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**Degree Program at TAU:** MBA

**Host University:** University of British Columbia (UBC)

**Exchange term:** Term 1 – Fall 2017 (3.5 months)

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### **Exchange Experience**

#### **About the country and city**

Vancouver located in southwest corner of Canada, with its scenic views, mild climate, and friendly people is known around the world as both a popular tourist attraction and one of the best places to live.

Vancouver is also one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse cities in Canada with 52 percent of the population speaking a first language other than English.

Vancouver has a combination of an amazing breathtaking nature and a vibrant and diverse city life. For those who love nature and hiking, this area of the world is like heaven with many amazing trails surrounding which are not at all too far from the city itself (take a look here <https://www.vancouvertrails.com/>). Also, there are many attractions inside the city and beautiful neighborhoods and viewpoints to explore.

#### **About the Host University**

UBC is located approximately 30 min from City Downtown, it's a big and beautiful university spreading out on a large area and including many campuses, buildings, residences, restaurants, houses, beaches and more – that area called "On Campus".

The MBA studies are on the 'Sauder School of business', as a student exchange you join the second year of the full MBA program. The average students' age in this program is 29 years old and most of them are International students which have travelled from all over the world to study their whole MBA degree in Canada (a big incentive for them is the fact that after graduation they're allowed to stay and work in Canada for 3).

The 'one semester students exchange program' includes around 20 students or so. A week before the beginning of the semester an orientation day takes place in the form of a city

tour organized by the faculty. It's a nice opportunity to meet and get to know the other students in the Students Exchange Program, who probably will be your close friends for the whole coming semester abroad.

All the classes are run in an open discussion method and you are expected to participate and speak your mind. Each student has a name tag which he/she is required to put on the table during the class. Also it's important to note that in all the courses, participation in classes is part of your overall grade.

The semester is divided into two mini semesters, each one called Period and is 5 weeks long (4 weeks of classes and 1 week of exams and presentations). All the courses you can choose from are elective courses and each one is 4 hours a week. The courses are somewhat demanding: Usually, each one includes a few case studies, a team project and a presentation to the class or exam, or both. Luckily, the syllabuses are very detailed and you can see in advance what each course required. Due to the large number of International students, the professors got used to non-native English speakers, so don't worry about your grammar in the assignments, if you take class seriously and put in good efforts, you will very likely be getting nice grades and pass the courses.

Between the two periods there is a two weeks break, which is a wonderful opportunity to travel around or join to workshops that the Career Center organizes for free to MBA students.

### **Courses and professors**

According to TAU guidance, you're required to complete a minimum of 4 credits in the semester abroad, which means 4 courses at UBC. According to UBC you're required to take 4 courses each period (8 courses for the whole semester) but you can take less on condition your home-university allowed that. In that case you can choose to make your semester very busy or more relaxed which leaves you with more time for travels and getting to know the culture.

### **Accommodation**

"On Campus" There are residences that you can apply for which are located on campus, but in my case the university announced in advance that there is a large demand for these residences and limited availability, so priority is given to students who come to study for the whole year and not just a semester. Another option is to privately rent a room in a house 'on campus'.

"Off campus"- Like in central Tel-Aviv the good areas for living in Vancouver have high demand and it's not easy there to find a room for rent for short term (one semester) but it's possible. The room rental rates range between \$750-\$1400 CAD per month, depending on the neighborhood.

Also, many FB groups for roommates or houses/rooms rental exist, I highly recommend to use them as a tool to find a room.

### **Visa**

A Visa is not required for studying. Students who come to study in Canada for less than six months can't anyway apply for Student Visa and so can't work there. With a Student Visa however you can work limited hours and only 'on campus'.

### **Transportation**

There is great transportation in Vancouver: buses and trains. As part of the fees you should pay to the university you pay for U-Pass, your monthly unlimited pass for all buses and train lines in Vancouver. It costs ~\$45 per month, is very useful and definitely worth it.

### **Insurance and Health Services**

As part of the fees you should pay to the university you also pay for 'iMED Health Insurance for international students at UBC', this insurance is to cover health issues during your stay in Canada. It's mandatory and costs ~\$200 for your whole stay. Personally, I bought an additional Israeli Medical Insurance policy for travelers abroad as well, just to be on the safe side.

### **Living expenses**

Expenses and prices are quite similar to Tel-Aviv, which makes the city not cheap at all for living.

### **Food**

There is everything ! You can find in Vancouver all kinds of authentic cuisines - Chinese, Japanese, Korean, French, Mongolian, Lebanese, Iranian, Israeli, Canadian and others. They have very good wild salmon and sea food. The price of a meal in a restaurant ranges between \$15 to \$25, depending on the area in Vancouver.

Tips in restaurants are like the norm in Tel Aviv, 10% and up.

### **Tips**

Travel in Vancouver and the area as much as you can! it's an amazing place. Bring with you VISA to US in advance and expand your trip to other places such as Seattle when you have some days off. Enjoy the experience, make new friends and explore an entirely new area and new culture.

I will be happy to share with you more from my experiences, feel free to contact me.

