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Host University: Duke University, The Fuqua School of Business

Exchange term: Fall 2018 (term 1 only – 2 months)

Exchange Experience

Durham – North Carolina

Durham is a small city (~250K people) in North Carolina, and part of the famous “Research Triangle”: NC State University, Duke University and UNC (Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill). There is not much to do in Durham but there's endless things to do in Duke. Duke University is the main attraction point of Durham – first and most important – it has the highest academic level in the United States (usually ranked at the top 10). Second, it has a very developed sport culture with its famous basketball team (Blue Devils) that counts the best within the collage league, football team, soccer and hockey teams. One of the things that makes this place so unique is the warm people and their southern hospitality – whether in campus or in the city, in the restaurants and on the bus. They also have their southern delicious food and great bars. As for the night life – places usually close around 2AM, and there are 2 main places to go out for grad students – “Tavern” Tuesday and “Shooters” on Friday. Both are fun places – the first is more like a bar and the second is like a dance bar / party place. As for the surroundings: there's a pretty good outlet (Tanger) about 20 min ride outside the city, banks, supermarkets and a couple of car rental options. Duke is surrounded with an endless green forest. The weather in the fall (September-October) is quite warm (around 26c-28c) and very humid. Nonetheless, it is also a bit rainy sometimes (but still warm).

Living arrangements & Transportation

I rented a non-furnished apartment in Station Nine complex, which is where most of Fuqua students live. I had a 2br apartment with other 3 Israeli roommates whom came for the exchange. We payed \$1,000 per month plus ~\$50 for the utilities and ~\$500 for the furniture that part of it we sold at the end. Station9 has a 24/7 gym, basketball



court, pool, club house with a huge screen TV, great coffee machine (a rare find in the US), a meeting room and a studying room – all with free Wi-Fi.

It's in a great location! It's right next to the "Duke Bus" bus stop (free bus to Duke that come every 20 min), a big grocery store "Harris Teeter", and 9th street very close by, where there are a few restaurants, shops and a hair-salon.

When I first arrive here, I had a room at one of the "Green Family" houses (they are an elderly couple with 3 houses around Durham), but after 3-4 nights there I had the opportunity to move to Station 9 and I did. It was the best decision I've made here. As I said – it's close to everything, all the friends are here, great facilities etc.

The search for accommodations is the trickiest part with the exchange at Duke, and I suggest you start looking for it immediately as a first thing after knowing for sure that you are going to Duke. Best is to look in Station 9's website, check on the full-time students' Facebook pages (e.g. "The Duke MBA – Daytime Class of 2019") and post that you're looking to sublease. Since some students from Fuqua are going on exchange programs as well, you might get lucky. You can always ask Annie for help contacting students from Fuqua as well.

Duke Van is an option to take a collective van from Fuqua (or anywhere else on campus) for free after 5:15PM. You can access it from the Duke app, under transportation. It's very convenient if you need to stay and study late in school. Uber and Lyft are also very common and cost around \$7-\$8 to/from Station 9 to Fuqua and around \$30 from/to the airport (in Raleigh). Downtown is a quick ~10 min Uber drive away.

Duke also has an amazing gym(s)! I went mostly to Wilson Recreation Center (at the university), which is a 4-floor gym with a climbing wall, swimming pool, gym and lots of free classes (Yoga, Pilates and more). Moreover, it is a very safe and nice place to run in the streets (around the university and Station 9, not in downtown).



As an exchange student you can enjoy all the services the school offers to its full-time students, such as career management and coaching (CMC), student clubs, recruiting events (important: you can participate but you are not allowed to submit your CV on campus as an exchange student), career field trips, notable speaker series etc. I warmly recommend you join the student clubs! It's very professional and career oriented. They bring very good speakers from the specific club's field (whether it's Marketing, Consulting, Blockchain, Banking, Fintech, Finance and more...). There are also "fun" clubs like sports, hiking, beer, wine, food and more. That's another great opportunity to mix and interact with the full-time MBA's. . Just join the org-sync website and register to clubs that interest you. Another warm recommendation is to mix and network with the full-time MBA's and not just your exchange peers. Fuqua as a special team spirit called "Team Fuqua". To simplify, it basically means "be a team player, a friend, help others...". The results are very warm welcome, very helpful students and a great place to meet and talk to people.

Visa process

As any US bureaucratic process, receiving the J-1 Visa is not fun but very clear and simple with Duke as your host. Just follow the instructions sent out by Annie and you'll be fine.

Vaccines

Duke follows the state law with regarding to vaccines. Thus, you must prove that you are vaccinated to study in Duke as a foreign student. They will send you the instructions of what you must do. Finally, you will need to send them a report signed by the vaccinating doctor (in a traveler's clinic) and fill in a digital form. Most likely you will have to go through a TB test when you arrive in Duke because most kids in Israel don't do it. It's a simple and painless test – they will leave you a time slot for it in your orientation days.

