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**Degree Program at TAU:** MBA in Management of Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

**Host University:** Fuqua School of Business, Duke University

**Exchange term:** Spring 2019 (Term 1), 2 months

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### **Exchange Summary:**

**\*\*\* Most topics are very well explained in other reviews, so I recommend you to read this summary along with the summaries of 2018 \*\*\***

To Sum up the exchange experience I would say:

1. It is truly once in a lifetime opportunity.
2. If your personal situation allows you to do it, don't think twice (it's worth the effort and the expenses).
3. Duke is an amazing choice.

Without a doubt, my Duke experience went far and beyond my expectations, which were very high. I was lucky enough to undergo this amazing period together with my wife and my young children (5 and 3 years old) which made it even more special for me.

I spent lots of quality time with my family combined with intense studies and trying to make new friends. For me, it was the ultimate combination of "business and pleasure".

### **Why I chose Duke?**

1. Elite Business School – Fuqua is ranked as one of the top 10 business schools in the US.
2. Ecosystem of an academic town – unlike other top universities such as New York, Paris or Barcelona, Durham is an academic town where you can meet Duke's students everywhere you go.

3. International Experience – Fuqua is known for its very high percentage of international students (~40%), which makes it very attractive in my view. The diversity of backgrounds, cultures and opinions is very special and interesting.
4. Weather- since I had the opportunity to travel only in the winter (Jan-Feb: term 1 of the spring semester), I preferred to choose a university where winter is relatively bearable. While most topnotch American universities are located in the northern part of the US (NY, Philadelphia, Chicago Etc.), Duke is probably the best option in the south.

Climate Durham - North Carolina		°C   °F					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
Average high in °C:	9.6	11.9	16.7	21.8	25.9	29.4	
Average low in °C:	-2.3	-1.4	2.8	7.7	13.1	18.6	

### Duke University, Durham and North Carolina

Duke University is located in Durham, at the center of North Carolina State. NC is a southern U.S state on the east coast.

North Carolina is one of the thirteen original colonies that rebelled the British Crown during the American Revolution and founded the United States.

Durham’s population is around 270K on a land of 280 km<sup>2</sup> (Tel Aviv, for perspective, has 436K residents on 53 km<sup>2</sup>) with a feeling of a town surrounded by nature. It is part of Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area which commonly known as the Research Triangle (where you can find the Research Triangle Park, home to numerous tech companies, enterprises and the three major research universities of North Carolina: The State University, Duke University, and The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill).



Duke is a private research university with a great reputation, well known all over the US. Duke’s presence is noticeable everywhere in Durham. Duke University also has an entire health and hospital system known as a national leader!

The campus is huge in size, a town of itself, consisting of dozens of buildings surrounded by forests. It is a demonstration of the magnitude and wealth of the United States' higher education system.

Walking around the campus and its impressive buildings, finding cool spots to study and relax in nature was a real pleasure and highly recommended (you can navigate with google maps or DukeMobile App). For more central locations in campus: <https://maps.duke.edu/map/?id=21#!ce/325,5021,551?ct/551>



### **The International Programs Office (IPO)**

The exchange program is very well organized and there is a special unit which takes care of every aspect of your exchange experience. The exchange program manager will take care of you from the very start and make sure to provide you with all the information that you need. They will send you emails with all the necessary details and steps that you need to follow before traveling to the US (with specific timetables). They can help with any question regarding academics and any other aspects of your stay. They are a great source of information that you can use, and the staff are very friendly and willing to help.

\*\*\* There is an incoming exchange student website with all the information that you need pre-arrival and all the links for resources you will need regarding any relevant issues - <https://sites.duke.edu/exchangeatfuqua/>.

Before your first week, they run a full orientation day with all the bureaucracy you will need to know (faculty tour, officials at the faculty, relevant IT info, ETC, entertainment recommendations, etc.). They will also arrange 2-3 social events especially for the exchange students.

## Courses and Professors

You will get all the necessary information regarding the bidding system and the list of available courses from the IPO by mail in advance. Exchange students are second in line in the bidding system after full time MBA's, so in some cases you will find some courses full. But still, you will be able to enroll in most courses. If you wish to get into a specific course, try to bid exactly the moment it opens, to increase your chances to get it. If you find yourself in a waiting list, it can be risky, but the statistics shows that usually the first 10-12 students get into the course eventually (after the first class changes). If you find yourself in more than one waiting lists, I recommend contacting the IPO to help you increase your quota of points in order to bid for one more extra course than the default and drop it later on. It is possible to change your selection anytime until the first week of the term.

Be aware that the classes are demanding, and you are expected to come prepared for classes (it will take you at least the same amount of time you spend in classes...).

