



Duke Fuqua Adcom Live Chat Transcript Sept 13, 2019



Adcom Members:

- Meghan Pollard, Sr. Associate Director of Admissions
 - Lauren Sutherland, Associate Director of Admissions
 - Morgan Griffin, Assistant Director of Admissions
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- Fuqua Class of 2022 Discussion: <https://gmatclub.com/forum/calling-all-duke-fuqua-mba-applicants-2020-intake-class-of-297275.html>
 - Fuqua Decision Tracker: <http://gmatclub.com/forum/fuqua-193/decision-tracker.html>
 - Fuqua Reviews: https://gmatclub.com/reviews/business_school/duke-fuqua-13
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Moderator: Hello everyone! Thanks for joining us today for this chat session with the Fuqua admissions team. Welcome, Meghan, Lauren, and Morgan in the chat session.

Shilpaanjali: Do you have specific electives for someone who wants to transition to the media and entertainment industry? And do you conduct any study treks to NYC or such to meet with industry executives? And what other resources do you provide?

Lauren: Yes! Our electives vary a bit year to year, but our Media, Entertainment and Sports club helps organize a trek every year to a location chosen by students to help students get exposure to companies, alumni, and to prep for the recruiting process. That location has been NYC and LA in the past, but is dependent on where students want to go!

Okyere0903: Is the MBA curriculum aligned with tech industry and what electives do I have to select in order to be able to transition into the tech industry?

Morgan: We just recently made changes to our curriculum to keep up with the demand for tech related jobs and prepare students for those careers. You can read about those changes here: [https://www.fuqua.duke.edu/duke-fuqua-i ... nouncement](https://www.fuqua.duke.edu/duke-fuqua-i...nouncement)

AmirMahdi: How frequently do you receive applications from the middle east, to be specific from Iran, and I wonder if the competition in this region is as fierce as it is in India? could someone say that the chances are higher for an applicant from Iran to be selected since there are fewer applicant from there?

Lauren: geographic locations that we receive applications from vary year to year, but certainly the Middle East is less represented in the applicant pool than countries with larger populations seeking an MBA, such as India, China, and the US. Our selectivity is ~22-23% each year, and no matter where you are from, we are looking for holistically strong candidates.

MariaAntony: Hello team Fuqua, I have been getting mixed responses on including random things related to career (professional) in the 25 random things essay. One Consultant claims that she heard directly from the admissions team that it dislikes work oriented points, while another says to keep a good number (say 6 - 8) for career oriented points. Could you please advise on this?

Morgan: We really want your 25 things to be about you. We will have seen your work experience and resume, so we do not want a rehash of that. I would look at work things in the 25 things as what has been impactful in your life or something you are proud of. If you have already included it in your resume or work experience, I would not include it in the 25 random things. That essay is meant for us to get to know you as a person. For example, what are you passionate about, what is your favorite thing and why, etc.

bglade: Who can I talk to, or where can I find more information about the RPCV Community at Duke Fuqua?

Lauren: Great question, and thank you for your work in the Peace Corps! The best way to get in touch with other RPCVs at Fuqua would be through our student ambassador profiles online- even if the ambassadors are not RPCVs, they would know which of their classmates were. You could also reach out to Net Impact, our student organization associated with the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship.

Raspberrysoda: Hi Morgan! Was a pleasure meeting you at the QS MBA Fair in New Delhi. I'll be applying in the ED round. Is it okay if my recommenders submit their LoRs 2-3 days after the deadline? Will I still be considered in the ED round?

Morgan: We do provide a short grace period following the round deadline to help with getting letters in within a few days..

Alohomora: I know that Fuqua is one of the best out there for a path in Healthcare/Life Sciences, but what really makes it so apart from the curriculum offerings?

Morgan: We also have our healthcare sector management program which allows students to dive deep into business healthcare issues. We also have our big healthcare conference on campus which brings industry experts and researchers to campus.

Thibo1414: Regarding the two recommenders required. Is there a penalties to only have one? Or is it better to have a non-supervisor recommender if we can't have a second person who has managed us.

Lauren: You have to have two recommendations submitted in order for your application to be complete and reviewed at Fuqua. You can't only submit one. We prefer if a current supervisor can submit one of them, but know that's not always possible, so make sure that at least one of your recommenders has supervised you in some capacity. If you don't have two supervisors that you can use, consider a partner, client, or possibly a team member to submit the other on your behalf. Just make sure they can speak to your teamwork and leadership skills!

