London was the destination of my post-sophomore summer. I distinctly remember stepping out of the plane and alighting on Heathrow’s Terminal Three, a place that I was once so familiar since I have spent most of my childhood in London. Despite an immediate yet well-known affinity, I was overwhelmed by a new sense of excitement since I was about to begin a new experience – my internship. I have never worked in London before since I had been a full-time student.

Earlier the year, much to my delight, I received an email from the Head of Legal Director from Hutchison Whampoa, a conglomerate with roots in Hong Kong, of which businesses operate in 54 countries. Although I was not a law student, the job description and my then limited knowledge of law compelled me to apply. Thus, I, a Classics major and Medieval and Renaissance concentrator to-be, began my first day of internship in the legal department of Hutchison in its office located in Battersea, a lovely yet variegated area positioned just south of the Thames. I did not know what to expect and was visibly very nervous. My worries were soon dissolved by the welcoming warmth of the amiable workers. I took the first week to familiarize myself with legal jargons and contracts that I was given to read. I began to feel much more at ease since my director, head advisor of Antitrust and Competition Law, taught me by showing me that the most important attribute in any workers is their attitude. He encouraged me to ask questions and not to be afraid to clarify since accuracy and clarity must be prioritized.

I was given many different tasks and projects. For instance, I reviewed contracts by checking them against older contracts to ensure that the company would not be in jeopardy, attended meetings, in person and via conference call and took notes,
proofread and formatted documents, organized and structured their legal database on all matters concerning competition within Hutchison, conducted legal research, summarized and tracked changes during the negotiating process (on termination rights and liabilities) etc.

The work varied immensely. It is precisely its breadth that I liked the most. I enjoy the fact that I was involved in both the macro and micro level. Not only did I get to produce recommendation forms for continuing subscription services, or uniform framework of headsets, but I was also fortunate enough to be involved in a huge project. This was a merger of two telecommunications companies in Italy in what is called a 4 to 3 merger. This is made more exciting since the European Commission has just refuted Hutchison’s application of such a 4 to 3 merger in the United Kingdom.

With the smaller tasks, my skills that I learnt from college were sufficient. For example, constant translation has made me sensitive towards language and word use and has trained me to be meticulous, both of which proved to be immeasurably valuable when proofreading, note-taking and articulating summaries.

However, I felt strongly that I learnt the most from firstly conducting legal research and secondly reading and proofreading legal documents regarding the merger case. I conducted three pieces of research during my eight weeklong internship. With the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and Fourth Directive of Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Terrorist Financing, I drafted guides summarizing and highlighting the relevance of such Acts to Hutchison as well as next steps to take. This required not
only a comprehensive understanding of the Acts and the company but also their implications on the company. The third research was longer and more technical since I had to condense information regarding Vertical Restraints, with a special focus on the differences in the Agreements between Selective Distribution and Exclusive Distribution. Undoubtedly, this piece of research took the longest, but it was also the most satisfying to complete. Throughout this journey, I received priceless feedback from my director, not only comments on formatting and but also advice on the consistency of style and content. Secondly, reading drafted contracts that are constantly changing gave me insight into how a negotiation is reached from a legal perspective. The realization that law does not stand on its own is an epiphenomenon of such an exercise. The merger was in the Telecommunications industry and the question of how the merger will affect the Telecommunications market and Hutchison’s market power is key in determining whether the merger would be approved. Hutchison must prove convincingly that the merger would not “significantly threaten” the market in order to receive the legally required approval from the European Commission. Thus, these legal documents shed light on not only the technicalities of Telecommunications but also the economical consequences of a merger, taking into account an endless possible list of factors.

Before, my understanding of the Telecommunications industry was rather lateral and basic but the compelling arguments, made by lawyers representing Hutchison, provided new angles in which to assess the economic effects of such a merger. It is through this, that I saw the intersectionality of law, economics and whatever relevant field the law is concerned with. Law, much more than mere cold words on a page, is prevalent to all facets of life!
This was my first exposure to the legal field and I had an enjoyable and pleasant experience. I am most certainly considering a career in law. In addition, London is a city full of activities and spending my free time in London made the internship all the more fun! Unsurprisingly, the weather was as gloomy and grey as expected, but despite the climate and subsequently the loom of “Brexit”, London possesses a historical charm that proves steadfast in face of whatever political or economical crisis. I went to numerous plays, concerts, parks and markets. Please do not hesitate to contact me for fun activities to do in London!