

Duke University Exchange Summary – Fall 2016 - Term II

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General

This is a once-in-a-life-time experience— if you can afford it, not just financially, but with respect to all other aspects of your life (work, family, etc.) - I highly recommend taking the opportunity and going to this adventure!

Each semester in Fuqua is divided into two terms (each around 8-10 weeks). For example, Fall semester is divided into “Fall 1” and “Fall 2”. I attended Fall 2 2016.

Pre-travel arrangements

Once you are accepted to the student exchange program, you will receive all the relevant information and preparation details from Carolyn Gilbert from the international office at Fuqua. I will not go over these instructions as they are quite self-explanatory, but I will recommend that: (a) Read it carefully and create a “Checklist” to make sure you will not forget anything; (b) do everything as quickly as possible, especially Visa related tasks and immunization.

Housing

Housing is a very important issue to arrange before arriving. It is very hard to find short-term leases in Durham (most apartment buildings will not offer a place for less than 6 months!). So here are some things you can do to find a good place to stay:

- (a) Every semester there are Fuqua students going for exchange and therefore sub-lease their room or house for that period. Try to publish a message at one of Fuqua’s Facebook groups (via an Israeli MBA student) saying that you are looking for a place to sub-lease for the semester.
- (b) Around 90% of Fuqua’s MBA students live in “Station Nine” apartment complex. You can send station nine’s office an e-mail asking them to publish your message that you are looking for a place for the semester, they

are very nice, and will be happy to post your message to the station nine community.

<http://www.stationnine.com/>

- (c) **AIRBNB** – Because I came for only one term, it was even harder finding a place (for two months). I found a nice house in Durham that was near station nine and east campus (see map below), for a very reasonable price. So, this is another way for housing.

<https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/4662868> - this is where I stayed, you can see my review.

- (d) **Bell West end** – a lot of exchange students stayed at this place which is closer to down town. I believe they allow shorter period for leasing. It was expensive but very “high-end”.

<http://www.bellapartmentliving.com/nc/durham/bell-west-end/>

There are more options, but I would say that the first one (sub-lease in station nine) is probably the best option! Please contact me if you need more ideas on housing ☺

Transportation

It is very easy to move around in Durham –

- (a) **Duke university bus lines** – this is a very good mean of transportation to/from campus and free for students of course. The following link is map & routes.

http://parking.duke.edu/images/Duke_Transit_Fall2016_poster_FINAL.pdf

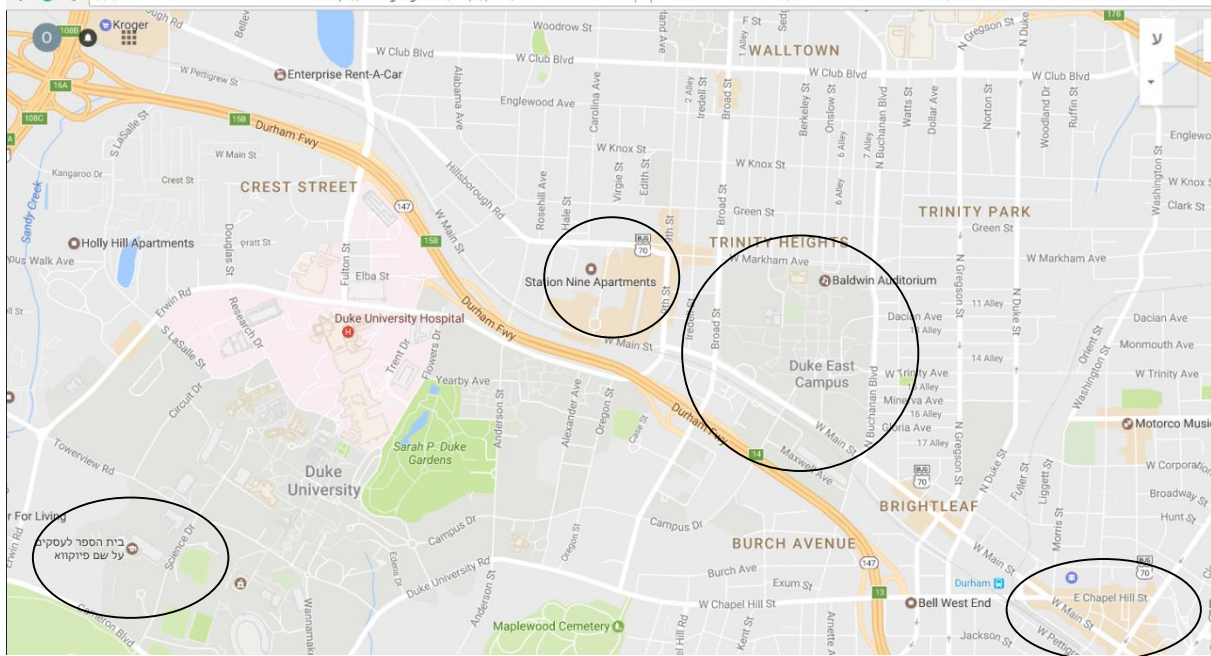
- (b) **Public buses** – Also free for students, but you must show the transportation card you get in orientation.