SanjuB: Do you have STEM courses as part of the MBA curriculum?

Morgan: We have an MStEM track where you can take STEM courses and graduate with a STEM focus which grants two years of additional work authorization. You can take some stem courses and but you unless you complete all the requirements for the MStEM track, you will not get the additional work authorization.

ankitbansal557: Good Morning Team Fuqua Team. As one of the core values of Fuqua is Supportive Ambition. Do the professors are supportive too towards students? and do they like to work with MBA grads as much they like to work with PhD Students?

Lauren: Our professors are very responsive to students! With the term structure at Fuqua (6 week terms for classes), professors are able to fully focus on teaching when they're teaching, and fully focus on research when they aren't- which means they are very accessible to MBA students.

blowice27: How is north Carolina as place to study and live

Lauren: We think it's a huge advantage to your MBA program! Our biggest alumni bases are in NYC and San Francisco, so grads do not have to stay in North Carolina after graduation, but for the time that you're here, you and your classmates will be fully invested in the Duke MBA--most students do not have existing networks in NC, so they are exploring a new area along with their classmates (unlike programs located in places like NYC, Boston, Chicago, etc.) There is so much to do here outside of the classroom too! Downtown Durham is very vibrant, with a great restaurant scene and lots of cultural experiences, and we're just 2 hours from the beach and 2 hours from the mountains if you're looking for a weekend getaway!

Businessconquerer: What is unique about Duke that sets Duke students apart from all the other people?

Lauren: Our students have a real desire to use business for good, not just to improve the bottom line. Fuqua students are really happy people- which is a surprising differentiating factor for MBA programs--but is important to know what type of student you'll be around for your 2 years at Duke, and what type of alumni community you'll be in!

Ankitprad: What are the other factors (other than GMAT scores) that are taken into account. Does someone with just lots of experience and a good GMAT score and no community service stand a chance?

Meghan: Each component is important to us and we take a holistic approach. One part of the application is not more important than the other. We would like to see some type of extracurricular from your undergraduate institution and/or post graduation though not required.

sn198: Could you briefly talk about what you look for when you review applications and about potential mistakes that applicants could avoid?

Lauren: we look for well rounded applicants who demonstrate a true desire to be a Fuqua student. Be sure your genuine voice shows through in your application, and that you've done your research about Fuqua before hitting submit on your application!

Gonner: I have my GMAT on the 7th of Oct and the deadline is oct 14th. will my application be considered for R1 without an official score, It takes 7-10 days for GMAC to give the official score.

Morgan: You only need to submit an unofficial test score in! If admitted, you will need to submit your official test scores.

Lekoben: Are there opportunities to do graduate assistantships while at Fuqua? For example maybe working part-time for one of the athletic teams while going through the program?

Meghan: You do have opportunities to TA while at Fuqua or through different departments such as admissions. There could be an opportunity with Duke athletics. Please note that you will be very busy with classes and team based projects so you will have to manage your time accordingly.

Blowice27: Any preferences between R1 and R2 for acceptance and scholarships

Morgan: We award scholarships in all rounds of admission. Since your application serves as your application for merit-based scholarship, it is best to apply when your application is the strongest.

Amirmahdi: How about the background and experience. As an example, take someone who's been in Marketing for 8 years and now wants to move to Finance. How do you see such applicants? Does it negatively affect his/her application?

Lauren: We welcome career changers at Duke! As long as you explain why you want to use the MBA to make a career change, and you provide examples of things that you'll be involved with to help you make that leap (i.e., professional clubs, FCCP projects in your desired industry, etc.), we trust that with your research, the Fuqua curriculum, and the Career Management Center, you can make that happen! Be clear in your second essay about how you will contribute at Fuqua and what you'll be involved with to help us understand how you'll use the resources here to grow.

SyedMurtazaNYC: Can we include more than one discussion (unrelated) in the optional essay?

Meghan: The optional essay should only be used to explain something in your application that needs more clarification such as gaps in work experience, trends in GPA, etc.

Businessconquerer: Many people have been saying different things on different platforms. Is the early action deadline binding?

Meghan: Early Action is absolutely binding.

Alohomora: When you mention "merit-based scholarships", does it solely refer to Undergraduate GPA/GMAT or is it referring to the candidate as a whole?

