

Full name: Anna Gedzelman

Email: anna.gedzel@gmail.com

Degree Program at TAU: MBA

Host University: Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University

Exchange term: Spring 2018 (10 weeks)

Exchange Experience

About the country and city:

Evanston - A beautiful city located northern to Chicago, on the Michigan Lake. The heart of the city is the Northwestern University that apart from Kellogg School of Management, has many other schools so the majority of Evanston's population is related to Northwestern. One can easily notice that it's a "student town" because there are coffee shops and restaurants everywhere full of students studying and shops with Northwestern's gear. So, there is something awesome in living in such a small students city because you feel part of a the community; everyone lives next to each other, study together, hangout and more, it's not as studying in a big city where after school everyone go to their own way.

The ride by train from Evanston to Chicago takes around 40 minutes, it's extremely easy and comfortable to commute. The train goes both ways all night.

We spent most of the time in Evanston, and when we had time we went to hang out in Chicago (once-twice a week), on weekends mostly.



Chicago

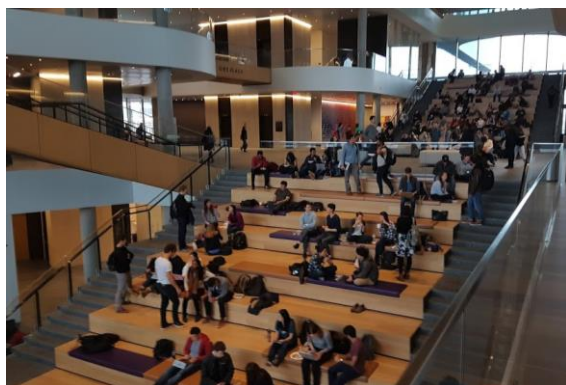
An AMAZING city, many world class museums (art, nature, science, planetarium, aquarium) they are huge and take one day to explore each. We visited them mostly on weekends. There are many shows, theaters, Broadway shows (I saw Hamilton and I highly recommend), "The Second City" is the most famous standup club at Chicago (recommended), Jazz bars, every day there is another festival, restaurants, clubs. River boat, architecture tours. I recommend you to visit other neighborhoods as well, besides downtown Chicago which is the most touristic.



About the Host University:

Campus and school atmosphere

Being ranked at the top five best MBA business schools in the US, Kellogg rises above all expectations. The full-time students put a lot of effort and money to get in, so they are super serious and study hard. During the fall semester they are very busy with recruitment in addition to the demanding courses (those who are at their first year recruit for summer internship, those who are at their second year recruit for jobs after graduation) so they don't have much time to interact and hang out. During the winter quarter, many students go to exchange programs abroad to "escape Chicago's winter" :), so I found the Spring quarter pretty awesome, because the students already got recruited and they are more relaxed, have more time to socialize, especially those who finish their second year, this is the last quarter of their Kellogg experience so they are taking advantage of any opportunity to meet new people, hang out, party and are much more relaxed of studies and submissions. During the summer quarter, Kellogg is pretty empty, only students who study Kellogg's 1Y program which is MBA in one year, study there because they have summer included.



Class atmosphere

Super serious. You are sitting in the class with a sign with your name on it, the professor can approach you at any time during the lecture and ask you to share your opinion on the case study you were asked to read at home. Everyone participates and no excuses to refuse answering the questions are acceptable.

What I found amazing at Kellogg is the personal connection between the professors and the students. The professors are highly interested in you, your background, future goals, hobbies, some professors arrive several minutes before class to go between the students and chat about life. One of the professors, the amazing Prof. Mohanbir Sawhny, organizes at the end of each year (end of spring quarter) a party to his students at his house in Evanston and it's really awesome! Other professors write an evaluation of an assignment you submitted, return it after 2 days, 3 pages long, describing genuine critic, what they loved about it, what should improve, how to improve it, exact steps to do for next week and so on. I was amazed when I saw such a detailed review at first, it really encouraged me to work even harder on my next projects.



Location

Kellogg has two branches. One, which is the main, located in Evanston, right on the lake with the most amazing view out of classes windows. Close to all accommodation options in town, 10 minutes' walk from McManus accommodation. The second branch is in Chicago. Kellogg's courses delivered in both branches, as an exchange student you can be enrolled in courses in both locations, just take into consideration commuting to Chicago both ways. Having said that, many students do it, it's not a problem, it really depends on the course you want to take.

Career center

Very helpful. There is one career advisor allocated for the exchange students. Helps with writing resumes, cover letters, and interviews preparation. Regarding to internships to whom might be interested, as the career advisor explained to us, recruiting for internships at Kellogg takes place at fall quarter and it's only for full-time students and not for exchange. Therefore,

you are welcome to apply for an internship during your exchange but it will be individually and not through Kellogg official recruitment system. However, according to what we have been told there, you must have a work permit in order to get the internship, the length of working period you can get approval for, depends on the length of your studying period in the US prior to internship. As an exchange student with only 10 weeks of study you might have a permit to work a very short number of weeks so it's not enough for the whole period of internships that lasts usually ~12 weeks. But I really don't want to discourage anyone from trying and fighting for it if you want it, rules might change so I advise to check that out when you arrive to Kellogg.

Social activities and student union

Kellogg is full with many different clubs you may be part of. Go to workshops, events, parties. Each is an opportunity to learn something new and meet great new people. Also, all sport facilities are free for Kellogg students, including exchange, so you may use the gym, swimming pool, squash and etc.