<http://godurhamtransit.org/maps-and-schedules>

- (c) **The Duke Van** – after 18:00, you can use the Duke app to ask for a duke van that would pick you up from anywhere in campus, and drop you off at your home! Free! I used this every day to go back home. (note: the duke van does not cover all of Durham, if your destination is not valid, you will not be able to call the van).

- (d) **Uber/Lyft** – Probably the fastest and most comfortable way of moving around, the fares are usually \$5-\$8 between campus-Ninth Street-Downtown.

Map:



From left to right: Fuqua business school in West Campus; Station nine apartments and ninth street; Duke East campus; Downtown Durham.

Courses

For each term, students take between 2-3 courses. Each course is 2:15 hours, twice a week. **There is one important fact to consider** when thinking and choosing classes – the registration for Fuqua full-time MBA students opens a few days before it is opening for exchange students – the result for me was, that the three courses I planned on taking were full... when you go over the course list, choose more than 3 courses so you will have backup in case anything fills up before you can register. In addition, you can sign up to full classes and be on the waiting list, the first 10 in that list usually make it in (because some students drop out). You can ask for extra credits so you could sign up for more than 3 courses (you can ask for 6 more points, this is two courses).

You can use this link to read students review on elective courses (Duke id needed) – very helpful:

https://cebeapps.fuqua.duke.edu/elective_eval/?jsessionid=86EC1DBDBA55B622EA3847A8B86EDAF6

During Fall 2 term, I took the following courses:

- (1) **Advanced corporate Finance** (prof. Vish) – This is a course that use the corporate finance as a base, and goes through 12 real cases (Usually HBS cases) and deals with complex corporate finance issue, such as: Supply chain finance, working capital, real option valuation, global valuations and more.
Pro's – the professor is great, the cases are super-interesting, and some of the subjects were new to me.
Con's- there are too many cases in the course, this resulted that some of them were not taught in a deep enough level.
I Would recommend this course, but other good options for finance courses are “Valuation” or “Fixed income securities”.
- (2) **Marketing of innovations** (Prof. Debu) – This is a great course that deals with innovation, and innovation related concepts. In addition, we learned some models to make forecasts for innovation diffusion (The Bass model).
- (3) **Negotiations – Very recommended course!** Teaches the basic concepts in negotiations. In each class you are assigned a role, and the first part of the class you negotiate with a classmate and come (or not) to a deal. The other part is debriefing of the negotiation, including exploring the deals that were made.
Very fun and great class to meet other fuquans and interact with them.

The Fun Stuff

Except studying, I made a list of fun things to do:

- 1) **Work out** – a few minutes walk from Fuqua you can find the Wilson recreation center. There is a huge gym, climbing wall and all kinds of classes you can take, such as – Plates, Yoga and much more. This is all for free! There is a smaller recreation center on East Campus, the Brodie center (it was really close to where I stayed, so I was there a few times during the week).
<http://recreation.duke.edu/>
- 2) **Events in Fuqua** – Feel free to join events that are arranged by the Fuqua clubs (Finance, Marketing etc.). I joined P&G and Pepsico case studies. Also, there are

more recreational clubs that arrange trips, this is also much fun and a great way to meet friends and explore the area.

- 3) **Duke basketball and football** – Don't miss out on this. You can get free tickets to games, it's a real experience!
- 4) **Road trips during the weekends/breaks** – assemble a group of friends and go explore the US! Here are some of the places I travelled to during the exchange period:

Washington, Virginia, Boston, North Carolina – Ashville, Great smoky mountains, the looking glass forest. New york and more! If you plan on flying somewhere, you should try and book the flight as early as possible – last minute is very expensive!

- 5) **Go out in Durham** – Drink a beer at the Tavern on Tuesdays (this is the “Fuqua” night), Go to Shooters on Friday or Saturday, Attend Fuqua parties (there is something going on almost every weekend).

Summary

There are so much to do during the exchange – Academically, Professionally, Recreation and more. While you are there – plan, attend, meet and make friends. This is probably going to be one of the great experiences of your life – enjoy every second.

Please feel free to contact me !

Here are some pictures of my experience:



“Fuqua Friday” – Free food and drinks every Friday after the last class.



First day of school



The Looking Glass (about 2 hours from Durham)



Duke Football



Chicken & Waffle – Downtown Durham



Great Smoky Mountains National Park