



Exchange Students summary / Fall 2014 – Grygorii Kanterman

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Short summary: So far, it has been a great experience seeing new great country, studying courses at the highest educational level and meeting many local and international people.

York University and Schulich Business School particularly has shown really high level in all aspects of top international business school as it written in many rankings and reviews.

Following pages of this summary will be my observations and some advises that I think are relevant to this topic.

Living in Toronto:



Living in Toronto is “nothing special”, absolutely in line with pictures and stories from Hollywood movies about live in the major business center in North America. Great infrastructure, sights, nature and comfort in all sides of human live. As the most vibrant and multicultural city in Canada one can find in Toronto enormous variety of restaurants, clubs and leisure places to satisfy all wishes and demands. It should be mentioned that Canadians are a bit “slow motion” people and very polite, though organized, punctual and efficient, thus typical Israeli individual should be ready for this kind of different environment.

Toronto has developed great systems in education, medical services and safety! I want to emphasize approach to safety which is at the highest world level with York University's application for those living on campus <http://safety.yorku.ca/mobileapp/>.

Cost of Living:

The most useful thing for local services in Toronto is Yelp <http://www.yelp.com/> where you can find reviews and sometimes prices.

Generally students have three main choices that should be assessed and chosen depending on one's priorities and comfort zones:

School is located well off the downtown with 1 hour approximate travel time

- 1) On campus (1 bedroom apartment cost 1000 CAD, some students share it for two people). It is obviously great for commuting to School, where you will be several days a week (some students took courses considering school accessibility and went there just 2 days a week). Additionally for those who like sports there are sport center with gym, swimming pool and team sports on campus for a symbolic price just 15 CAD for whole period.

Small shopping mall with all basic services and cafes also located on campus. <http://www.york-lanes.ca/>

Advise: since many service providers on campus are monopolists in that student area some services more expensive than those in the downtown and their quality also questionable. I would encourage you to use services such as hairdresser, dentist etc. while you are in the city. (Use Yelp, see link above)

Transportation to the downtown is a bit problematic and long. Bus-Subway route is around 1 hour duration.

- 2) Apartment outside the downtown – 800-1000 CAD
- 3) Room in the downtown – 500 – 1000 CAD. For those interested in having fun and enjoy night live in Toronto and downtown opportunities, this option is the best.

Sources for housing:

<http://toronto.en.craigslist.ca/>

www.kijiji.ca/ - Great website for housing in Toronto. Actually you can find almost everything on the site.

On-campus housing <http://studenthousing.info.yorku.ca/>

I actually stayed on-campus but finding something in the city in advance is highly recommended, city has lots of things to explore.

Other expenses:

- Transportation – 3CAD per one-way ride, 130 CAD monthly pass

- School Expenses – 100 CAD – 300 CAD, books, study cases, printing etc.
- Food – 400 CAD – 700 CAD monthly depending on how often you eat out
- Insurance – 225 CAD, per person, mandatory UHIP
- Tourism – from 100 CAD to unknown number, some people travelled to Cuba after studies))

Other Activities:

At Business School exchange student is treated the same way with full time students, which means that student will have the same networking and business meetings possibilities. Exchange term is during fall season – very busy hiring and recruitment season with lots of companies coming on campus and presenting opportunities with them. Additionally, Schulich Business School has career center, and as an exchange student you can use its services.

There are two student organizations that will organize some great student activities including three-day trip to Provincial Park for team-building (Schulimpics), trip to Niagara Falls and other cultural exchange events. I can say that student support and friendship is really organized and implemented on the highest level.

Additionally, there are more than twenty student clubs specializing on different professional topics with their events and activities around topic.

Educational Experience:

In general, School is equipped with everything you need to study. There is free access to university Wi-Fi, spaces in the library, rooms for group work that are possible to book in advance through electronic system. For students interested in finance there are computers in the library with access to Bloomberg professional system. The only negative feedback I can give to study rooms that they don't have individual plug-in options for computers, thus you have to have a great battery in laptop or study without PC (unfortunately, this was my case).

Similar to Recanati, at Schulich heavily emphasized group work and group presentations. The difference I felt comparing to Sofaer 1 year MBA at Recanati is that requirements for grades and expectations are a bit higher at Schulich but on the other hand it is much less intense. You will have definitely more free time to study at Schulich.

The Courses I took:

All courses are 3 hours in duration, some on week days, some on weekends and in evenings for part-timers. In my experience, those for part timers were the best, since not only class mates are currently employed and can share valuable experience but also lecturers are current professionals who coming to school after work what give additional practical insight.

Management of risk in financial institutions (lecturer - Lois Tullo)

This course is designed for people interested in banking career after education with strong emphasis on best risk management practices in Canadian banks and networking with professionals. During the

course we had seven classes in headquarters of five major banks, rating agency and risk management software provider where we had a chance to ask questions and chat with senior managers of those companies. Obviously, as prerequisites some banking, finance or risk management experience required, it is quite advanced class.

International credit: markets and metrics (evening class, lecturer – Cristine Helsdon-Tekker)

Another advanced course for corporate and commercial bankers. It is very practical with lots of real world examples and discussions. This course also included several meetings with current professionals in class and in headquarters of Banks. The lecturer itself is director of corporate lending business for one of the banks. Actually, this course is one of the best. Participants have to have financial market experience prior to join this class in order to exploit it fully.

Venture capital and private equity (Saturday class, lecturer - Sofia Johan)

The course is designed as a venture capital market overview describing in details all aspects of market functionality. Many theoretical approaches are presented regarding VC and business owner relationships, VC fundraising activity, valuations of Startups, etc. It is very theoretical and most of the conclusions based on empirical researches. No special prerequisites are required, just don't expect any information on how to invest, expect only market overview.

Microfinance and social impact investment (Evening class, lecturer – Jonathan Hera)

Great practical course for investors in Startups, the teacher is current portfolio manager at government owned VC who invests professionally in social impact startups. About third of the course is microfinance business overview, third is social impact metrics and last third is investment rules and approaches. Final assignment is a group presentation of real investment opportunity to investment committee. Overall, this was my favorite course, very practical and exiting, mainly due to great knowledgeable teacher, visitors from this field and course design. No special preconditions for this course are necessary. It will be valuable for people interested in social impact and / or investment area.