



Personal Information

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Degree Program at TAU: MBA

Host University: Brandeis University

Exchange term: 1 semester – fall 2016 (4 months)

Exchange Experience

- **About the country and city**

Brandeis is located in Waltham Massachusetts, USA. Waltham is a small satellite city of Boston. Boston- 35 colleges are located in Boston, including the IVY league universities Harvard and MIT.

- **About the Host University**

The business school is called IBS (Brandeis International School) and has his own building. The school is known for his staff and their willingness to help. Feel free to ask anything you need and they will take care of it.

There is both student union for the IBS student only and for graduate students of all Brandeis programs. Both are offering extra curriculum activities. Some of those trips really come as handy because otherwise you will have to rent a car to go see the place.

The career center is available for full-time students, but you can try.

- **Courses and professors**

General information – The grades of most classes at Brandeis are comprised also from the class participation component. In the classes I did the portion was from 25-45%. That means you need to study hard at home before every class but this is also a good way to improve your English skills.

The courses I recommend:

- **Entrepreneurship** with Prof. Charles Reed. Before each class, every student analyzes an HBR case. The cases are on a different aspect of entrepreneurship every week. In class the Prof. analyzes the case together with the students. The students contribute from their work experience and the Prof. tells stories about relevant use cases that he has experienced throughout his career. The Prof. often ask students for questions (when they do not participate in class).
- **Management communication** with Bill Ellet. The class helps you improve both your verbal and your writing skills. The class is only half a semester long. There are few assignments in which you will need to read an HBR case and to answer a list of questions. You will be graded both for your content and for your writing competence. The course ends with a shark tank mock up and this the highlight of the course.
- *Alliance, Acquisition, and Divestment strategy* with Prof. Ben Gomes. This is a pure strategy class. Each class last 3 hours. The first half is dedicated to an HBR study case where the company strategy is being analyzed in the context of either acquisition, Alliance or divestment. In the second half of class there is guest lecture related first half topic.

- **Accommodation**

The dorms are a good option because you pay on a monthly basis and you don't need any deposit, guaranteed cheque, etc. The only problem is that it is expensive (around 1,200USD a month). I found a 5 months sublet on the Israeli Facebook group "ישראלים בבוסטון וסביבתה" I paid 500 USD per month but the room was tiny. The sublet was in Boston next to Central Square. I had 4 non-American roommates, each roommate from a different country and it was an amazing experience which I strongly recommend.

- **Transportation**

I had to commute to Brandeis an hour each direction. I had a direct bus (line 70) from Central square to Brandeis and then 10-15 minutes walk. Instead of walking you can take the Brandeis shuttle but the frequency is not so high. I recommend doing a monthly pass for ~55 USD a month. Once you settle down go online to the Massachusetts transportation website <https://www.mbta.com/> - very friendly website and you will find there all the information you need.

- **Insurance and Health Services**

The health insurance is mandatory. You need to pay the full year insurance fee even though you are there only for 1 semester (half a year). The insurance fee is 1,200 USD. I never used the insurance, but it is better to have one and not use it than the other way around.

- **Living expenses**

Boston is an expensive city. There is a lot of options and you will want to try them all. Your monthly budget should be between 500 USD to 1000 USD , not including rent and health insurance.

- **Food**

In Brandeis there is almost every day an occasion that involves food. You can eat there to cut your expenses. If you wish to experience good varied food, Boston is the place for you. You will find all type of restaurants: American, Asian, Japanese, Kurian, Kosher, halal etc. There is a New England discounted supermarket chain called "Market basket" – if you like supermarkets you will love "Market Basket". The closest one to Brandeis is 25 minutes walking distance or 10 minutes bus ride.

- **Night life**

The city is full of students. Appropriately, there are many places to hangout. On weekdays, everything closes around 2 AM. On the weekends, places stay open a little bit later. You need an ID to drink so either you carry your passport everywhere or you can buy a liqueur ID for 50 USD.

- **Tips**

Go to as much activities as you can! Go to as many events and trips organized by Brandeis. Come with open mind and you will have the time of your life.

Since Boston is expensive stick to a budget. Buy cheap where you can and do not save on experiences. Save on food, not experience!

Enjoy 😊