Before registration, I recommend looking at the courses' ratings, based on students' ratings, using this link:

[https://go.fuqua.duke.edu/fuquaworld/myapp/homepage.course.evals.tiles#/.](https://go.fuqua.duke.edu/fuquaworld/myapp/homepage.course.evals.tiles#/)

You can also try to contact the Israeli' full time MBA's (or other daytime MBA's...) for recommendations on specific courses (you will find them on Facebook\LinkedIn\ IPO staff\ The Daytime MBA Office of Student Life (OSL):

<https://sites.duke.edu/daytimembapolicies/studentlife/>)

There is a wide selection of elective courses to choose from (~20-25 courses). I took 3 courses but decided to complete 2 of them (there is an option to attend classes as an auditor without having to be fully committed to participation and assignments) . The main reason was that I had already completed the required elective courses capacity (together with Fuqua's other courses) and I decided in the second half of the term to dedicate more time for traveling and other Fuqua activities (like the high profile business leaders' lecture, Israeli startups session, Dan Arieli's lecture, etc.).

I took the following courses:

### NEGOTIATION (with Greg Fischer):

A classic course for any MBA student. The course dealt with the theory and practice of negotiation in diverse settings. It covered the components of an effective negotiation process and helped students analyze and improve their own behavior in negotiations. I really enjoyed the course since most of it was dedicated to practicing a negotiation case with the different students in class, based on the practices presented in class and in the readings. Before class you will have to read the cases and be prepared for class with a negotiation strategy. The professor is very friendly and there is a good atmosphere in class. All in all, the practical exercises makes it very fun and it is a great opportunity to practice negotiation in English and create connections with other students.

### LEADERSHIP (with Aaron Key)

The course deals with different aspects of leadership, based on in-depth examples from cases and exercises, as well as relying on the most well-established and up-to-date studies. For me the course was valuable. I learned new ideas about influencing others and useful leadership techniques and had a chance to examine my own style of leadership. I really liked Aaron's charisma and attitude to the students (that's why he usually gets very high ratings) but since the concept of classes changed lately, some of the feedbacks were lower than in previous the years. Therefore the professor decided to redesign the course and improve it. If you consider taking this course, I recommend reading the latest reviews (on the site linked above).

### **Fun, Leisure and Social activities**

Duke experience is so much more than what happens during classes! There is plenty to do:

#### Fuqua's Extracurricular Clubs and Activities

- Keynote speaker events - top business leaders speak on campus.
- Student Clubs - dozens of professional, diversity (clubs related to specific ethnic group\religion or gender) and leisure clubs driven and managed independently by students. Don't miss this opportunity to enrich your experience by joining club activities and connecting with the daytime MBA students. There are

professional/career clubs dedicated to specific fields (tech, finance, marketing, private equity, design & innovation etc.). There are also social and activity clubs which are very fun (specifically: sports clubs, culinary club, 3 different clubs for alcohol 😊 - beer club, wine club, cocktail and spirits club, partners club etc.).

- Social events, activities, lectures and parties – usually organized by the clubs and published on campus walls as well as online.

### Campus Highlights

- Duke Recreation Center- An outstanding variety of fitness options with the best sports facilities you can imagine. Wilson Recreation Center is the larger of the two centers, located close to Fuqua on the center of the west campus. It is a 4-floor building with a great gym, a climbing wall, swimming pools and almost any sport class you can think of for free (you pay for it as part of your fees). Any other sport activity you can think of is also available (Tennis, Basketball, Volleyball...) (For more info- <https://recreation.duke.edu/facilities>)
- Duke Chapel- the most famous building located on west campus.
- Duke Gardens- A lovely nature park near the campus. Great for inspiration and relaxation.
- Watch Duke's basketball team-  
Duke is very well known for its athletic teams, above all for its basketball team, The Blue Devils, which is considered one of the best national teams. Even if you are not a great basketball fan, watching a game at Cameron Stadium (in Duke's campus) is one of the best experiences you can have. The atmosphere is amazing! As a student you can get a free ticket in the graduate walk-up line at the stadium (Just get there early enough as there are a limited number of tickets). Another option is to find other students who won the seasonal tickets lottery and have some spare tickets (for most of the games they are allowed to bring one or two guests. For more info - <https://www.dukegradcampout.org/game-day-fags/>).
- Cultural events and lectures are also available all around the campus (<http://calendar.duke.edu/>)

- Culinary- Brodhead-Center- State of the art dining complex (8-10 min walking distance from Fuqua) with a great variety of meals and a cool atmosphere (also full of spots for studying).

### **Accommodation**

Although all the Duke undergraduates have accommodation provided onsite, post graduates don't have that option. This means you need to find your own place for the duration of your exchange.

