

Full name: Yarin Gaon

Email: Yarin@bengaon.com

Degree Program at TAU: MBA with a focus in Marketing

Host University: Kellogg

Exchange term: Fall 2019 (10 weeks)

Exchange Experience

About the country and city

Chicago is the third largest city in the US, and as such, has a lot to offer. Northwestern University (Kellogg Global Hub) is located in Evanston, which is a northern suburb of Chicago, nestled right on Lake Michigan.

Evanston is about 30-35 min drive (by car) to Downtown Chicago and is much smaller than Chicago and has a more “suburban” feeling to it. It still has a great downtown area with restaurants, shopping, and has a very “college town” vibe to it.

About the Host University

Kellogg is the management school at Northwestern University. It’s one of the top 10 business schools in the US (and for a good reason). Even though NU (Northwestern University) offers some activities, Kellogg has its own student union and clubs.

Kellogg works with a software called “Campus Groups,” which has a calendar with all the information regarding all the activities and clubs that Kellogg offers (and there’s a LOT of things to do on campus).

As an exchange student, you will be permitted to take place in any Kellogg activity or club, and you should definitely do so, because it’s just a whole different league. That’s the beauty of this school: CEOs and industry leaders come from all over the world to speak at Kellogg events. It is an excellent opportunity to create connections with top of the line business people. You get a front row seat to conversations with industry leaders.

Courses and professors

The professors are divided into two categories: Researchers and Business-people. Researchers usually teach core courses, and business-people teach specific courses in their field. The professors are the absolute best in their respective industries and the courses are so much more practical—rather than just being theoretical. We were given real life examples and models to learn from, with practical implementation for real world scenarios. The courses really prepare you for future career opportunities.

Accommodation

I lived in Uptown, which is a northern neighborhood of Chicago (for personal reasons), but you should definitely look for a place in Evanston, preferably within walking distance from the school. Things are happening every day, and if you don't live within walking distance, you will miss a lot of the action.

Kellogg offers exchange students the option to rent a unit in their dorms that come fully furnished.

Visa

I have a Green Card, so I did not need a visa, but most do. A J-1 visa is usually issued at the American embassy at Tel Aviv and stamped by the school upon arrival. Kellogg will provide you with an acceptance letter that you can show to the immigration officer.

Transportation

Assuming you won't get a car, you can easily travel around Chicago and Evanston with public transportation: You can either use the CTA (the metro), the Metra (commuter rail) or the bus service. Evanston sits along the purple line with three major train stations and a Metra station as well. You can easily get directly downtown using the purple line or commuter rail. The purple line offers "rush" express service to downtown Chicago during busy periods—the AM and PM rush hours.

NU also has its own "on campus" bus shuttle (which is free). It takes students around the campus and also has a direct express line to the Downtown campus.

Insurance and Health Services

NU forces exchange students to purchase special insurance (sold by them) for a fee of \$1,400 for four months. It's not cheap, and also not negotiable. As a result, you will not need a traveler's insurance from Israel.

Living expenses

Chicago is not a cheap city, be prepared to spend some money. The school itself will charge you with an "activity" fee (\$120) and insurance (\$1,400). Besides that, everything else also costs money: the rent, required books etc.

Food

Kellogg has a massive cafeteria for when you're at the school. Otherwise, Evanston offers a variety of restaurants and places to eat. There are so many great spots in Evanston. I personally love the restaurant called "Found" which has excellent flatbread. Also, you can always take the purple line straight to the city of Chicago.

Tips

Make sure you take in all the "out of class" activities Kellogg has to offer. That's where the real value is, and you should not miss it. I also recommend joining a club – they have a lot of cool events, and it's an easy way to meet new people.

Kellogg also offers help with your career, helping you with your CV and job hunting (even for international students) – highly recommended. I would weekly attend "IPG" sessions where second year students would prepare you for future job interviews and they divide it based on field of interest. The retail club prepared me for a job in the retail field—but they have other fields as well like consulting, etc.

General experience

You will see for yourself why Kellogg is considered one of the top schools in the country. The quality of the teaching, students and campus is just a whole different league than what we know in Israel, and if you can afford it – you should definitely do it! Hands down one of the best experiences in my life. If you have any questions regarding Kellogg or Chicago, feel free to contact me! My details are listed at the top.

Photos

