



Full Name: Tzafi Primovitch

Email: tzafip@gmail.com

Degree Program at TAU: MBA

Host University: Fuqua School of Business, Duke University

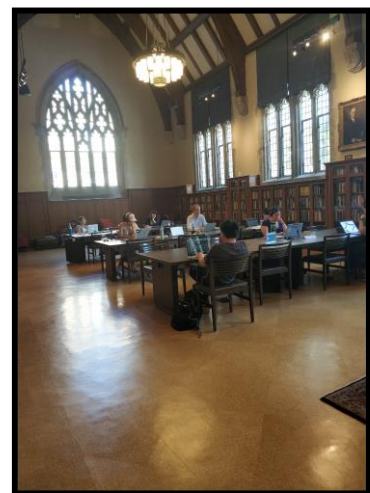
Exchange Term: Fall 2019, term 1 (2 months)

Exchange Experience

About the Country and City

Durham is located in northern North Carolina in a region called the “Research Triangle”, referring to Durham, Raleigh, and Chapel Hill. Each city hosts a major university (Duke University in Durham, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University in Raleigh). If you want to travel, North Carolina offers beautiful parks and trails, the most famous of which, are the Smoky Mountains and Asheville (4-5 hours from Durham).

Downtown Durham is a small area that evolved in the past couple of years and has few restaurants, pubs, and a theater. But there's no doubt that Duke is where all the interesting stuff happens.



About the Host University

The campus is beautiful with a lot of nature, a gothic chapel, and old looking buildings (I got the feeling of being on a Harry Potter movie set). The Fuqua building has a more modern architecture and provides all the facilities you will need - team rooms with screens, printing services, lockers, a library, a cafeteria, and a ping-pong table 😊. The school tries to have as many social events as possible and every Friday there is a “Fuqua Friday” where all students, faculty, and friends get together to celebrate the end of the week with food and alcohol.



In addition to being a high-ranking university, Duke is known for its excellent basketball team and you must go to at least one “Blue Devils” game. Generally, Duke is full of sports activities and offers every kind that you could think of - from white water kayaking to Pilate's lessons. As a Duke student, you can use all university facilities, including the Wilson Recreation Center, a 4-floor gym with a climbing wall, swimming pool, 3 basketball courts, 2 tennis courts, fitness classes, and much more.



Besides sports, Fuqua has about 60 clubs focused on career (ie. lockchain, consulting and innovation clubs), activities (ie. soccer, wine, and arts clubs) and diversity (Jewish club). The clubs organize lectures and activities and they are a great way to meet and become friends with other Fuqua students.

Courses and Professors

Exchange students have limited variety of courses to choose from and are able to sign up for courses last (when most of the popular courses are usually already full).

But even if the class seems full, there are a lot of dropouts at the beginning of each term and many students enter the classes from a waitlist, so don't lose hope if you didn't get the classes you want at first (the rule of thumb is if you are number 10 or less on the waiting list, you have a good chance of getting in).

There is also an option to take courses from other faculties, but the timeline of Fuqua academic year is different from the rest of the university and you should consider it if you wish to do so.

During your stay you will probably need to take at least 3 courses (to get to 4.5 Coler credits). If you are only going for 1 term you will need to take them all at once, but if you are coming for 2 terms I recommend you take 2 courses in each term since most of the courses are very demanding and time-consuming.

Most of the courses will require preparation work before each class. You should be ready for a "cold call" (the professor will pick a random student and ask him questions about the case/assignment of that class).

Here are the classes I took:

1. **Managing Innovation in a Global Organization** with Professor Jonathon Cummings The professor is committed and put a lot of effort into making this course professional and engaging, The course itself has a case study and a quiz for each lesson, one midterm, one final exam and a final report (10 pages with your study group).

2. **Medical Device Strategy** with Greg Davis

The course gives you a broad sense of the medical device industry in the US. It's focused on understanding corporate strategy, regulatory and reimbursement frameworks, manufacturing supply chain, customer needs, and other related issues. Most classes start with a case study discussion. We had one team project, a presentation and a midterm exam.

