

## My Johnson@Cornell Experience

***Taking part in the exchange program in Johnson Cornell will allow you to enjoy the real American collage life, enjoying the small community of the MBA school, meeting some great friends and visiting in one the most gorgeous places on earth.***

***This is one in a life time experience and every MBA student should go through. Studying in a top MBA school environment, travelling, hiking, parting, watching college sport events and spending 4 months with group of smart, inspiring and great people that became very good friends for lifetime.***



Cornell university, located in Ithaca is a small cozy town in upstate NY. It is one of the 8 Ivy league universities in the USA. The Johnson business school is ranked 16 in Bloomberg American MBA ranking for 2016.

Ithaca is located 4 hour drive from all major cities – New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Boston (6hrs), Toronto (5hrs), Montreal (7hrs) and more.

Being part of Cornell university (18K+ students) and the Johnson business school (~500 students) will make you part of close, warm and great community. You will meet in 4 months many people from all over the world- all talented, friendly, welcoming and open people that left their lives and came to Ithaca to be part of this small MBA community (This is one of the smallest MBA programs in the USA).





**Housing-** The thing needs to be taken care of as soon as possible!

As for the school year of 2016-2017 the grad dorms are being renovated. The renovation is supposed to be only 1 year long (So, theoretically, starting next year there are exchange/international grad students dorms ~900\$/month). Usually grad exchange live there- It is a good option if you want to hang out with other grad students and other exchange students and you want to live in the campus. Another option which I had to choose due to the dorms renovation, was living off campus. Finding a place only for one semester was really difficult! If the renovation will end I don't think it will be as difficult as it was for me. If you still want to live off campus, In order to find a place for only 4 months you can use the following ways-

1. Craigslist – the American 'YAD2' – housing, 2<sup>nd</sup> hand furniture and electronics, etc.
2. Facebook – there are many groups that can help with housing finding.
3. Mailing properties managers – the last option, write nice email and send it to multiple landlords.

**Flight-** If you go on exchange for the fall semester you will need to be in Ithaca around August 20<sup>th</sup>. Buy the ticket as soon as you find a place to live because prices can go very high. You will need to get to New York and from there to take the bus up to Ithaca (you can get to Syracuse airport as well- 1 hour from Ithaca but this will be very expensive and will force you to have multiple connection flights, another option is getting from Philadelphia airport to Ithaca airport but this as well is a very expensive option).

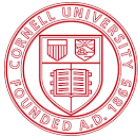
**Arriving to Ithaca-** book a bus in advance when you come right before the beginning of the semester- you will find a bus to get up to Ithaca even if you'll do it on the same day but if you do it in advance you can choose the bus company to ride with (and the quality and drive duration difference between the companies is relatively big).

Those are the bus companies in the town-

1. C2C – The official Cornell bus- fast and relatively expensive (twice a day, +-90\$)
2. Coach USA – There are 2 routes (the premium is once a day, 50\$-60\$ and around 5 hours, the normal is 40\$ and 6-7 hours).
3. Big Red bus – Another company founded by Cornell grads with buses going almost every day (50\$-70\$).

**Weather and what to bring** – Ithaca can be hot and humid August to September (30°c-35°c /up to 90%), wet, rainy, cold and snowy starting October-November (well below 0c and much lower into the winter/Blizzard snow) until late March- mid April. You should have sufficient clothes for any weather and temperature conditions.

There are a few stores around Ithaca but the nearest large mall is at Syracuse and a rental car is needed to get there. There are a few outlets areas 1 hour ride from Ithaca with cheap clothes but again, a car is needed in order to get there.



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**Health**- immunizations, forms, Insurance, etc.

When officially becoming a part of the exchange program with Johnson at Cornell you will start getting emails from your new school. First to your personal inbox and then to a new email (@Cornell.edu).

Some of those emails will ask you to pay the university the payment for health insurance for the semester (Around 1000\$). This is mandatory and it gives pretty good coverage (no need for any additional insurance).

In addition, you will need to fill some medical forms that will be sent to you, make sure your doctor signs on it. One more thing is you'll need to find your old yellow immunization records. If you don't have it, you'll need to go to your doctor and make sure he approves that you got the relevant immunizations needed. When you'll get to Cornell you will need to go to an appointment with a nurse and you might need to get some more immunization shots (For free). All the health forms should be sent to Cornell Ganett health Center around 2-3 weeks before school starts.

**Classes** - There are many classes in the Johnson MBA list and Choosing classes takes time- You will need to take 12-18 Johnson credits (The minimum is 12 and the rest can be taken either from Johnson's class list or in other non-Johnson Cornell schools). you'll need to run through all the classes in the class rooster and find what is more or less interesting for you.

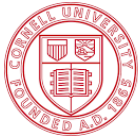
There are 2 halves for each semester in Johnson (just like in Tel Aviv university), you can choose classes that runs through all the semester or runs through each half. There are some weekend classes as well.

Johnson classes can be divided into 2 unofficial groups- 'hands on' classes and theoretical classes. Other way to divide the classes is by subject- Finance, Economy, Tech, Entrepreneurship, Consulting, Marketing, Leadership, etc.

I recommend to participate in as many 'hands on' management classes (writing, presentation, excel, communication, case solving, modeling, etc). This is a once in lifetime opportunity and you will have enough classes that will be acknowledged by Tel Aviv university. Take some 'hands on' classes and not only theoretical classes, take some classes that are being taught by top world professors, participate in high level classes that are out of your specialization.

