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Degree Program at TAU: Sofaer Global MBA

Host University: NYU Stern

Exchange term: Fall Semester (End of August till Mid December approx.)

Exchange Experience

My semester at NYU Stern was incredible. I met many people from all over the world and exposed myself to a completely new city. I learnt a lot from an academic, professional and personal level. You do have to get out of your comfort zone and embrace being in a new country and a new city but in doing so, you will gain a lot.

About the City

New York is made up of 5 boroughs; Manhattan, Brooklyn, The Bronx, Queens and Staten Island. Manhattan is the main island of the city, and it is also where NYU Stern is located. Manhattan is where the hustle and bustle is. The New York you see in the movies. The city is a concrete jungle full of skyscrapers, shops, theatre, events and infinite amount of people from different cultures and backgrounds. Brooklyn too is exciting. Although, more relaxed both in its architecture and in its mentality. Make sure you take advantage of living in one of the best cities in the world and studying at one of the top international schools.

About NYU

NYU is a city based university and not a campus based university (unlike TAU, for example). Meaning that NYU has its buildings scattered around the city. NYU Stern is the business school and has a prime location within New York. Located right next to Washington Square Park in Greenwich Village. The University is nearby two major

subways station and it easy to get to and from just about anywhere in Manhattan. Stern is one of the top 10 Business schools in the world. The school always has guest lectures from top professionals, meets up, clubs, events and so on. There is always something going on. And that's just the Stern school – there is the whole university itself which also offers many different events, clubs and so.

Clubs – There are two types of clubs; the NYU clubs and the NYU Stern clubs. The NYU are clubs which involve the whole university. That means that there can be undergraduate, graduates, PHD students from every different school. While, the Stern Clubs are just for Stern MBA students. I personally joined the Stern clubs as I thought they were more for me and it's a good way to meet other people in your class. I join the Football Club (soccer) and the Real Estate Club. The Football club was a really fun experience. I got to meet many people from my class and it's always fun to connect through sport. The football team is not too serious so you don't have to be amazing to join. People are there to have fun. I even joined them for a 3-day tournament at Yale University, which was a really fun experience. There are many other sports groups such as Tennis, Basketball and others. The Real Estate club was more professional. As real estate is something I want to get into it was useful to join. They offer events, site seeing, networking and more. For example, through the club I attended a special two-day finance/excel workshop which was very beneficial.

Clubs can be found through the Campus Groups NYU App.

Guest lectures and Events- There are always guest lectures or events going on at Stern. There are company presentation, recruitment lectures, and guest lecture from noble prize winners and so on. The best way to find out about what events are happening and when is through the Campus Groups app.

There is also a Beer Blast event which takes place every Thursday. In which the Stern students get all you can drink beer and play drinking games and chat. A very good way to meet your fellow class mates!

Career Center - The Stern career center is recommended for those who are seeking for internship opportunities in NY. They offer LinkedIn enhancement sessions, help in writing CV and can direct to internship opportunities in many fields.

Students – There are around 380 MBA1 (1st year students) and 380 MBA2 students. As well as around 300 part-time students (called the Langone Program). You are likely to have around 30/40 exchange students in total from all over the world.

Courses – Courses are split into day class (which are usually for MBA1 and MBA2) and evening classes which are mainly, but not always, for Langone students. The evening classes take place from 6:00pm till 9:00pm. So I would recommend taking one (max two) just so you can enjoy the evenings in the city.

I took 4 courses and audited 1. I would recommend taking 4 classes, as it is just the right amount.

