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Degree Program at TAU: Msc

Host University: IESE

Exchange term: Fall Semester 2019 (Sep-Dec)

Exchange Experience

Tel Aviv University offers you to take one semester abroad during your MBA/Msc studies; I recommend taking advantage of this opportunity. This is truly once of a life time experience. Some of the hosting schools offered by Coller are ranked among the best business schools in the world and usually students find it very difficult to get in, while the exchange program allows you to experience those programs without paying the enormous tuition (sometimes around \$100K) and without stopping your life for two years (the standard time of a full time international MBA program).

About the country and city

I guess if you are reading these lines, you already know that Spain and Barcelona is among the best places in the world, so keep on reading!

About the Host University

If I could do the whole thing again I would still choose IESE without any second thought. Those are the main reasons:

- IESE is considered one of the most diverse business schools in the world. While in the top MBA schools in the US the class will be composed of approximately 90% Americans, in IESE you will meet people from all around the world. When I say all the around the world - that includes countries such as: Indonesia, Hong Kong, Lebanon, Costa Rica, etc. You would not get such an experience elsewhere.
- IESE's full time MBA program (the one that you are going to join) is ranked among the best programs around the world.

- Barcelona is a great place to spend three months. The city is very international and the weather is similar to the one we have in Tel-Aviv, so you will quickly feel at home.
- IESE will allow you full access to its career services, while most of the schools in the US offered by TAU will not allow you to enjoy those services. That means that if you would like to work in the Europe following your graduation, IESE will help you get access to some of the leading companies in the world.

Getting there

IESE is located in a quiet, luxury neighborhood, very close to the center part of Barcelona. I usually arrived to school by bus which was very convenient and cheap. Some other people chose to buy or rent electric bicycle or scooters, as those are very safe to use in Barcelona. This option can save you a lot of time however the downside is that towards November the weather is changing and sometimes it gets a bit windy and cold to use electric scooters.

Social activities

Another big advantage of IESE is that they will make you feel part of the school very quickly, it is all very organized. They will add you to a section WhatsApp group (the students are divided to five sections in their first year), every week there is usually some kind of an event (Indian dinner, Japanese dinner, parties, etc.). I think that the most difficult thing during your exchange period is to manage your time as there are a lot of things to do (classes, career events, school events, travelling).

Usually there is a group of around 20 exchange students from around at IESE, so you will quickly become friends with those groups as you will share the same experience as them.

In addition you will have the option to join students clubs (sport, career, etc.). I recommend taking advantage of this tool. It will allow you to meet other students, have fun, and enjoy the career services.

Career Center

My recommendation here is to act fast!

While the full time students polish their CV's and get prepared to interviews during their entire first year of study, you will only have three months. If you will take this opportunity seriously that should be enough. Some of my exchange friends at IESE got some amazing job offers from companies such as Siemens, Credit Suisse and more.

IESE required all students to use the same CV format. I recommend to prepare this in your first week. Otherwise you will miss some of the applications deadlines. Ask for help from

other IESE students, they will be happy to help you. Usually the job applications is been done by IESE's website called **Symplicity**, remember this name. It took my about two weeks and a lot of emails to get access. So again act fast here, prepare your CV based on IESE's requirements and get access to [Symplicity](#).

During your time at IESE, the school is organizing career events, and I recommend exploring them.

VISA

Your Israeli passport allows you to be 90 days in Spain out of a period of 180 days. If you want to stay more you need to apply for a student VISA, that cost around 200 Euro. It should be easy to apply for the VISA at the Spanish embassy in TLV. Some of the Israelis that are doing exchange in EU zone applying for VISA and other choose not to apply. It is up to you. If you are planning to do some traveling before or after the exchange, or you are planning to apply to some jobs around the EU, I recommend you to be on the safe side and apply for the student VISA that will allow you to spend 180 days instead of the 90 days period.

Accommodation

For sure the most difficult mission of your exchange experience!

Some people choose to take Airbnb. The big advantage is that will allow you to arrive in Barcelona only a few days before school starts. Bear in mind that once school starts you will not have time to look for an apartment.

I arrived in Barcelona one week before school started and booked a hotel for that week. During that week I sent countless email to agencies and visited at least ten apartments.

The most popular website to find an apartment in Barcelona is Idealista:

<https://www.idealista.com/>

I also recommend the following agency which is very good and well known in Barcelona:

<https://www.aspasios.com/>

I paid for an awesome two room apartment 1,500 Euro (including bills).

In terms of where to live, most of IESE students live at a neighborhood called Elxample. As a general rule look for an apartment around the corner of Avinguda Diagona and Passeig de Gracia (best area to live, trust me).

Courses and professors

Around one month before school starts you will receive an email with the instructions of how to enroll to classes (bidding). Read those instructions very carefully. You will receive the instructions to your IESE email.

The variety of classes is very wide. Take advantage of the opportunity given to you and enroll to at least 6 credits (around 10 different classes). It is not as intense as it sounds. A couple of recommendations:

- One of the most popular classes called EXSIM, it is some kind of an executive simulation. The class is usually taking place during the first week of school or during the last week of school. It is intensive class; you will spend the whole week in school (sometimes until 11PM). You should definitely try taking it during the first week, as it will allow you to meet other IESE students very quickly. While you are allocating your points part of the bidding process, give this class a big portion of your points (although demand is changing from year to year).
- Try taking one or two of Jan Simon classes, this guy is one man show.

Living expenses

As we all already know, Israel and Tel-Aviv is very expensive. I found Spain and Barcelona to be cheaper in all aspects of cost of living.

Food

The cafeteria in IESE is quite good, most students eat their lunch over there. It is also a good opportunity to meet other IESE students.

Good luck! And feel free to contact me if you have any questions,

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