaching English conversation classes, writing funding proposals or reports, writing press releases for local and international media, and assisting with exhibitions and publications. In some cases, Fellows have participated in non-violent political actions, media projects, or seminars and conferences.

Visit <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html> for internship ideas and leads.

### **Part 3: Fall 2012 – Course & Presentation**

The fall component of the Fellowship is PAX 89 (Internship in Peace, Conflict, and Coexistence Studies), which is a course designed specifically for and limited to 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. 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, and one-on-one meetings with the professor. The course qualifies for the Brandeis Writing Intensive requirement.

At the conclusion of the course, students share their work in a forum open to the Brandeis community. This presentation is an opportunity for students to discuss their summer internship experiences and enhance presentation skills. For this reason, **students who will be abroad in the fall of 2012 are ineligible for the Sorensen Fellowship**. However, it is possible to schedule a Study Abroad experience and a Sorensen Fellowship during your time at Brandeis. Read “Brandeis and the World” at <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html>

## **Application Process**

### **Preliminary Application – due Oct. 5**

Although not required, submitting a Preliminary Application for review is strongly recommended so you can get useful feedback on your ideas. Preliminary materials will not become part of your final application, so it is fine if the proposal is incomplete or in rough draft form. Preliminary Applications should be submitted online at <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html> no later than Wednesday, October 5, 2011 at 5 p.m. We also ask that you deliver a hard copy of your preliminary essay, double-spaced, to the Ethics Center office in Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex room 309, by 5 p.m. on October 5, but hard copies of application materials are optional for the Preliminary Application.

**Proposal Writing Workshop – Oct. 12**

We strongly encourage you to attend the optional Proposal Writing Workshop on Wednesday, October 12, 2011 from 5:15-6:15 p.m. in the Mandel Center for the Humanities, Reading Room 303. This workshop will offer specific suggestions about how to best present your ideas and how to write a compelling proposal. It's particularly aimed at those who have submitted Preliminary Applications, but all are welcome.

**Application – due Tuesday, Nov. 1, 2011 by 5 p.m.**

The final application consists of the following pieces:

**1. Online application at**

<http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html> (includes essay).

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 will not be accepted. Materials received after the deadline will not be opened.**

\* **Letter or email of interest from internship organization** (see “Contacting the Organization” below)

\* **Transcript (unofficial or official)** – To obtain an unofficial transcript, go to <http://sage.brandeis.edu>. (Contact the Registrar’s office for assistance.)

\* **Current resume** (include honors, special programs, extracurricular activities, etc.)

\* **Two letters of recommendation** – One must be from a Brandeis professor. The second letter of recommendation may be from a second Brandeis professor or a Brandeis staff member (administrator, coach, mentor). 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. Additional letters of recommendation, such as from a relevant off-campus person, are accepted but are neither required nor encouraged. 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

<http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html>. **Students must pick up recommendations in signed and sealed envelopes and hand deliver them to the Ethics Center as part of the completed application packet. 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 Tuesday, November 1, 2011**. Hard copy materials should be brought to the Ethics Center office in room 309 of the Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex (ASAC, across from the Heller School). Only students who are abroad in fall 2011 may email their materials to [ethics@brandeis.edu](mailto:ethics@brandeis.edu), or fax to 781-736-8561. The Selection Committee will meet by Friday, November 11 to select finalists. All applicants will be contacted via email by that evening. Up to ten finalists will be given an

assigned interview slot at that time. Up to six Fellows will be selected no later than Wednesday, November 23, 2011.

## Application Details

**Contacting the Organization** (Helpful hints and a sample contact letter can be found at <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html>)

You should have some idea of the work you'd like to do before contacting the organization. If you're not sure what work is needed by the organization, you might indicate the areas of the organization that interest you and how you might like to contribute. *You must indicate that this is a tentative inquiry, making no promises on behalf of the Ethics Center or yourself.* The organization should only be asked for a letter or email in response, indicating their interest in working with you should you receive a Fellowship, and their thoughts on your proposed work. See <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html> for the Internship Site Description form, which you must send to a potential organization, outlining the requirements of the site.

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 intellectual journey. We'll be looking for a match between the site and your interests and passion.

### **Essay (to be pasted in your online application)**

In 750-1250 words, please describe your interest in the Sorensen Fellowship and your proposed internship work. (If you're pursuing two different internship options, you may write about both, and your essay may be 1250-1750 words.)

### **Questions about you and your background**

These questions are ideas to help get you started, but you need not answer them all:

- How has your life experience prepared you for this Fellowship? What experiences have you had in activism or service? What insights and questions will you bring from your own background and identities? Has anything in your studies or reading shaped your thinking in relation to these issues?
- We are looking for people who have the maturity to adapt to new living and working environments, who are flexible, willing to learn and work hard, respectful of people of other cultures and backgrounds, and have a sense of humor. How would you describe yourself in terms of these qualities?
- What do you hope to accomplish in this three-semester experience? How does this Fellowship relate to your educational, personal and professional goals?