- **Real Estate Development and Entrepreneurship with Professor Harry Chernoff:** This is one of the best courses I have taken throughout all my studies. It teaches you the building blocks of real estate. The class is quite demanding with case studies, projects, mid-term and readings. Chernoff invites many guest lectures, talks about his experiences and allows you to explore the real estate world. The final project is actually presenting a real investment opportunity to real investors, and it is good real-life practice. If you're into real estate, this is the course for you!
- **The Financial Service industry with Professor James Finch:** This course teaches you about the overall finance world in the US and how it works. It touches upon what is private equity, wealth management, IPO, Debt, Syndication of loans, CDO, CLO etc. The lecturer has been teaching this course for a year or two. He speaks fast and tends to just use slides presentations only. But he knows his stuff after working in banking all his life. He gives real life examples and always invites the class to ask questions. If you want to know about the finance world and how it all intertwines this is a good course. The course is somewhat demanding. Involving a mid-term and an end of exam.
- **Digital Currency, Blockchain, and the Future of the Financial Services Industry professors David Yermack & Andrew Hinkes:** This course teaches you about Blockchain, Crypto currency and so on. A very

interesting course and very popular too. There are many guest lectures, up to date material and two very good professors. The course gives you a building block of what is Crypto, Blockchain etc. You do not need to have previous background in this field. Yermack talks about the practical aspect and its uses while Hinkes talks about issues relating to blockchain in law and governance. This is a very good course and one which is really liked.

- **Innovation and Design professor Luke Williams:** This course takes you through the process of disrupting an industry with a new idea. The course will teach you the process of concept creating/marketing/observation gathering/breaking the norms/POC and so on. The professor is funny and engaging. But you have to be interested in this field and not have touched on these aspects before to gain the most out of the course.
- **Portfolio management with Professor Marc Reinganum:** This course looks into how to diversify a portfolio of stocks and what is the right way to do so. It is a very theoretical class and looks at models such as the CAPM, equally weighted portfolio, Sharpe ratio etc. The professor is new and although very nice, he is still building the course. I did not enjoy this course. Although, this is not a demanding course

NYU gym - NYU has 3 gyms in the city (free for students): Palladium which has a pool rock-climbing, basketball court. The 404 (right next to stern) which is a bit smaller and one in Brooklyn which I did not go to. The gyms are great so really no need to buy a gym membership.

Accommodations – you can find accommodation via the NYU dorms. These are a bit expensive compared to rent prices in city. But are at a good location and eliminates the hassle of finding a place (if you apply early enough). I did not live in the dorms and found a place to live in east village.

There are tons of Facebook groups, apps such as roomie, airBNB and so on. I moved twice during my stay. And do remember finding it a bit hard to find a place. I

recommending sharing a Facebook status and asking as many people as you can for help. Rent is expensive, ranging from 1300\$ to 2000\$+ in Manhattan. Brooklyn being a bit cheaper.

Weather – The semester starts at the end of summer, so it gets very hot. About the same temperatures as Israel experiences in the summer! And then it moves into autumn which is a cooler (like the Israeli winter). By the last month of the semester it will get very cold (about 3 degrees Celsius). So, make sure to pack accordingly. I personally knew I was going to do some winter shopping there so I didn't pack a lot of winter stuff.

Transport – The subway is open 24/7 and is quite efficient. You can either top up money or buy a monthly pass. There is also a Citi Bike. As well as Uber, Lyft and Via.

VISA - The visa process (for a J1 Visa) is as follows – First the school contacts you. You send them your information and they open up a Stern account for you. They send TAU a DS-2019 form. When you have it, you can pay the SEVIS fee and fill out a DS-160 form in order to set an appointment at the US embassy. It is not too complicated but makes sure to get the VISA as soon as you can giving you time to sort out any problems if they arise.

Insurance – NYU requires you purchase health insurance. Which costs about 1000\$+. You can choose to waive the school insurance and purchase your own (but makes sure the school confirms the insurance policy before hand). In doing so you are likely to save you a few hundred dollars. Check a company called ISO which many students use.

Nightlife- New York has got so much to offer. Theatre, music gigs, jazz, clubs, parties, everything. I went out a lot in LES and Brooklyn. But you will go around everywhere I am sure.

Overall: One of the best 4 and half months I could have wanted. Meeting lots of people, exploring many different things, seeing amazing landmarks, going out, learning and more! Really recommended if can afford it and have the confidence to get out of your comfort zone. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions!