



My Exchange Evaluation – Sahitya Anand

Basic Information

<i>Host University</i>	Duke University – The Fuqua School of Business
<i>Semester & Year of Exchange</i>	Fall semester & 2022
<i>Otago degree(s)</i>	Master of Business Administration
<i>Major(s)</i>	N/A

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

<i>Course title</i>	<i>Language of instruction</i>	<i>Otago equivalent</i>
Strategy Implementation	English	
Operations Strategy	English	
Women in Leadership	English	
Ethics in Management	English	
Entrepreneurial Strategy	English	

Total Otago credits gained: ☐ 54 points ☐ 72 points ☐ 108 points ☒ 60

Any comments about these papers?

My focus was around strategy and leadership. I chose courses in these areas. The teaching format was case-based and the professors were beyond excellent. One of the professors, Professor John de Figueiredo is amongst the best 20 in the country. He has worked with Michael Porter and his new models is speculated to be the next 5 forces. It was a privilege to be taught by Professor John de Figueiredo and Professor Ashish Arora.

How did the academic experience/ workload/ style of teaching differ from Otago?

The workload every term felt like a true MBA workload. There were assignments, exams, compulsory readings, pre-surveys etc. for each course.

At Fuqua my cohort mates were not only high achievers but also experienced and very diverse in terms of industry, roles they've held and culture they come from which built on my curiosity and exposed me to different perspectives and alternate approaches. I am beyond grateful to the 100+ Second Year students at the Fuqua Business School that adopted me as their own and help me integrate with them seamlessly.

Accommodation

What accommodation did you stay in? What were the pros and cons of your accommodation?

The Blue Light Living, Durham, North Carolina.

Pros: Excellent amenities and central location to everything. I loved being so close to 9th street and Station Nine/ Berkshire Nine where the MBA students live. They had a free shuttle service to the university and shopping centres.

Cons: Exorbitant rent and flaky management.

Money matters

Please detail your basic costs, e.g. accommodation, flights, visa, food, insurance

Accommodation: USD 7500 for 4 months

Flights: NZD 3000

Visa: NZD 360

Insurance: NZD 730 for Outbound Student Safe insurance

Duke and Fuqua Fees: USD 3000

Food: I spent a lot on food and drinks. I am not a good benchmark so I will refrain from providing these details.

What means did you use to access your finances? What would you recommend? (Credit card, Cash passport, foreign bank account, etc.)

I stuck to my ANZ platinum credit card but I would recommend opening an American Bank account so that you can use apps like Venmo and Zelle to pay a business or someone. These apps are extensively used within the university. Most transactions are cashless just like in NZ. I didn't feel the need to carry cash on me.

Visas & Insurance

Did you have to apply for a visa? What was the process?

Yes, J1. The application form is extensive and the process long. I struggled to secure an appointment for the interview with the U.S Embassy and when I did, it was last minute. You will have to travel to Auckland for the interview.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes, they have a mandatory Duke Student Health Insurance plan (Blue Cross Blue Shield) of USD1220 for 4 months that is part of the Duke fees.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

What organised activities were available to students? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future exchange students?

There are so many events, workshops, activities organised at Fuqua on a daily. They range from academic to well-being to fun. I would recommend doing everything and anything you can get to.

They have a Fuqua Friday event every Friday with free food and beer. There is a Fuqua Vision event every term which is a show full of skits on Fuqua students by Fuqua students. They have a speaker series with renowned people having discussions with students.

There is honestly so much going on. I highly recommend getting on their Slack for announcements and to stay posted on all happenings at Fuqua.

What was the university/ city like?

Duke University is just splendid. The campus is elaborate with Hogwarts feels all through. There are so many schools on the campus to visit and absorb the uniqueness of each of them– Pratt engineering, Fuqua school of Business, Duke School of Law etc. The Duke chapel is the Eiffel Tower of Duke campus. I absolutely fell in love with the campus. There is so much to see and do.

There is a multi-storey food hall open to all students. Great place to get food and study within its beautiful halls.

Duke University is big on basketball. Catch a basketball game or football game, it is an experience.

Durham is okay. There isn't much to write about it. It is difficult to get to places without a car. If you live close to 9th street, you are good for daily needs like supermarket, food etc. The closest mall is 20 minutes by Uber and costs USD 40.

Any recommendations for things to do, places to visit, places to eat etc.?

A lot of spots on 9th street and downtown. You can ask full-time students for recommendations.

A few recommendations for food and drinks that I've tried and liked are below,

Killer Queen
Bar Virgile
Dram and Draught
Dame's chicken & waffles
Devil's NY Pizzeria & Restaurant
Happy+Hale
Monuts
Elmo's diner
Lime and Lemon Indian
Local 22 kitchen & bar
Cocoa Cinnamon for coffee

I travelled extensively while on exchange and so did other exchange students to various destinations. I went to Colombia (the country), Miami , Outerbanks, Asheville , Eno river etc. So much to do if you can get out of Durham. Second year MBA students from Fuqua travel a lot. They organise various "treks". Try to get on them if you can afford them. I absolutely loved travelling with the second years and will be travelling with them after we graduate also.

Any tips for future students?

All Fuqua students believe in a “Team Fuqua” culture and they are always helpful, put this to good use. Make a conscious decision everyday to get out of your comfort zone and put yourself out there to build a network.

Get on their slack channel and read your emails from Duke/Fuqua/Student organisations - all of them. This is where you will find your next event, next opportunity, next friend, next life lesson.

Overall Experience

Please write one paragraph (or more) about your exchange experience. Please include some photos!

If you get an opportunity to do an exchange at The Fuqua School of Business, take it. There is nothing like it and it'll change your world for the better. The connections you will make and the teachings you will be exposed to are beyond imaginable and they will carry you for years to come.

I was asked to do another semester of studies by a few of the second-year MBA students. I would've jumped at the idea if I didn't have to return to NZ to start a new job. I'm considering going back for their graduation in May if stars align.

I will happily do promotions for the exchange office, if required, to get more MBA candidates on Duke University exchange.