My family and I rented a fully furnished apartment in the 810 Ninth Apartments complex - located in a prime location on Ninth Street and where most of the MBA's choose to live. A lot of the MBAs choose to live in one of these complexes which I really recommend. We really liked our complex and the Berkshire which is near. Station nine is also a great option but the first two are newer. The complexes usually have a nice lobby, pool, gym, meeting room for studying and other facilities (and free WIFI). The area is full of restaurants and close to big supermarkets. It is an 8-10 minute drive from Fuqua.

As far as I know, the common options are to sublet from other students while they are away or try to find an apartment together with other exchange students coming during the same period. If you are coming for less than 4 months it may be difficult to rent an apartment in these complexes because they have minimum periods of stay and you have to furnish the apartment. There are also companies you can rent all the furniture from during the leasing period.

My best advice -Start looking around as soon as you are know you are coming for sure because it can be tough to find what you are looking for. It is a good idea to handle your visa as fast as you can as well, in order to be sure that you can go.

All relevant resources are here - <https://sites.duke.edu/exchangeatfuqua/pre-arrival/housing/>

## **Transportation**

Uber works great in Durham. It is very fast and convenient. It costs \$6-8 for a ride from Ninth Street to campus or downtown (~10 min drive). A good option is to share with other students. You may also find daytime MBA's with a car who can give you a ride. Another option is to use the Duke bus (Free bus to campus that comes every 20 min). After 5PM (maybe 5:30) you can use the free Duke Van which is a collective van from campus to your apartment (check if it is on the route) – It is accessible from the Duke app and is very convenient!

For traveling outside of town or for family use (like in my case), renting a car is the most convenient way.

## **Visa**

You will get a J-1 student visa. It is an American bureaucratic process full of forms, documents and procedures you will have to complete. You will get all the necessary information and support from Duke's representative which will be in contact with you during the process. Finally, after filling out the necessary forms, gathering the required documents and sending them to Duke, filling some more forms, paying the fee, and a short interview at the embassy, you will get the visa 😊

The J-1 visa allows a 30-day grace period to remain in the US at the end of your program.

## **Tips**

- Enjoy North Carolina's nature. Many chances you won't come again 😊
- Try to connect to the daytime Israeli students and their partners – They helped us a lot!
- Orientation Day – Since you will have a formal picture most students wear formal business dress.
- For basketball fans – Visit the NC Basketball Museum where Michael Jordan's legend was created.
- For families –
  - Life and Science Museum – A special museum in Durham where kids can spend days over days. Lots of fun.



- Marbles Kids Museum – Amazing kid’s kingdom, full of activities, located in downtown Raleigh (30-40 min drive).

### **Summery- what made it special?**

- Being “part of the family” – As an exchange student you really get a feeling of being a part of Fuqua (known as Team Fuqua). Everyone has a lot of pride to be part of Fuqua and Duke. This is part of the American academic culture and it is funny and contagious. You will find yourself proudly wearing Duke’s apparel 😊
- The experience of studying with some of the best students in the world. Since the students are fulltime MBA’s, it is a completely different feeling from the Israeli MBA where you usually work full time job and the MBA is a small part of your week. Students are really invested in their MBA (emotionally and financially) and it is a totally different experience.
- Social life – is a big part of the total experience... Since no one is local, a big part of the experience are social events, on and off campus. “The Israeli gang” (The full time Israeli students) welcomed me and my family very warmly, helped us a lot and we found ourselves part of them with weekend social gatherings and birthdays parties. I’ve also spent a lot of good times with my exchange fellows from all over the world (India, South Korea, France, Kazakhstan, South Africa, China, Chile and Peru). We felt part of Fuqua’s social life (Fuqua’s Fridays dinner, wine club’s drinking night, parties etc...) and gained unforgettable memories.
- Beautiful campus and exceptional facilities – The university is considered one of the most beautiful universities and I found myself really enjoying walking through the campus and enjoying its facilities (the recreation center, the food court, Fuqua’s library and much more)
- Relatively good weather in the winter– The days were not too cold and not a lot of rainy days allowed us to enjoy the town and being out in nature.
- The town and the area – As someone who lived in the big city all his life (Tel Aviv), I found Durham to be a very nice place to live in. North Carolina’s southern people are very friendly and hospitable. I enjoyed the combination of modern town entertainment and services (big supermarkets, lots of great food and coffee houses,

kid's attractions and cultural activities) as well as a great nature feeling (the university and the town are surrounded by natural forests).

Conclusion- Duke is a great choice for an unforgettable exchange experience. You will definitely be satisfied as much as I am....

Please contact me for any question or doubt.

Cheers,

Lior



