

## Statement of Purpose

Dear Dr. May,

My name is Hung Le Tran, and I am a second year at the University of Chicago majoring in mathematics and computer science. I am applying to the UChicago Math REU Full Program and am very interested in attending. If accepted, I would gain immense mathematical maturity both in breadth and depth, acquire new experiences that would shape my academic journey in mathematics, and build invaluable relationships with like-minded peers and mentors.

For a long time, I have been involved in Math Olympiads, in which the challenge to flexibly use and connect ideas in algebra, geometry and number theory to solve presented problems always keeps me excited. My first taste of independent mathematical “research”, however, came in my last year of high school, when I wrote my Extended Essay on the general formula for orthogonal regression. The most fulfilling moment then was when I learnt of Marden’s Theorem while working on the 3-point case, a theorem that relates roots of complex polynomials to the Steiner inellipse of a triangle, two concepts that I had initially thought to be wholly separate. This was when I started appreciating the beauty of abstract mathematics.

This past summer, after my first year in college, I participated in the Apprentice Program, my best mathematics experience yet. In 5 weeks, I was introduced to group theory, quadratic reciprocity, and graph theory, while also attending the 8-week Probability and Analysis lectures of the Full Program, which covered random walks, geometric measure theory, Fourier analysis, stochastic calculus, as well as the Number Theory lectures where broad ideas on analytic number theory were discussed. In participating in the Full Program this year, I hope to be able to gain a deeper understanding in the diverse topics that the different lecture sequences offer.

Most importantly, throughout the REU, I really enjoyed working through Lawler’s *Random Walk and the Heat Equation* and Evans’ *Partial Differential Equations* under the mentorship of Prof. Beniada Shabani, building up to an expository work on the PDE topics I read, unifying the analytic and probabilistic viewpoints employed in my readings on Laplace’s and Heat equations. This, again, was fascinating to me, when one can model and view the same problem from varying perspectives. Throughout, I thoroughly loved both the self-directed and mentored aspects of the reading process, and certainly look forward to the same experience again this coming summer.

This year, I am taking the Honors Analysis sequence and Point-Set Topology, a topic I became interested in after seeing the power of viewing objects through the topological lens in real analysis. If accepted to the program, I would like to continue to learn more about PDEs and other analysis topics, for their ability to reflect real world phenomena is really inspiring for me.

I believe that I have the desire for knowledge and the passion to conduct independent studies, and thus sincerely hope that you can grant me the opportunity to be part of the program. Thank you for your time and consideration.

All my best,

Hung Le Tran