

UNC Team Members:

- Danielle Richie, Sr. Associate Director of MBA Admissions & Student Recruitment
 - Bryan Davis, Current UNC MBA Student (Class of 2020)
 - UNC Class of 2022 Discussion: <https://gmatclub.com/forum/calling-unc-kenan-flagler-mba-applicants-class-of-301298.html>
 - UNC Decision Tracker: <https://gmatclub.com/forum/kenan-flagler-206/decision-tracker.html>
 - UNC Reviews: https://gmatclub.com/reviews/business_school/unc-kenan-flagler-20
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Moderator: Welcome Everyone! Today we have Danielle Richie (Sr. Associate Director of Admissions) and Bryan Davis (MBA Candidate, UNC Kenan Flagler) to chat with us. For the next one hour Danielle and Bryan will be answering our questions about UNC's MBA program, applications, etc.

Danielle: Thank you all for joining the UNC Kenan-Flagler GMATClub Forum. My name is Danielle Richie and I oversee the full-time MBA admissions & student recruitment at Kenan-Flagler Business School. We are excited to be here today to share information about the full-time MBA program in addition to answering your questions.

Bryan: Hi all! My name is Bryan Davis and I'm a second year MBA candidate at UNC Kenan-Flagler. Prior to b-school I was a health and benefits consultant with Willis Towers Watson. Last summer I interned at Deloitte Consulting as an S&O Summer Associate, and will be returning to Deloitte full-time after graduation.

Danielle: The practical business skills and knowledge you'll acquire with an MBA make it one of the most powerful graduate degrees you can pursue. Throughout this chat, Bryan and I will provide details about the UNC program.

We offer a portfolio of MBA programs for candidates to choose from. The difference is the format of learning. At Kenan-Flagler, we offer the 2 year full-time MBA program on campus and 3 working professional format: part-time, online MBA@UNC in addition to Evening or Weekend MBA. Today, we will focus on the full-time MBA.

Danielle: Bryan, what made you decide to pursue your MBA?

Bryan: I decided to pursue my MBA a few years back primarily because my level of influence on organizations stopped at the human capital and employee benefits (insurance) level, and I wanted to be in the position to effect positive change at organizations on a larger scale. An MBA would both prepare me and put me in the position towards making a greater impact.

Danielle: How would you describe your first year experience, Bryan?

Bryan: My first year here was amazing. Chapel Hill is an incredible place to spend two years. I showed up in early July for the Analytical Skills Workshop, which really prepared me to excel in my classes. Being at Kenan-Flagler is like joining a business accelerator program but for your personal brand. It's extremely intense and extremely transformative. What I loved and benefitted most from my first year experience was how deeply involved the second years were in my success. They know what it's like to "balance" everything 1st year has to offer, and they wouldn't have been successful had it not been for the class ahead of them. It creates an intense culture of giving back.

Danielle: Great feedback. How did you balance your time between family, school, and your internship search along with student activities?

Bryan: You have to be extremely organized and have your priorities in order. As one of the students with a family, time management was crucial. I live by the philosophy of "every yes has a no". There are going to be things that you miss out on because you simply can't do it all. You have to get over your fear of missing out quickly, and just enjoy what you do choose to take part in.

For me, I treated my first year like a job. From 7 am – 5 pm I was dedicated to school and recruiting activities. I'd then go home and spend time with my family, and pick back up on school/recruiting/social activities afterwards. There were busier and slower weeks just like with any job. Looking back, it wasn't all that different from how demanding some of my past jobs were. And that's coming from someone who recruited for consulting along with multiple other career paths.

Danielle: Good advice. Time management is critical as an MBA.

Satya2029: How strong is the energy club there in UNC? Do companies take the same interest as they take on other candidates who have other concentrations in their domains?

Danielle: Kenan-Flagler has one of the only Energy MBAs with a curriculum focused on the entire energy value chain – from oil and gas to power to renewables. Additionally, our Energy faculty are industry practitioners, which means significant access to recruiting opportunities. The student-run Energy Club works closely with the academic faculty, career management staff, and other student leadership groups to organize educational events and conferences, case competitions, and career treks to provide students with experiential learning and networking opportunities with industry. You can learn more here: <https://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/progr...es/energy/>

Danielle: Bryan, you mentioned you are going back to Deloitte. Do you want to provide some details on the job search and recruiting?

Bryan: Yes absolutely. I casted a wide net by recruiting for consulting, healthcare, and internal strategy roles. The recruitment process is very comprehensive. As a first year, you lean on the career clubs, which are led by a full-time career coach and the second year students.