3. **Project Finance**, Professor John Buley, and Professor S. "Vish" Viswanathan

If you're into some humor you should definitely take this course. Half of the time I forgot that I was sitting in class and not watching a comedy show. The professors are fun and engaging and very professional. Don't worry if you haven't got a strong financial background (I didn't), you can still handle this course and get help from your peers and tutors. The course focuses on exposing you to the strategy, politics and risks involved in financing large projects (infrastructure, energy etc.). Class assignments included reading a case study for every class, 4 group cases, one individual case, and one take-home final exam.

Accommodation

Graduate students stay in off-campus rented houses or complexes around the university. The most popular area for Fuqua students is 9th street. There are 4 big complexes (station 9, Berkshire 9, Berkshire main, and 810 9th) that offer luxury apartments with common areas, pools, gyms, etc. You can find cheaper accommodation if you choose to rent an apartment instead of living in those complexes. But whatever you chose, it is better to do it as soon as possible. This link provides a summary of your options with nice statistics: <https://docsend.com/view/vrd8np5>.

You can check out the options to sublease an apartment as well. Fuqua has a shared Google doc that connects Fuqua students that are leaving for an exchange, and the ones who are coming in (you). The exchange coordinator, will send you a link to this shared doc. You can also find a sublease yourself using this website <https://rotatingroom.com/>

Visa

You will apply for a J1 Visa (unless you have citizenship).

Duke will send you instructions with timelines regarding the documents they need from you. Once they get all the documents, they will issue you a form that you will need to **physically** take with you to the immigration authorities. After receiving this form, you can start the visa process with the embassy.

The entire process can be a little confusing, but if you follow the instructions carefully you should be able to do it right.

Transportation

RDU Airport –International airport, 25 min from Durham. An Uber from the airport is about \$30.

Most of the exchange students don't buy a car and instead use public transportation. You have a few options on how to get around the city:

Duke operates a very convenient shuttle transportation service called **Duke Transit**. If you live around the university, you will find it very easy to use. There are buses that go on a circular route every 20 min. From 6 pm you can order a **DukeVan** that picks you up and drops you off at your home free of charge (make sure that you live inside the DukeVan operation areas).

There are also students arriving at Fuqua by car who offer **ridshares**. You can join the relevant GroupMe group and check there.

Bikes are also a nice option.

If you wish to go to other areas in Durham you can use the **GoDurham** bus (also free of charge for Duke students), or use an **Uber** or **Lyft**.

The public intercity transportation is not very good, and for longer trips I would recommend using a rented **car** or flights.

Insurance and Health Services

All exchange students must pay for the Duke health Insurance Policy and they will provide you with all the health services that you will need.

You will get a list of vaccines and be asked to provide proof that you got all of them. If you missed some, it is better to complete them in Israel since it's more expensive in the USA. There is one exception: the Manto (or TB test) is only acceptable if you did it in the US so don't worry about it. You and your fellow exchange students will do it in the first week at Duke.

Living Expenses

Flight to Durham (2 connections - 15 hours)	\$640
Visa + SIVS	\$160 + \$220
Duke Fee (Health insurance, etc.)	\$1224
Study materials	\$200
Apartment - rent for 3 months. (I took a 1BD apartment and this was the shortest period Berkshire 9 would agree on)	\$5400
Furniture (check DukeList and Fuqua Facebook group for furniture. I bought everything I needed and then resold it).	\$100
Bills (electricity + water + rental insurance)	~\$200

Uber/Lyft	\$40 a month
Sim card	\$30 a month
Weekly expenses	~\$100
<hr/>	
Total	~\$9000

General experience

There is so much to do during the exchange –academically, professionally, socially, and more. While you are there – try to do as much as you can, be involved and proactive, meet and make friends. This is probably going to be one of the great experiences of your life so enjoy every second of it.

Photos