Meghan: Merit based scholarships are awarded with a holistic approach to the application. Each area of your application is weighted and not one factor qualifies for a merit based scholarship

karthik2209: Lauren, some elementary questions here Question 1) Whether articleship (3 years practical training as part of curriculum of Chartered Accountancy in India) is considered part of work experience (if done after graduation)? Question 2) Do you encourage or suggest any online courses to be completed for MBA Finance applicants before applying?

Lauren: We consider all post-graduate work experience, so the articleship would absolutely count towards your work experience! If you have an accounting or finance background already, you probably do not need to supplement your application with additional coursework. If you haven't had any quantitative classes in your background, that's when the AdCom would like to see some supplemental coursework.

Businessconquerer: Is there an option for need based scholarship at Fuqua

Meghan: We only offer merit based scholarships and not need based scholarships. We do offer financial aid to all of our students.

SyedMurtazaNYC: What is the general reception towards recommendations coming from relationships < 1 year. (New job etc). What are the main things that you look for in recommendations and their sources?

Morgan: We do not have a preference on how long a recommender has known you. We suggest recommenders who know you best and write a good letter on your behalf. Your recommender should be able to elaborate on your working style, how you work with others, and your accomplishments in your career.

Thibo1414: When living in the US. Is interviewing on campus required (or very strongly encouraged) or is there the option to interview remotely?

Morgan: Unless you live on the west coast, you would have to come to Fuqua in Durham to interview. We are currently hosting Open Interview Period where you can initiate your own interview and not wait for a decision from us. Again though, for that period, no matter where you live, you would need to come to Durham.

Amirmahdi: Is the age above the school's average a negative factor in a resume? like 34!

Meghan: While we publish an average age of 28, we do not make admissions decisions based on age. We look at the quality of your applications.

CavalryRises: Good afternoon! I am interested in applying for MMS, but I don't have a strong undergrad GPA. Do you have any suggestions of particular areas that I could focus on highlighting rather than GPA during my application? Thanks~

Morgan: Just like the MBA program, we look at all components of your application, so things like your leadership and involvement and essays can help you highlight things about your candidacy.

SyedMurtazaNYC: Can you please provide some light background on the open interviews session? After signing up, when do we get more details, who are the interviewers, and recommended things to do in between sessions?

Lauren: If you are coming to campus for an open interview, you will be interviewing with one of our second year students, our Admissions Fellows. The interviewers are assigned randomly, and the only information they have about you is the resume you submit. We encourage you to sign up for other activities during your campus visit, like a class visit and tour, and in between sessions, you can hang out in the admissions lounge and chat with current students. We look forward to seeing you on campus soon!

Lekoben: Do you take into consideration full-time work experience during an undergraduate degree? Maybe not in your statistics, but if someone was working a full-time engineering job for example while doing their degree part-time, would this be evaluated as work experience?

Meghan: We consider full time work experience as being post graduation. However, you may share that you worked full time during undergraduate in your optional essay.

Wrenw: 1) when you say quant scores carry heavier weight than verbal, what do you consider a strong quant score and 2) how would you grade Fuqua's social impact consulting network?

Lauren: We actually consider your best OVERALL test score, rather than focusing on the individual sections. We like to see quant readiness in your test scores, but accept a wide range of subscores. Fuqua has a strong focus on social impact, and have grads every year going into social impact/non profit consulting. There are dedicated resources in the Career Management Center to help you reach that career goal.

Businessconquerer: What are the several countries that Duke takes us for global immersion?

Morgan: We have our Global Academic Travel Experience change each year and is based on where student team leaders select. Some of those regions include Southeast Asia and Latin America

blowice27: Does duke have blind interviews?

Meghan: Yes, your interview will be blind.

vijaytr1911: Can you give some guidance on how to best use the 2 pages for the essay on engagement outside classroom? It just seems like 2 pages is a lot so I want to know what you want to hear. Do you want to hear a detailed description of my past experiences that will help me better contribute to the Fuqua community? Or do you want to know specifically how I will contribute to the Fuqua community?

Morgan: We really want to see how to plan to make an impact. This is a great place to show any research you have done on Fuqua and connect your career goals to the impact you would bring to the classroom. You will be surprised at how quickly you can fill the two pages. You can certainly tie in your past experiences to how you would contribute.