Choose some non-Johnson classes- try some basic classes in the architecture school or the engineering computer sciences school. learn or improve your swimming skills, learn how to golf or bowl and even learn how to scuba dive or sail (with some additional charges).

Enrolling – the enrollment system in Cornell is very annoying. Choose all of your classes and make the list ready in the student center website before the enrollment window opens. When your enrollment window opens- enroll right away and hope to successfully enroll in many classes! However, even if you are in some waiting lists (and you will be), stay optimistic. Until the first-second week of classes you'll



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99% get into each class that you are positioned 40~ or lower (unless it is a small 10 student classes and then it's harder).

Enroll to as many classes as you can. You can drop from any class up to 2 weeks after the class begins.

## **Classes I had -**

**Management Presentations (1.5 credit)** – This class will help you improve your presentation skills, standing and talking in front of people, building well-structured presentation and talking in English in front of audience in general. This class gives you tools that you will use many times in your life.

**Management Writing (1.5 credit)** – This class will improve your English written skills and the way you structure any written document/letter/email. It will help you improving some old forgotten grammar skills and will give you the ability of structuring any written paper (this skill can be very helpful when writing in Hebrew as well).

**Financial Modeling (1.5 credit)** – This class will teach you how to build financial models using excel. It is very good class if you like finance and working in building financial reports.

**Core leadership in a VUCA world (1.5 credit)** – This class professor is the former chief of staff of the USA (was the head of the American army during the last Iraq war). This is a very interesting leadership class that will give you many new points of view about how to be a good leader and how to work with people in a volatile, complex, uncertain and ambiguous surroundings.

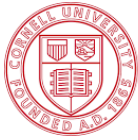
**Tech Strategy for a sustainable world (1.5 credit)** – This class connecting between the tech world (solar energy, 3D printing, electric cars...) and the management world. It is a new class. I felt like it wasn't structured well for now (but it can get better in the future).

**Emerging Technology Markets (1.5 credit)** – This class is a tech product managing class. It is very interesting only if you are into product management in the tech world. It is dealing with very theoretical concepts of managing new products in the tech world.

**The Business Idea Factory (1.5 credit)** – This class is one of many entrepreneurship classes you can take in Johnson school. The class is a factory of ideas for entrepreneurs and it teaches how to find a good idea for new business and how to choose between several ideas. During the semester there are a few entrepreneurs that come to tell their story and give some interesting insights about their business in the early stages.

**Data Driven Marketing (1.5 credit)** – This class is very interesting and recommended class for any student who have interest in digital marketing. The class is a good start for any student who want to learn some of the basics of the digital marketing world- the terminology, how google adwords work, how to build a digital data based campaign, etc.





**Career Center-** Being part of the Johnson community allows you to use the career center services. They can help you re-writing your resume and work on your cover letters. As an exchange student you will not be allowed to participate in most of the company briefings (Due to the fact that they don't want outside students to 'steal' Johnson students' positions).

**Johnson and Cornell student events** - Sage Social - Every Thursday afternoon all of the Johnson student get together for 2 hours of beer and some food and talking/networking with each other (Staff, faculty and students).

Dinning with professors and with the dean - During the semester there are several events being hosted by the dean/staff members and students can come to their homes and enjoy a nice easy quiet evening with other students and some staff and faculty members.

BRB – This is the place all the grad students hang out after a long school day. You can drink 1\$ beer in there and sometimes there are parties and other events being hosted by the Big Red Barn. In addition, every Friday there is TGIF (Thank Grads It's Friday) event with 1\$ beer and some free snacks.

Sports- No matter if you like American sport or not you should go at least once or twice to Cornell sport events. Cornell has a pretty good hockey college team. In addition, there is a football team and you cannot skip the homecoming- first American football league game weekend event.





**Travelling** – During the fall semester you’ll have plenty of free time and long weekends to enjoy the great area of Ithaca during the end of the summer and the fall (and beginning of the winter). Being in upstate NY will allow you to enjoy the nature and the great area of the north-east of the USA. You can go and enjoy the many waterfalls in the area, wineries, many lakes, amazing foliage scenery and many big cities.

Renting a car during weekends is very cheap when being shared with friends and can get you everywhere (NY city, Boston, Toronto, Niagara Falls, Philadelphia, Washington DC...).



### **Israeli/Jewish community in Ithaca-**

Cornell is the most Jewish university in the USA with ~25% Jewish students. You will meet some of them. Most are undergrads but some are grads and Johnson students.

Just like any other place in the world, there is a small Israeli community in Ithaca and there is a large Jewish community as well.

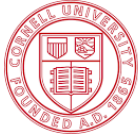
Being part of this Israeli/Jewish community is warming and there are great people that are part of it. In addition, it can be very helpful if you need any help or even if you just want to find a nice Shabbat/holiday dinner to join or people to hang out with in the first few days when you get to Ithaca.

Use the following groups (or search for random people in Cornell, Johnson communities) –

LinkedIn (search for connections that are connected to you),

Facebook (Israelis in Ithaca, NY- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/202746203101205/> ),

Chabad (<http://www.chabadcornell.com/>), Hillel (mainly undergrads targeted),



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Other events (there are many events on campus- Israeli and non-Israeli events. Try to be active and take place in as many events as you can!)

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Cornell is one of the top colleges in the USA but for some reason it is not so familiar by Israelis. Cornell became my real home for the 4 month of my exchange experience. The Small community life is very special and different compered to big city college life. If you want to really enjoy the exchange experience and get to really know and earn some good friend from so many places around the world- Cornell is the place for you. This is an experience that will stay with you forever.

Enjoy.

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**For any further questions feel free to send email or give me a call!**

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