

Danielle Fumagalli
Cal Class of 2010



I had a fantastic UCDC experience, both in terms of the program classes and my internship. The Berkeley program professors and staff were extremely approachable, both inside and outside of the classroom. They helped my friends in the program and me with a multitude of issues, from finding a last-minute internship to grad school advice. In the research seminar which made up most of my units there, there was both a professor and a GSI for a 20- student class, so I had no problem in getting individual advice on my paper or my other assignments. For my final

research paper which is a significant part of the program, I wrote 25 pages on the China-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement which went into effect at the beginning of 2010. It was a new experience to write on something so current, and it gave me the opportunity to explore a topic that hadn't already been extensively written on. I also had the opportunity to take a class on financial crises taught by a University of Pennsylvania professor. The class was small, about 12 people, and there was lots of opportunity for discussion of issues like the current financial crisis with students from UPenn who often brought new views that I had not considered.

For my internship, I worked at the State Department in the Office of Economic Policy for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs. I had also interned for the State Department the previous summer, and based on my two experiences I think that the State Department offers one of the most rewarding internships out there. Some interns complain of being given boring and unimportant tasks. This was never the case with me. I was always given assignments that were challenging, took my personal interests into account, and had readily apparent value. In my first hours there, I had already been thrown into preparing for a conference of CEOs of multinational corporations. Much of my office's work involves the U.S. role in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, so I participated in a lot of preparation for the U.S. delegation's APEC meetings. Other tasks I was involved in included redesigning our office's website, preparing talking points for speeches, and writing memos for high ranking department officials. I think one of the most important things that I have taken away from this internship is the ability to transition my way of thinking and writing from academic to practical- something that is rarely learned by writing essays in class.