



**Brandeis University**  
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS SCHOOL



**Tel Aviv University**  
**TAU Recanati**

The Leon Recanati Graduate School of Business Administration

### **Exchange summery Brandeis University spring 2015**

Brandeis University is one of many colleges and universities (over 70) located in the greater Boston area, MA. It is located in a small town called Waltham which is a 20 min commuter rail ride out of down town Boston. Brandeis University is a beautiful place with lots of green in the spring and a hole of a lot of white in winter. IBS (International Business Bchool) has its own building surrounded by a forest. The school is very international with students from all over the world with locals being a very small minority. Brandeis used to be a Jewish school and there are some relics of that fact, school is out on Jewish holidays, part of the cafeteria is Kosher and so on. It's a lovely place full with friendly and interesting people.

We are a married couple both doing our MBA and the exchange together.

#### **Visa information**

Exchange students will require a student visa (J1) before entering the US. The procedure is fairly simple, you will first receive a DS-2019 form from the University. Than schedule a visa interview at the embassy. This process may take some time so make sure you plan ahead (about 3 month).

Some states, including MA, require you to have some vaccinations before you are eligible to study there. You will need to send evidence of your vaccination records to the university. This also may take time to gather or to actually get vaccinated so plan a head.

#### **Housing**

Most of Brandeis students choose to live in Waltham which is a walking distance from the University and there are free shuttles back and forth. Most people rent a privet house with 3-5 roommates. The average cost is 500-700\$. The downside is that Waltham is not the most exciting place on earth. We chose to live at Cambridge which is across the Charles River from Boston. It is fairly famous for housing both Harvard University and MIT. This is a more expansive option (about 1100\$) but Cambridge is more lively with lots of bars restaurants and special events. If you choose to stay in Cambridge be sure to find a place near Porter square which is where you will take the commuter rail to Brandeis. If you can't find a place near Porter the second best option somewhere along the red line. The red line will take you to Porter.

#### **Living expenses**

Total expense is about 12,000\$ for the entire period. The main expenses are housing and mandatory health insurance from Brandeis (1500\$). Flights in the US are more expansive

than in the EU plan a head to buy cheap. Restaurants and pubs have similar prices as in TLV. A beer can set you back about 5-8\$.

### **Transportation**

MBTA- this is the general name for all public transportation in the Boston area.

Commuter rail- a net of rail raiding outside of the city into nearby towns, the purple train will take you from Boston/Cambridge to Waltham. One way ride costs about 6.5\$

The T- the underground subway system in Boston is called the T, you will need a charley card to ride it. It's given free, we got ours at south station when we arrived. A single ride costs 2.1\$. The red line goes from Cambridge into central Boston. The buses are also part of the T system. A ride on a bus costs 1.8\$ and there is a transit option from the subway.

### **Courses**

IBS is very known for its finance courses. It's not our field of expertise as we are both in IT. The variety of tech courses is limited.

We took 4 courses:

Big data 1 and Big data 2 - they are given in module 1 and module 2 respectively so you can take them both in on semester. We took the course with Prop. Robert Carver. These courses give you some background on the big data field, including tools, theories and some practical knowledge.

Consumer Behavior - this course is very interesting with a lot of class discussions and interesting readings, it also has a group project which gives you some hands on experience. This class was led by Prop. Jane Ebert.

Business strategy in emerging markets - this was the best course we took. This is a case based class, meaning, every class starts with a 1-2 hour class discussion about the readings, there may be cold calls and you have to prepare. The material and cases are very interesting and the professor Aldo Musacchio is an ex Harvard prop with lots of experience.

### **Recreation**

Be aware get involved there is a lot of university activities and events, there is free gym and pool and lots of classes like kickboxing and yoga. There are also a lot of Boston communities events, festivals, markets and shows. Some of the best events are hosted by other universities in the area such as Harvard and MIT and some are open to the public.

### **Tips and things to be aware of**

- Winter is cold, very cold, temperatures may drop to -20C. It makes it hard to travel during the spring semester in the New England area. The fall semester maybe a better choice weather wise. If you do choose to take the spring semester buy worm close when you get there.

- The spring semester has 2 one week vacations, one is the February break and the other is during Passover. Plan ahead and go somewhere warm.
- Most classes are graded mostly on participation and team projects. Most classes don't even have a final exam.
- Try and go to sport games of each type basketball, baseball, football and hockey. Even if you're not a big sports fan or even know all the rules it's an amazing experience and new Englanders take their sports very seriously.
- Unlike in Israel, if there is a promotion in the supermarket that says 2 for 5. You don't have to buy 2! One will cost 2.50. it took us a while to figure this out ☺

If you have any questions please feel free to contact us:

[rongoldenberg@gmail.com](mailto:rongoldenberg@gmail.com) , [shlomitbanin@gmail.com](mailto:shlomitbanin@gmail.com)

Good luck and enjoy this once in a lifetime experience!