Vedang09: Hi Bryan. Thanks for taking time out along with Danielle. Would you share your best experience so far in UNC? The one thing that has stood out so far for you? And how has the UNC experience been compared to what you had expected when you first joined?

Bryan: Best experience was the career trek during fall break (happening right now for 1st years). I went to Atlanta and met with a number of consulting firms. It was a great opportunity to get away from the classroom environment, focus on recruiting, and make memorable experiences with other 1ys. The UNC experience has exceeded expectations. I visited twice prior to applying, and what was most attractive to me was how willing current students were to lend a helping hand. That culture has checked out along the way.

Vedang09: What sets UNC apart from some other similarly ranked colleges?

Bryan: There are many things, but one that comes to mind is strength of alumni. I was admitted and had to choose between UNC and other similarly ranked schools. I felt that the culture of the school as live out by the massive alumni base was a significant advantage, which proved true through the recruiting process.

skyisalover: I know UNC has a Dual degree program pharmD/MBA. I thought about applying this summer and didn't do that well on the GMAT. I know a lot of people went with GRE instead of GMAT. Do yall weigh the tests the same or different.

Danielle: The most common question I get is, should I take the GMAT or GRE? Honestly, it is up to you! At Kenan-Flagler, we do not weigh one test score over the other.

Lucy14: I would be interested in knowing whether UNC is looking at building more recruiting opportunities both within other areas in the US as well as internationally. Looking at the statistics page on MBA employments - most people end up in the south and in technology or financial services. Is this a current priority? If not - what are the current initiatives at UNC?

Danielle: Yes, we are continuing to attract top companies and as the industry changes, so does our strategic plan. We have over 125 companies who visit campus during on-campus recruiting season in addition to the variety of companies who recruit off campus. This past year, technology was a % higher than finance.

Bryan: Lucy14, placement in the Southeast is strong primarily due to self-selection. A lot of students are from the SE, or are from elsewhere and want to stay here after graduation. In my experience, I haven't seen anyone have trouble getting to whatever geographic area they are targeting. Personally, I'm from Texas, interned in Dallas, but will be returning to Denver. A lot of flexibility and choice goes into the placement statistics.

Lucy14: I would also be interested in knowing what are Bryan's favourite classes at UNC and what he has learned? Who were the most influential professors?

Bryan: Other than the ones mentioned above, some of my other favorites were Managing the Professional Services Firm, Data Analytics and Decision Making, Strategic Innovation, and Managerial Accounting. What have I learned? Goodness, that could be a separate hour long chat, ha. I'd say the overarching theme is that I've learned how to have a more holistic view of a business and its challenges, and now have the tools to go about tackling those challenges. Influential professors = Mark Lang (Accounting) is up there. He is a phenomenal professor.

Danielle: In addition to that, our students also benefit from companies visiting campus during Executive lectures and Dean Speaker series. Last week we had David Taylor, CEO of P&G on campus. The week prior, we had the Net Impact Conference featuring one of Ben & Jerry co-founders, Jerry Greenfield.

SageJiraiya: I have heard that ad-com checks the social media accounts of candidates, specially LinkedIn. How would you view a candidate who doesn't have a LinkedIn profile or has recently created one? Is that a red flag for the applicant?

Danielle: That is one of the myths of admissions. We simply don't have a lot of time to go through all of the social media accounts of our applicants. However, once you become an MBA student, I would recommend a LinkedIn account.

swikrityC: I have gone through resumes and career trajectories of many MBA applicants, but I very rarely see people from creative backgrounds such as Content Lead, Content Strategist, and Social Media Marketer applying to B-schools. If you can please tell me whether professionals from this niche background stand a chance at UNC, especially when the adcoms know that employers would face a hard time to argue why they would need an international person versus an American in a creative job where communication is the core responsibility?

Danielle: Great question! We understand that applicants are looking to make changes to their career. 54% of our incoming class this year came from non-business backgrounds. The admissions committee will look for transferable skills if you are looking to change OR look at what skills you have that will continue to enhance within the MBA program and post MBA career goals.

satya2029: More often than not we hear that age is one of the deciding factors when it come down to selecting applicants. Do adcoms follow the age factor strictly? How does UNC set itself apart from other B schools when it comes to encourage applicants who are above 30?

Danielle: We are looking at length of experience. On average, our candidates have around 5.5 years of work experience for the full-time MBA program. For our evening and weekend MBA formats, the average amount of work experience is 10 years and the age range is higher.