BL1993: Does the adcom see from the scorecard that I upload how many times i have taken the gmat? I mean, when i send the scores through GMAC, they will only report the scores I accepted. But in the test-taker's copy , all attempts are mentioned, including cancelled attempts (score for cancelled attempts in not mentioned)

Lauren: GMAC recently changed how the score reports look when you send them to schools (within the last year), and we can no longer see the number of attempts that you have made. At Fuqua, we look really favorably upon students taking the test multiple times, so please indicate that on your application! It shows grit and perseverance, which means a great deal to the AdCom.

Mag07: Is 16 year education compulsory while applying ?If no, are the non-engineering students(3 year degree holders like Bachelor's in Science, Bachelor's in Business Administration etc.) from India given any preference ? Thanks in advance

Morgan: There is no preference and we do accept some three year degrees from India.

sudhanshubanty: Does too many changes in job while showing work experience count as negative factor

Meghan: It will be important to explain the nature and rationale for your job changes so that the Admissions Committee may understand the context of your career choices.

SyedMurtazaNYC: I am eager to find out more about Net Impact Club and the B&L Org, I have reached out to few ambassadors but havent had a response. Who is the best person to contact?

Lauren: Our second year students just got back to campus a week ago, so I imagine they'll be more responsive now! Feel free to reach out to them again, and be on the lookout for our new student ambassador profiles to go live on the website soon (google "fuqua student ambassadors")!

KK01: Does Duke have an Entrepreneurship Center & classes? If so, could you please describe some of the resources available.

Lauren: Our class offerings vary a bit every year, but things like our Program for Entrepreneurs (P4E) are offered every year! There's also an Entrepreneurship and Venture Capital Club (EVCC) that puts on programming for students interested in the field. Completing a mentored study with a local entrepreneur is a great way to supplement your academic career at Fuqua.

gmatenthureturns: My question is, in the reapplicant essay, what exactly are you looking in self-reflection piece of GPS, especially since we don't receive any feedback on our previous application? Also, is it okay to discuss GMAT in reapplication essay as in no of attempts, hitting a score plateau etc?

Meghan: Happy to answer. We are looking to see where you have reflected and improved upon in your application. This could be taking on additional roles at work, promotions, extra activities, etc. in the re-applicant essay.

sudhanshubanty: Does work experience in MNC'S count more than the work experience with other companies say from local companies

Lauren: We want to see upward progression and management experience in your work history, regardless of what type of company it is. If it's not an MNC, be sure to explain what the industry is and give a little context for the company throughout your application (resume or work experience).

feinotto: Hi again. Talking about partners, how is the Fuqua environment and program for them?

Meghan: Partners are an integral part of our Team Fuqua community. They even have their own section (Section 7)! The Fuqua Partners Club is part of our MBA Association and are very active at Fuqua.

Ordenador: I'd like to know if you consider entrepreneurs but who have not been successful in their endeavour (for various reasons? How does this factor play out in the overall application consideration?

Lauren: We love to see an entrepreneurial spirit, and know it doesn't always result in full time work. Just be clear on your reason for leaving in the work experience, and consider using the optional statement to give more context to your work history.

— — — — — Questions Received via Email — — — — —

Q#1: What is the approximate word limit one should be looking at for the last long essay on contribution one can make to the Fuqua community?

Morgan: We ask people to keep it to two pages. There is only a word limit on the short answer questions.

Q#2: I know that an MBA is on the horizon, but am having a hard time discerning if it makes sense for myself in 2, 3, or even 4 years out. What signs should I be looking for in my current career to determine when I should pull the trigger on getting an MBA?

Morgan: When you feel like you have reached a plateau or you are at a point where you can take two years off. There is no set time of when it is the right time, it is truly up to when a candidate feels they are ready.

Q#3: Is it better to finish applications in time for Round 2? Or take the time to improve factors (mainly GMAT), even if it takes time until Round 3?

Morgan: We encourage all international applicants to apply by Round 2 so they have enough time to complete any paperwork. When it comes to deciding which round to apply in, we want you to put forth your best and strongest application when you are ready. If that means waiting till Round 3, that is fine.

Moderator: We are down to the last 2 mins guys. We won't be accepting new questions now. This has been an excellent session. I am sure this will go a long way in helping candidates put their best foot forward.

Nightblade354: Agreed. Duke blue always comes through

Lauren: Thank you all for joining us today! Don't forget our upcoming deadlines, Early Action on September 19 (our binding round) and Round 1 deadline on October 14. We hope to see your applications soon!

Meghan: Go Duke and Go Team Fuqua!!!

Morgan: Thank you everyone! We enjoyed chatting with you today!
