Thank you for signing up to participate in the 2020 Writing Competition. Although the 2020 Writing Competition instructions will provide all necessary information to complete the Competition, we understand that transfer applicants did not have the opportunity to attend informational events at the Law School during Winter Quarter. Instead, we would like to welcome you to join us for an informational lunch talk via Zoom on May 15, 2020. Details on joining this informational session can be found on the school’s website.

For those unable to attend, we have also put together a short primer on the 2020 Writing Competition. Please note that you will receive the full instructions for the Writing Competition by 9:00 AM CDT on Saturday, May 30, 2020. This document is not a replacement for those instructions. Instead, this document briefly introduces you to the Competition, should you decide to participate.

- The Writing Competition requires that you write a Topic Analysis (Part I), edit a written selection (Part II), and write a short personal statement (Part III). You will have fourteen days to complete the Writing Competition. You will receive the packet containing the Writing Competition materials via email by 9:00 AM CDT on Thursday, May 28, 2020. Your submission must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. CDT on Thursday, June 11, 2020. This is a hard deadline, and excuses will not be accepted under any circumstances.

- You must work on the Writing Competition entirely by yourself. You may not receive any substantive, editorial, or proofreading assistance, nor may you discuss any aspect of the competition with any other person until July 18, 2020.

- Parts I and II of the Writing Competition require you to use The University of Chicago Manual of Legal Citation (the Maroonbook) for citations. The Maroonbook is available online at http://lawreview.uchicago.edu/page/maroonbook. Please be sure to download the 2019 edition of the Maroonbook, which was produced by the editors of Volume 87 of the Law Review.

- Part I of the Writing Competition consists of a Topic Analysis: a memo describing a legal issue and evaluating whether that issue could form the basis of a student Comment. New staff members spend a significant amount of time during the summer researching legal issues and preparing Topic Analyses that will eventually be used for Comments.
  - A Comment is a student-authored essay of moderate length (10,000 to 13,500 words) providing an in-depth analysis of a live legal question and a resolution or a new approach to the issue. Law Reviews at other schools may refer to these pieces as “Notes.”
  - The purpose of a Topic Analysis is to assess the suitability of a topic as the basis for a student Comment. Your Topic Analysis must not exceed 3,000 words, including footnotes. The Writing Competition instructions will contain example Topic Analyses that should inform how you format and structure your Topic Analysis.

- Part II of the Writing Competition requires you to complete a substantive edit (often called a “cite check”) on a short passage of legal writing. For the selection, assume that none of the sources that appear has been cited in the larger article from which the selection is excerpted. That is, you should treat the selection as a complete passage. Substantive editing of the selection will require a significant amount of time and effort. As a staffer on a journal, substantive editing is an important responsibility. You should check this passage for consistency with the style guides used by the University of Chicago Law Review (the Maroonbook and Chicago Manual of Style). You should also check this passage to ensure that the claims it makes are supported by cited sources.

- For Part III of the Writing Competition, you will write a short essay responding to the following prompt: “Please write a statement of no more than 500 words explaining why you are particularly interested in serving on the staff of the Law Review, Legal Forum, or Chicago Journal of International Law. Alternatively, or in addition, please explain any reasons why you believe your skills, professional experiences, life experiences, interests, or background would enable you to make a valuable contribution to a journal.”