### Questions about your proposed internship

Your essay must address these fundamental questions about the work you would like to do with the proposed organization:

- **WHAT** do you want to do? Explain your proposed internship work. What are the critical issues or central themes you intend to address?
- **HOW** do you want to do it? Briefly describe how you plan to approach the work.
- **WHY** do you want to do it? Justify the importance of the work. What is likely to be achieved, demonstrated, or discovered? How has your coursework prepared you intellectually? How will this internship contribute to your academic development? How does your proposed internship fit into the Ethics Center mission and principles?
- **WHAT COURSE** do you intend to take in spring 2012 to prepare you for this experience? How does that course fit into your proposed internship work?

## Helpful Hints

### **This sounds challenging! Where do I start?**

The application process is intended to be challenging but not impossible – 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.

Read the mission and guiding principles of the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life (see <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/about/index.html>). Begin by deciding on an area of interest, a region or an organization; you’ll need as much lead time as possible to think about your internship and contact 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.

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.

### **Finding an Internship Site**

Make sure your proposal is actually an internship, not a research project or simply a summer job. Read the definition of an internship:

<http://www.brandeis.edu/hiatt/students/experiential/internships/>

Your ideal organization 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:

<http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/internships.html>. Internships are not limited to those suggested on this site. Check out the online workshop “How to Find an Internship” at <http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/internships>. Keep in mind that internships that are available in fall/spring might also be available in summer.

When you’re ready to contact the organization, visit

<http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html> for ideas. You’ll also find the Internship Site Description, which you must send to the organization so they’ll know what is expected of them.

### **A Sample Internship Proposal Idea**

Imagine that you were interested in South Africa. You might visit the Ethics Center’s internship ideas website and notice that several former Fellows have worked at Ikamva Labantu in Cape Town, South Africa. The organization’s website <http://www.ikamva.com/> lists several programs: early childhood development, youth development, home-based care, economic improvement, etc.

If you decided that Ikamva Labantu sounded like a match for your interests, you might contact the organization and indicate that your preference is the youth development sector, but that you’re willing to contribute wherever you are needed in the organization. Describe a specific contribution you might make, such as teaching an art class, documenting a program through photography and interviewing, writing grant proposals, researching, or helping to enhance their website. Be sure you attach the Internship Site Description.

### **Safety and Security Considerations**

As you consider your preferred internship location, think carefully about safety issues. For the list of current travel warnings and alerts from the US State Department, visit [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/tw/tw\\_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html) for travel warnings and [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/pa/pa\\_1766.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1766.html) for travel alerts. LEASE READ THESE CAREFULLY. Having your destination country on a State Department 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 the steps you will take to address the issues raised in the travel advisory warning. You’ll find this question in the online application. You may want to ask your contact person at the potential organization about safety issues.

After you have been selected as a Fellow, the Ethics Center will continue to monitor developments in your internship location. We ask you to continue to monitor the State Department 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 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:

- The capacity to envision and implement a well thought out internship.
- The ability to clearly articulate that internship.
- A history of activism or service, as demonstrated by previous work with a volunteer organization, student club, or summer work. The focus of your activism or service need not be related to the focus of your proposed internship, but some experience working on issues of social justice indicates commitment and exposure to work outside the classroom.
- 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.
- Coursework – past, in process, and planned for the spring – indicating a solid academic background in your internship's area of interest.
- Academic achievement. (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!

Fellows receive a \$4000 stipend (\$3500 if internship is in the U.S.), course credit, a summer internship experience either abroad or in the USA, and the opportunity to learn from both frustrations and accomplishments while working with others towards a more just and ethical world.

**Before You Panic**

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 some 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, 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, FAX x68561, [ethics@brandeis.edu](mailto:ethics@brandeis.edu)

Become a Facebook fan of the Ethics Center: <http://www.facebook.com/EthicsBrandeis>

Follow us on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/ethicsbrandeis>

**Office location:** 3rd floor of the Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex (ASAC), across the loop road from the Heller School.

## Resources

Check out the following online resources at

<http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/atbrandeis/sorensenfellowship/apply.html> before beginning the application process:

- Due dates and Ethics Center contact info.
- “Brandeis and the World,” which contains information about how to be a Sorensen Fellow AND study abroad if you want to do both.
- Information about former years’ Fellows and their internships.
- The 2010 Fellows’ final papers, compiled in a publication entitled *Shifting Perspectives: Encountering Community in a Changing World*.
- PAX 89 course syllabus for fall 2011. (Note: the syllabus may change.)
- 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.
- Tips on contacting a potential internship site.
- Internship Site Description to send to potential internship sites as you request your letter or email of interest.
- Recommender’s Instructions. **Remember, recommendations will not be accepted by email. Recommendations received after the Nov. 1 deadline will not be opened.**
- The Ethics Center mission statement and principles.
- The award-winning application essays of the 2011 Sorensen Fellows (flaws and all!).