Classes

There is a bidding system for picking classes. You will receive an email about a month before the semester starts with the list of available classes. Be advice that the exchange students are second in the bidding priority. Thus, the list of classes for the bidding you are going to get will be after the full-time MBA students had picked their



classes. However, until the semester starts there will be minor changes with the bidding, and the dramatic changes will occur only after the first class. During that time you are able to make changes in your bidding (until after the first class). Therefore, you might find yourself in the waiting list for a particular class. In order to choose whether to bet and try to "win" the waiting list there's a rule of thumb: if you are within the first 12 places on the waiting list on the day that classes start, you will most likely get in the class.

The registration is done online, on a first-come-first-serve basis. Therefore I would suggest you to send your bidding in the first second the bidding opens – it's a matter of seconds between getting into the waiting list and accepting to the class.

I took 3 classes and I would not recommend taking more if you want to experience other things than studying. Each class is twice a week, for 2:15 hours per session. Most classes have a lot of reading to do before each class (materials you buy in the course pack), and some have assignments due every class. I took all 3 classes on the same 2 days (3 classes on Monday and Thursday). It made me some time to study / party / travel / rest without having to get to school. Very efficient 😊.

The classes I took

1. Venture Capital & Private Equity with Professor David T. Robinson – this is an amazing opportunity to learn from the best! The professor is super professional and funny. There's relatively a lot of work to do for this class – for every class you read a case study (12-15 pages usually) and write a half-pager for the class. In addition, there are 3 group assignments, 2 take-home quizzes, and a final exam (a take-home case).

2. Consumer Behavior with Professor Gavan Fitzsimons – super interesting and super up-to-date, since Duke is the number 1 university in the world with this field of research. The class is easy-going due to the professor and his funny attitude. The class is basically a marketing class, but with psychological and behavioral elements. The class has 2 assignments (mid-term and final, no exam) and every class we had a 30-40 min of group work to submit 2-3 slides with a business idea of how to imply the things we've learned that day in class. Very easy class, and it counts like the best class to do in Duke, so the competition for a place in this class is big. I would defiantly recommend taking it!



3. Managing Innovation in a Global Organization with Professor Jonathon Cummings – the professor was very professional and passionate, but the class was very boring. Nonetheless, it was professional, and I've learned a lot. Considering that my MBA is focused in managing innovation, and I did learn a lot of new things – I can't say it was a waste of time – but it was very boring. This class is quite demanding – it has a case study for each class, 5 write-ups (a page), 9 short "quizzes" (one for each case), mid-term, final exam, final report (10 pages with your studying group).

Extra-curricular activities

There are endless things you can do in Duke and around it. First, every Friday there "Fuqua Friday" – a free dinner with all Fuqua students, faculty, families and pets. The food is great, the beer is cold and the atmosphere is really awesome!

As mentioned before – there are tons of different clubs and activities you can find in org-sync website.

And let's not forget – this is the US, so you can travel across it with very cheap flights or just road-trip it with your friends. My friends and (around 9 boys and girls from different countries) decided to run from the hurricane to Washington DC. So we rented 2 cars and an Airbnb apartment next to the Capitol-Hill and went for a long weekend of 5 days (Wednesday-Sunday) in DC. It's like 5 hours of drive. I warmly recommend you to go there. I also made a little trip to San-Diego, California, to meet some friends from my military service whom live there now. I know that many of our friends there draw to Ashville and Nashville. Just to give you a sense of how cheap flights can be – a friend of mine (a full-time MBA student at Duke) and his wife took a flight to New Orleans for the fall break for only \$40 per ticket!

A little tip – get an Amazon Prime membership (free for the first month) – in an amazing shopping experience. You can get anything in 1-2 days.

Costs

One time expenses

- Visa - ~\$750
- Flight - ~\$1,150
- Fuqua's charges (insurance, recreation, course pack, health fee, etc.) ~\$1,500



- Furnisher- ~\$150
- Utilities - ~\$50

Monthly expenses

- Apartment - \$500 per month
- Food - ~\$500 per month (school cafeteria, grocery store, restaurants, bars...)
- Transportation – Duke van and buses are free for students
- Uber/Lyft costs ~\$50 per month
- Phone – a local sim with unlimited calls and texts and 4-5G of data costs ~\$50 per month, I suggest to get at&t sim, as their reception is best in Durham

Total costs for 2 months- ~\$5,800-\$6,000

This was an amazing experience! I wish I could make the whole semester and not only term 1, because it's just so perfect. I warmly suggest you to use every moment of your time there – to meet new people, network, learn, rest, listen and experience one of the best Universities in the US. It's a mind opening experience where you'll have a chance to learn more about yourself.

Please feel free to contact me with any further questions!