



Full name: Moria Harush

Email: Moria.harush@gmail.com

Degree Program at TAU: MSC in Technology and Information System

Host University: Fuqua School of Business, Duke University

Exchange term: Spring 2020 (Full Semester)

Exchange Experience

About the Country and City

Duke University is located in Durham, North Carolina. Durham is a small and quiet city full of parks and green views, and Duke University is the main attraction in the city. Durham is located in an ideal location for traveling: 2-3 hours from main cities in NC, a 4 hour drive from Washington D.C., and even only 8 hours from NYC.

About the Host University

The university is a huge place, where you will find everything you need: a food court, gym (includes a pool, climbing wall, personal training and more), stores, apost office, a basketball stadium, healthcare, etc.

Duke has a lot of clubs covering a range of subjects from the environment, energy, women in business through art, sports, to wine, cocktails, and even a culinary club. Each club hosts events open to everyone and is a great way to meet other students in a more casual and fun environment (just be careful of FOMO, there are a lot of events to choose from).

Courses and Professors

I had a hard time finding courses that could be approved by the MSC program, and due to that, I couldn't choose from the variety of courses offered.

I took 2 courses in each term - in my opinion, 2-3 courses in a term will lead to a good balance between the load of work, other activities the university offers and more (such as social events, etc.). Roughly 1 full studying day at school requires additional 1.5 days studying at home.

My Courses:

Decision Models:

The course is divided into three parts. The first part, discusses the use of decision trees for structuring decision problems under uncertainty. The second part, discusses the Monte Carlo simulation, a technique for simulating problems with many uncertainties. The third part is about optimization- an approach for finding the best possible solution in problems with many decision variables and constraints.

I really enjoyed this course, it was very practical and interesting.

Information Management:

The course introduces students to the skills required to organize, manage, visualize, and present structured information. The focus is primarily on Windows Excel. The course also covers Structured Query Language (SQL), Microsoft Power BI Desktop, and Tableau Desktop.

Basically most of the course is dealing with Excel – I started the course with a lot of experience and still learned a lot of new stuff. Highly recommended.

Forecasting:

This course covered a variety of methods of data analysis and forecasting that are applicable in many functional areas of business, engineering, and the sciences: including linear and logistic regression, random walk models, exponential

smoothing, seasonal decomposition, and ARIMA models, as well as methods of acquiring, organizing and transforming data for analysis. The main program used for those topics was R.

It was a very intense and technical course. If you don't have a background in statistics and programming, it is not recommended.

Strategy Implementation:

This course is an integrative strategy course. It is designed to provide some powerful tools and techniques to address the strategic problems faced by businesses. The principles, mindset and techniques that are covered in this course are the crucial managerial skills that are used throughout any organization and especially those used by Senior Management and the Board of Directors.

After all the data-oriented courses I took, this course was a nice refresher.

Accommodation – dorms and other solutions

Most of the MBA students live on 9th street, in residential places such as Station Nine, Berkshire, and 810 9th St. It is important to note that those apartments are not furnished. Annie (the exchange coordinator) will probably send you links for FB groups and the Duke internal website where students post subleases, roommate requests, etc.

Visa

It is a long process so I recommend starting as soon as the exchange coordinator sends you instructions. You will need to gather all the documents and mail a hard copy of them to receive the DS-2019 form from the University; only then can you apply to the embassy for an interview. In total, you will be required to pay \$220 to the SEVIS and ~\$165 to the embassy.

Transportation

In general, Durham is not very pedestrian friendly city. Around the campus, Duke provides bus lines that arrive frequently. I personally used the Duke bus to get to school, and for all the rest of the rides I used Uber or Lyft(which was the most convenient way).

Insurance and Health Services

You have to pay for Duke's health insurance policy, but I bought additional insurance in Israel just to be on the safe side because Duke's insurance policy does not cover everything.

Good to know before – you will be able to do the required vaccines or blood tests on the orientation day and get a refund from the Duke health insurance.

Food

Durham full of good restaurants – I recommend Burger Bach, Pizzeria Toro, M Kokko for Korean food, Dashi for ramen soup, Dame's Chicken & Waffles for the most American breakfast (even though I ordered it for lunch) and Cosmic Cantina (Mexican food) for late-night snacking.

Night life

Basically there are 2 main clubs/bars the MBA students are hanging out in. The Tavern on Tuesdays and the Shooters on Fridays. Besides that there are some nice bars like Fullsteam Brewery, Alley Twenty Six and Dain's Place.

Expenses:

- Rent – I rented a room for \$600 per month (that was a low price compare to others).
- Duke health insurance and additional payments ~\$2000
- Course pack – it differs depending on the course, I paid ~ \$40-80 per course.
- Visa: \$220 + \$165 = \$386

- Sim card: I used mint mobile (the service was bad), \$65 for 3 months
- Groceries- it really depend on your consumption. Most of the time I ate outside. I did my grocery shopping at “Harris Teeter” and “Whole Foods” (you can also order online) and I spent roughly ~ \$100 per week.

Tips

- You can order a sim card before arriving in Durham if you have an address to ship to.
- I managed to travel a lot during the weekends to the close-by cities by car, and went for a long vacation during the spring break – I recommend planning ahead because the domestic flights are cheaper when you book in advance.
- You can register in “Harris Teeter” to the VIC card with your Duke email address and get a 10% discount.
- With the Duke email address, you can get 6 months free on Amazon Prime
- Go see a Blue-Devil’s basketball game.