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Degree Program at TAU: MBA

Host University: NYU Stern

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Exchange Experience

About the Country and City

Studying at Stern was certainly an eye-opening, mind-changing experience for me. My semester at NYU Stern was much different than I ever thought it would be. Traveling in New York as a tourist was always a great pleasure for me, but living in Manhattan was completely different, and a much more special and enjoyable experience.

Living in New-York during the COVID-19 situation, well, that's literally a once in a lifetime experience. New York is meant to be the city that never sleeps, but with New York on coronavirus lockdown, the city stood empty, and its neon advertising played to no-one. However, in this document I will write down a few points that hopefully will serve other students who are interested in learning at Stern in normal times, therefore, I won't discuss the coronavirus' unique circumstances that we faced during the last part of the semester.

About the Host University

Several things set Stern apart from other business schools. I believe that the first one is the location. Stern is located in the heart of New York City, the best city in the world. Most of NYU's main buildings surround Washington Square Park, and the

Kaufman Management Center is home to Stern. The campus is very diversified, and you will meet students from literally all over the world.

Social Activities: Clubs are a great resource to connect with student life at Stern. There are activities and events every week and you can join all of them. There are clubs for everything from professional groups and sports to traveling, food, and religion (there are a couple of Jewish organizations as well). You can use the NYU and CampusGroup apps and visit the [NYU Stern Campus Groups](#) portal to keep yourself updated. Also, check the [calendar of events](#), and [the clubs](#) available to join.

Career center: You can have a 20-minute meeting with the Career Center to review your CV, and get some tips. Exchange students are not allowed to attend on-campus recruiting events, but we do have full access to the career center network and website (job postings and recruiting system). In general, if you want to have an internship in the U.S, you must focus on this mission from the start, and develop your networking capabilities.

Courses and Professors

The academic level at Stern is high, but nothing that you should be afraid of. The courses put a lot of focus on industry practices and trends and much less focus on theory. New York is the financial capital of the world, and I felt that the program specializes in economics and finance. I recommend going over all the syllabi for the courses you are interested in, reviewing the course schedules, the assignments and tests, and then figuring out the best combination for you. I would recommend taking courses during weekdays rather than weeknights and weekends, which include more part-time students, and in my opinion, have a different environment. If possible, I also recommend studying from Monday to Wednesday, in order to have a long weekend for fun/work, etc.

Recommended courses:

- Corporate Finance (Prof. Aswath Damodaran, 3 credits) – Prof. Damodaran is sometimes called the “dean of valuation”. I already had a finance background, and I didn't think I would learn finance-related courses at Stern. However, Damodaran is a worldwide guru - he advises investment banks and companies all over the world. At Stern, students with no finance background take his courses as well due to his prestige. The course gives you a big picture of corporate finance so that you can understand how things fit together in real life. The course also gives you the capacity to understand the theories and apply the techniques to real-world situations. The course is much more intense than any other course that I took. It contains 4 tests, a final project, and a case.
- Foundations of Entrepreneurship (Prof. Glen Okun, 3 credits) – Prof. Okun is a great professor. He has real-world experience, and he makes the class fun and relevant. Each class covers a couple of case studies which you discuss in small groups and then further debrief as a class. This is a great class for anyone looking to start a venture or even just assess the attractiveness of a company from many perspectives. Apart from the readings before each class, there are only two assignments: an individual midterm and final team paper, so the course load is not too heavy.
- Developing Managerial Skills (Prof. Dolly Chung, 3 credits) –The course is focused on the personal, interpersonal, and group skills needed to be an effective manager and leader. The professor is extremely nice, and helpful and I think the best thing that I got from this class was the opportunity to meet other students, because you work with your team a significant amount of class time.

I took other courses, like Professional Responsibility, just because this was my last semester of the MBA. If you have a chance, I recommend finishing all of your mandatory courses at TAU, so you won't have any constraints.

Accommodation

Finding accommodation in NYC is 10x harder than Tel Aviv. Therefore, start looking for an apartment as soon as you can. Lower Manhattan will be the best fit, where you can go to school by foot.

There are several Facebook groups for finding a sublet, I recommend doing it through Israeli groups such as [this one](#).

Another option, which was the one that worked for me, is to use the [Stern apartment listings sheet](#)! It includes Stern's own exchange students who are going abroad. Make sure you are signed into your Stern account when you try to access the sheet.

I had great luck, and I subleased an amazing full apartment in the East Village from a Stern Student who went to Spain for an exchange program.

Visa

Stern will send TAU your DS-2019 document, then you have to pay the fees, fill in the online embassy forms, and attend an interview at the embassy. I got a J-1 visa, and it enabled me to enter the U.S one month before the semester began and stay there up to one month after it ended. You can extend the Visa for Academic Training (AKA internship) by another 4 months.

Transportation

It is quite easy to get around NYC. If you don't live too far from everything- I always preferred to walk on foot and see the streets. Buy an MTA ticket and use it for the subway and buses. Quicker and more convenient ways are Uber, Lyft, and Via.

Insurance and Health Services

NYU offers its own insurance plan, which is very expensive. I purchased my insurance from ISO. ISO provides cheap insurance for foreign students and it meets the NYU requirements. Insurance from an Israeli company such as Harel won't be enough. Once you have paid for the insurance, ISO will send you a signed waiver form, which you should send to NYU's health insurance team.

Food & Night life

Much can be said about the endless opportunities to eat and go out in Manhattan. There is a vast range of restaurants and bars in the city. Stern has Beer Blast every Thursday, which usually includes unlimited drinks and a great opportunity to meet your classmates.

If you're into Broadway shows, try your luck, and sign up for the daily [lottery](#) for cheap tickets to the best shows.