Courses and professors

I took 4 courses and was very occupied:

- Marketing Strategy – Timothy Calkins
- New Ventures Discovery – David Schonthal
- Creativity as a business tool – David Schonthal
- Product Management – Mohanbir Sawhny

Marketing Strategy:

This is one of the leading courses in the school, as Kellogg is being known as the world leading school in Marketing. Professor Tim Calkins is a legendary professor at Kellogg and it is super hard to get a spot in that class, but highly recommended! Very interesting material, the professor is a natural story teller, time flies when he starts talking and I was absolutely hypnotized listening to him. Highly recommended for both, those who feel that are experts in marketing and don't need another course and for those who never been interested in marketing, it's enriching for everyone.

New Ventures Discovery:

Highly recommended course as well, super popular at Kellogg and hard to get in, due to the professor, David Schonthal, which is young, stylish, charismatic, with a lot of experience in entrepreneurship, a natural story teller. The course is highly dimensive, a lot of work but rewarding, you do learn there a lot and take yourself out of your comfort zone a lot.

Creativity as a business tool:

Also, with the same great professor, David Schonthal, this course is 0.5 points so lighter (half quarter), lower workload, each lesson is a different workshop you go through, very experiential and influential. I have enjoyed it and would recommend it.

Product Management:

Very dimensive course, very high workload with a lot of personal homework, readings at home, group assignments, includes a group project to advise a real company in the industry facing business troubles. The course goes through a lot of material. I must say that for those who want in their career to switch to a product management role, this course might help, all examples, cases and theories are very relevant so you can get a quite good understanding about the role and its challenges. I personally switched after the exchange to a product manager role and went through the course material when was recruiting, find it very useful. The professor is very nice, brings a lot of real managers that work in the firms described in the case studies at the time of the described crises, to tell us their personal experience and lessons they have learned out of it, very influential.

In general, I would recommend being prepared in advance with desired courses prior to enrollment starts, because all the best courses are getting full in seconds.

Accommodation – dorms and other solutions

McManus residency – big furnished rooms with everything inside. Cost 3200\$ for the total period. No need to pay extra for bills. Pay attention that the availability at McManus is limited so follow the emails and apply for accommodation there in time. Close to the campus, around 10min walk, all the exchange students usually stay there so it's good for the social life, to be close to your friends.

In case you didn't get a spot at McManus, it's not a problem, you can easily find an apartment for rent, might even be cheaper. You will get help from the exchange coordinator at Kellogg.

Visa

You will get detailed emails about it, just need to follow the instructions, pretty simple process. You get J1 visa, so you are allowed to arrive 30 days prior to your first day of study and stay 30 days after the end date of your exchange. Notice: if you choose to get out of the US during your exchange, you are allowed to return with the same visa, however during your 30 days grace after exchange is over, if you leave the states you are not allowed to re-enter with the same visa, only with tourist visa if you have one.

Transportation

Very easy to commute in Evanston, everywhere is walking distance: the campus, sport pavilion, accommodation, restaurants, and groceries. There is a train station near McManus, to get to Chicago. Its 40 min ride.

Also, we have used many times uber and lift, super easy, fast and comfortable.

Insurance and Health Services

At Northwestern University you are obligated to pay for health insurance, it's around 1000\$.

Living expenses

Health insurance: ~1000\$

Accommodation: ~3200\$

Food: ~ 1800\$

Books and course packets: ~ 150\$

Transportation: ~ 200\$

Night life/ going out : ~300 – ~1000

Phone: 40\$ a month

Take into consideration that participation in many of the Kellogg events - workshops, parties, etc. costs money: 20-50\$ for each event. Money flies on those events but it's worth it! I wouldn't miss any of it.

Also you might want to travel over the weekends. I paid for an internal flight ticket around 350\$ (Chicago is in the middle of the continent).

Food

There are two main grocery shops near to McManus: Whole foods and Target. Many restaurants, bars and coffee shops around the city. There are many different options to eat in the campus as well, good cafeteria with a great view on the lake.



Night life

There are many Kellogg's events at night and parties. It is a great opportunity to meet new people. There are many clubs, bars and restaurants in Evanston. Chicago is awesome with its night life, we loved going to some jazz bars (Buddy Guy's Legend – jazz bar with a great live music and barbeque chicken wings☺). Green Mill is a great jazz bar as well, with live music and a dance floor, located two train stops away from Evanston. Also, Chicago is full with high class restaurants, fancy cocktail bars, great theaters, Broadway shows and comedy clubs.

Tips

The best tip I can give you is to take advantage of each opportunity to get out of your comfort zone and participate in classes, do presentations, don't be afraid of taking courses with a lot of communication, workshops, its wonderful and really helps you move forward and become better.

Also, I would recommend going to as many workshops as possible and in different subjects. The workshop might not be in a subject you are interested in, but it's a great opportunity to meet new people. You might be surprised to meet your new best friend there.

Amazon prime for Kellogg students is free! It's great! I bought everything there and it arrived in 2 days straight to McManus front desk.

General experience

Besides the difficulty of adjusting to a new living place, new people from different cultures, high tension and workload in studies, I had one of the best experiences in my life! I am grateful to Collier School of Management that allowed me this amazing opportunity. I have acquired many soft skills, and met amazing people that became my best friends and I am sure that will accompanied me for life.

