

Dar Chen

darchenn@gmail.com

New York University - Fall 2015

The University

NYU located at the heart of Manhattan, an urban campus that really lets you touch and feel the vibes of this amazing city. The MBA program is part of the Stern school and takes place on the Kaufman building right next the Washington Square Park. The building is quite new with great facilities (comfortable classes, lockers and many learning lounges). Most of the classes equipped with cameras, so many courses are being videotaped and you will be able to watch them later if you missed a lesson or want to go on the subjects again.

Courses

The following are the courses I participated in (about 2:30 hours a week each):

Investment Banking:

It's by far one the most recommended courses at Stern. The lecturer, Professor Murphy, is truly amazing! With decades of experience, he knows how uniquely teach the basics of the financial markets, using real examples and humor. I would recommend this course even for students who don't come from a financial field or interested going this way - the things you will learn are not that complicated and knowing them for general knowledge is important too. As one of the most wanted courses it takes place in one of the biggest halls, with about 150 students next to you, but don't worry - you always have time to ask questions if you didn't understand something. This course is videotaped, so if you miss a lecture or want to watch one of the lectures again you can easily do it using your laptop. There are some articles you will need to read before each lecture, but no homework or projects, just 2 exams (midterm and final).

Financial Information Systems:

Being honest, I came to this one with some concerns as I don't have any experience with Information Systems and the basic courses I took during my BA weren't easy for me. Having said that, even though the course is under the "Information Systems" section - it's truly a financial course and you won't need any previous Information Systems knowledge. Combining this one with the Investment banking course would give you a great understanding of today's financial markets and how they actually work "behind the scenes". You will learn many subjects, but won't have to deal with projects or homework. There will be 3 exams, one every 4 weeks, 50% multiple questions and 50% short interview questions. Be aware that the professor expects everyone to contribute to the discussions, so don't be surprised if he will ask for your opinion even if you didn't raise your hand.

Managing Growing Companies:

This course is unusual comparing to the format we are familiar with at Reanati. You won't really "learn" new subjects each week. What do I mean by that? You will have to read a case study before each lecture and analyze it. Later, during the lecture, the professor will analyze it his way and show you the right way to do so. The cases are really interesting and you'll learn a lot from them, but after 5-6 weeks I found it a bit boring reading and analyzing case

after case, so I can't say I really enjoyed this course. There are 2 case analyzes for submission.

Programming in Python:

For many years I have wanted to learn how to program, so finding this course at Stern was a nice surprise. It starts with the basics, so you don't need any previous knowledge (although it would be very helpful), and goes forward very fast. Do your homework otherwise you'll stay behind. The main goal of the course is the project you will need to present at the end of the semester (groups of 3-4), and you will have a weekly assignment and a midterm exam. Take it only if you are willing to spend 3-4 hours a week working on your homework and 1-2 weeks working on your project. It's a great opportunity for students who want to try and learn programming for beginners.

Housing

As I stayed most of the time with family relatives who live here, I can't really give you helpful tips. Just take into account that NYC is one of the most expensive cities out there, and from what I understood - 1,200\$ for a room in a roommate's apartment considered as a normal cost. If you think finding an apartment in Tel Aviv is a nightmare, NYC can easily compete with it, as most owners aren't thrilled to sign a 4 month contract. Therefore, try to find a long sublet or even 2-3 sublets (1-2 months each) - it might be easier and to find and slightly cheaper. Regarding dorms - as far as I know, students in our program unauthorized to apply for it.

Public Transportation

One word, or actually two - 'walk' and 'subway'.

NYC is one of those cities that walking around for hours is actually fun, so if the weather is nice - don't be lazy and walk even 30 blocks. When you need to get to further locations you can always use the subway system (2.75\$ per ride), it would take you anywhere you want.

Cost of living

As I mentioned before, staying with my family saved me a huge amount of money, but generally speaking - NYC is expensive! Even grabbing a lunch in one of the many fast food chains would cost you at least 9-10\$. The supermarkets aren't cheap either.

Visa

I'm an American citizen so didn't have to use any visa, but usually you will come here using a student visa. For more details, please see other students' summaries.

General experience

ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY.

I have learned so much during my semester there, met people from all over the world and had the opportunity to study in one of the best universities worldwide without paying 50,000\$ per year (yes, that the tuition there). It's not easy or always possible to take a 4 month "pause", leave your home/job and study away from home not in your native language, but trust me (and I believe everyone will agree with on this one) - DO IT! It's so different from studying in Israel that I can't even start to explain, only by experiencing it by yourself you will understand. This opportunity it's a huge privilege that only a few universities around the world offer to their students, so why won't you enjoy it?

Some final tips

- Difficulty level - there is no doubt that you will need to spend many hours on a weekly basis, much more than we are used to here, in order to complete all the assignments (exams, presentations, projects, readings, cases). However, at least for me, the level of the assignments was the same as in TAU or even a bit easier. Don't be afraid of the exams, the focus here is mostly on the projects.
- Cold calls - some professors love to "cold call" students who don't participate and ask them for their opinion on the subject, so be sure you've read all the readings before each lecture (unless you want to embarrass yourself...)
- Attendance - none of my professors checked attendance. I missed some lectures and later watched them online (many courses are videotaped).
- Books and course packets - most of the courses here have their readings and cases sold separately and you will be asked to buy those books/course packets. They are not cheap (I spent a total of 230\$).
- English level - NYU is a "pro international students", so don't feel insecure if you don't speak English perfectly. Many students are foreigners and you won't feel different than any other student next to you. Regarding the exams, no one will fail you because you made a grammar or a spelling mistake.
- Student discounts - some businesses around the city give some discounts for students, don't be shy to ask them. You can also buy cheaper Broadway and Movie tickets using the university website.

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