November 5, 2008

Swarthmore College  
History Department  
500 College Avenue  
Swarthmore, PA 19081

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to provide you with information about Research Associate (RA) positions at Harvard Business School (HBS). It is my hope that you will agree that our positions are a wonderful opportunity for graduating seniors and that you will encourage them to contact me and apply.

Each year HBS recruits 8-12 recent graduates from top tier schools, who have excelled in both academic studies and outside activities. While economics concentrators tend to do very well here, we find that strong researchers and writers come from all disciplines. Independent, self-disciplined, and intellectually curious candidates will find this a great opportunity to build writing, research, and analytical skills and to develop knowledge of industries, leaders, and business practices.

Our large and diverse group of talented researchers currently consists of about 120 people. A number have earned MBAs, JDs, or PhDs; others have worked in industry for over 15 years and bring an immense amount of practical experience. As you can see, the recent graduates would be in very good company!

After working as a researcher, many of the RAs go on to pursue a graduate degree. Others may enter the world of consulting, continue in-depth research at world renowned think-tanks, or often they will pursue a position in an industry that they learned about as part of their work here.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have about the program. I’ve also attached a job description to be posted for your students. Candidates may also contact me with questions and can apply through on-campus recruiting or by visiting www.hbs.edu/research/ra.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Beth Hall
Harvard Business School seeks Research Associates to partner with faculty on significant scholarly research projects. In this role, people often become more closely affiliated with a particular industry, functional practice or academic discipline, which often leads to future career paths. Many of the skills are immediately transferable to an analyst role in consulting, academic pursuits, such as a doctoral or graduate program, or a position in the private or public sectors. Research Associates contribute towards the faculty's research agenda, in capacities not limited to writing and editing, data gathering, analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, gaining understanding of subject matter and synthesizing findings, planning and conducting interviews, creating and interpreting analyses, developing course and curriculum materials including HBS cases, and assisting with the creation of presentations.

Requirements: BA/BS degree. Research Associates at Harvard Business School bring a diversity of backgrounds and skills including areas of study such as anthropology, economics, English, history, philosophy, psychology and sociology, as well as all other areas of the humanities and social sciences. We seek outstanding analytical and interpersonal skills, educational and professional backgrounds; we generally do not require specific industry background. Some positions require knowledge of statistical packages such as Stata or SAS; while others require strong writing and editorial skills. Applicants should be prepared to submit writing samples, transcripts, and if applicable coding samples upon request.

Harvard University offers generous benefits including medical and dental coverage, up to 4 weeks of vacation time per year, 11.5 University-recognized holidays, University-sponsored pension plan, tuition assistance program, training and development programs and a variety of discounts and purchasing offers.

**Background**

The mission of Harvard Business School is to educate leaders who make a difference in the world. In support of the mission, HBS hires a large and diverse group of talented researchers. Research positions provide recent college graduates with the unique opportunity to work with, and learn from, the world's leading minds in management education and business practice. In addition, HBS hires a number of research associates who have earned advanced degrees, such as MBAs, JDs and PhDs, or have worked in industry for years and bring an immense amount of practical experience. Research Associates typically go on to pursue a graduate degree, consulting or a position in industry.

**Apply**

Candidates can apply by visiting our website [www.hbs.edu/research/ra](http://www.hbs.edu/research/ra). For questions about the application process contact Beth Hall at behall@hbs.edu.
We make ideas happen.
It starts with an idea...

"The work that I do requires that you be agile, yet open-minded; creative; and methodical. Being an RA has really widened my horizons and helped me understand the options that are open to me in the future."

An idea with the power to change the way we think and act is the product of more than one great mind.

Often, it's a result of collaboration. Research Associates at HBS have the unmatched opportunity to be part of a dynamic relationship by working closely with world-renowned faculty on the research, case studies, and coursework that will shape the world's future leaders.

The day-to-day work of this position is as varied as the projects pursued by our faculty. Investigation, discovery, and analysis are the common denominators of a rich and rewarding process that supports HBS in its mission to educate leaders who make a difference in the world. As an RA, you may travel across town—or around the world—to conduct field interviews with senior-level executives or spend time on the factory floor. On any given day, an RA might analyze financial data, delve into the resources of the world's largest business library; or write the story that brings a business situation to life. To view video interviews of RAs describing their experience at HBS, visit www.hbs.edu/research/ra.
...and leads to new worlds of experience.

For many, this has been a transforming experience that offers flexibility, creativity, and the opportunity to work independently. As an RA, you'll find yourself meeting people and exploring issues and topics that open up new worlds of experience and insight, both professionally and personally. This results in a substantial body of work. RAs create a variety of influential products and usually have multiple projects in the works. You may be involved in a broad study that focuses on a Fortune 500 company, a hospital, or a small start-up venture. RAs also work on book projects and articles that make significant contributions to the ongoing dialogue of ideas and practice in business and leadership circles.

RAs have the time and resources to dig deep into their research, with the guidance of faculty who are thought leaders in fields ranging from entrepreneurship to finance to organizational behavior. As a demanding, satisfying process, resulting in an outcome that influences how future leaders will solve today's challenges.

Finally, HBS is a great place to work. Our substantial benefits package includes generous healthcare options and paid time off for full- and most part-time RAs, as well as a tuition assistance program to subsidize continuing education opportunities at Harvard University and elsewhere.

For examples of sample projects and to learn more about benefits and other posts, visit www.hbs.edu/researchra.

"Being an RA showed me where I wanted to go; it was ideal preparation for graduate school."
—Daniel Schneider, BA, Public Policy, Ph.D. candidate, Sociology

"There's really no limit to what you can learn. If you just keep your eyes and ears open. It's definitely the best job that I've ever had."
—Eric Schoen, BA, Economics, BBA, 1997

As an RA candidate, you may have recently completed an MBA or PhD—or just graduated with a BA or BS in anything from applied math to economics to literature. Some RAs come to us from established careers in the private and nonprofit sectors, for others, it's their first "real" job. We welcome applications from working parents, those in the midst of a career transition, and individuals who may be interested in academia.

The bottom line is that there is no typical RA, because no two RA positions are identical. RAs share a sense of intellectual curiosity, strong interpersonal skills, and a proven ability in writing, analysis, and problem-solving. Some positions require excellent interviewing or advanced computer skills, including experience with statistical packages. For others positions, we require or prefer experience in a specific business or fluency in a foreign language. Whatever your background or situation, you'll enjoy the advantage of intellectually challenging work that can be balanced with other interests and responsibilities.
...and takes you places you never expected.

The paths that RAs follow after they leave HBS are as varied as the work they do while they're here. Some have gone on to doctoral programs, business and law school, or another graduate-level degree program; we've also seen our RAs enter the fields of consulting, publishing, and finance, or find positions in government or research institutes. RAs have told us that the skills they develop in researching, writing, interviewing, analysis, and project management create a springboard to a wide range of career options.

The Next Step

Visit www.hbs.edu/research/ra for current RA postings and application details. Once your materials are on file, you may be asked to submit other details such as writing samples, transcripts, and letters of recommendation or references. Our interviewing and matching process is lengthy and rigorous, but it ensures a good fit between your skills and experience and a faculty member's research goals.

See our website for more details:

www.hbs.edu/research/ra