For the full-time MBA program, if you have more than 10 years of experience then the admissions committee evaluates the work experience you have and what company recruiters are looking for. Typically corporate recruiters are looking to fill mid-level management positions which might put candidates out of range based on years of work experience, not age.

sastry1: Do professional certificates such as PMP, 6sigma BB, AI & ML, etc add any value to the application?

Danielle: It certainly helps the application and wouldn't hurt it. We will take professional certificates into consideration but it will not be counted towards overall years of work experience or in place of academics.

SageJiraiya: Hi Bryan, I've heard great praises about the collaborative community and culture at UNC. Can you share your experience? One of the student ambassadors told me how his classmates who were competing for the same internships helped him with his interviews. Is this a common occurrence at UNC? Also how would you rate Chapel Hill.

Bryan: Iron sharpens iron. There is a common belief on campus that if you prepare for classes and interviews in solidarity, you're not going to do nearly as well as your classmates who prepare with each other. We all help each other, as we're not competing with each other, but with other schools for internship and full-time slots.

I love Chapel Hill. The weather is great, there are diverse dining options, and there is so much nature around! When we went "home" to Dallas over the summer for my internship, my kids complained the whole time because they wanted to be back here at UNC. Also I'm a huge fan of the college basketball culture here.

SageJiraiya: It's great to know that this is the mindset of people there! College towns are very fascinating to me, it's great to know that your kids love it there! Thanks for your response.

Email Question 1: What aspects of the application are given most weight when it comes to offering full financial aid/scholarships? Will candidates with low undergraduate GPAs be eligible for such scholarships if they have subsequently earned a Masters degree with a strong GPA?

Danielle: When applying for admission, all applicants are considered for merit-based fellowships and do not need to submit a separate application. The admissions committee will look at all of your credentials and award accordingly. If you have a MS degree which has a higher GPA, that will be taken into consideration.

Email Question 2: I read in one of the student reviews that UNC director of MBA has frequently changed over the last few years? Is it true and if so, is it something we should be concerned about?

Danielle: UNC Director of MBA - we have a variety of directors that oversee different business units such as the MBA program, admissions, career & leadership, etc. I do not think there should be any concern when there is transition. Kenan-Flagler has been a Top 20 MBA program and what remains consistent is to continue providing service to our students. We want to set our students up for success in the classroom, during the internship and job search as well with experiential opportunities.

Moderator: Any word on interview invitation timelines of EA and R1 rounds?

Danielle: Our early action deadline just closed on Monday. We are evaluating applications and should be sending out interview invites by end of next week.

vedang09: You have discusses applicants with 10+ years work experience. What about applicants with 2.5-3 years work ex and hence limited leadership experience?

Danielle: We require at least 2 years of work experience for the full-time MBA program. For our working professional programs, 10 years is just the average.

It is important to note that schools provide just averages for the class. We have students with + or - years of work experience, GMAT/GRE scores, etc.

When we focus on job experience, we want resumes that are outcome based. It is not just about the years of work experience but what you have done during the time in your role. Were you promoted? Take on new responsibilities, etc.

Lucy14: Are there any local alumni associations in new york? If so where should i find information on this?

Danielle: Yes! We have a variety of UNC alumni chapters AND Kenan-Flagler chapters. For more information, you can visit [http://www.unckenan-flagler.org/s/1723/ ... tbuilder=1](http://www.unckenan-flagler.org/s/1723/...tbuilder=1)

Sastry1: for overseas applicants , is there any dis-advantage applying in the R2 and R3

Danielle: We recommend that all international applicants apply by round 3. Round 4 can be challenging if admitted and the visa wait time.

Satya2029: When do we get to know about scholarships or fellowships? At the of getting the admit or soon after joining the class?

Danielle: When applicants get their admissions decision, they will also recieve their fellowship amount (if awarded)

MBAPrepCoach: Most memorable experience?

Bryan: I'll chime in here Our cohorts are called Legacies, and we participate in the "Legacy Cup" which is a competition between cohorts that goes throughout the year. One of the marquee events is Karaoke. Each legacy prepares two songs. It's held at a local event venue, and nearly everyone attends. The judges are professors and other MBA staff members. It's amazing.

Moderator: DanielleRichie and **Bryan:** Your concluding remarks before we end this chat?

Danielle: Don't rush the application process. Apply when you are ready! and most importantly, don't hesitate to ask questions. We are here to help you. Also, schedule a campus visit (if you can!) As Bryan mentioned, Chapel Hill is beautiful and by visiting, you will get to experience the "Carolina Way"

If you have additional questions, please feel free to email us! mba_info@unc.edu or visit us online <https://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/>
