



Chat with Tuck Second-Year Students Oct 23, 2019



Tuck Team Members Joined this Session

- Valeria Wiens, Associate Director of Admissions
- Rob Crampton, MBA Candidate, Class of 2020
- Aidai Kozubekova, MBA Candidate, Class of 2020
- Sonovia Wint, MBA Candidate, Class of 2020

- Tuck Class of 2022 (Full Time MBA) Discussion: <https://gmatclub.com/forum/calling-all-tuck-dartmouth-applicants-2020-intake-class-of-295791.html>
 - Tuck Decision Tracker: <https://gmatclub.com/forum/tuck-194/app-tracker.html>
 - Tuck Reviews: https://gmatclub.com/reviews/business_school/tuck-10
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Moderator: Welcome Everyone! Today we have Valeria Wiens (Associate Director of Admissions), and three Tuck second year students - Rob Crampton, Aidai Kozubekova, and Sonovia Wint - to chat with us.

For the next one hour Valeria, Rob, Aidai, and Sonia will be chatting with us and answering our questions about Tuck's MBA program, applications, their experiences etc.

Rob: Hi all, I am Rob Crampton – a second year student at Tuck. Prior to Tuck, I worked at a financial technology company. I came to Tuck to transition into Investment Banking and will be working as an Associate at Bank of America Merrill Lynch upon graduating. I would be happy to answer an industry specific questions or general questions related to my recruiting experience.

Sonovia: Hi everyone! I'm Sonovia and I came to Tuck with a public sector background in federal consulting and nonprofit strategy. At Tuck, I've been involved in Net Impact, Black Students at Tuck (BSAT), Consortium, and Center for Business, Government & Society and this summer I worked at Gates Foundation in Seattle supporting their philanthropic initiatives. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have and look forward to chatting with you all today.

Valeria: Hello everyone! Thank you for joining us today. I'm Valeria, Associate Director, Evaluation. I've been at Tuck for just over 5 years now and lived in Russia, Germany, Spain and Canada prior to moving to the Upper Valley.

Aidai: Hi everybody! My name is Aidai Kozubekova. I am a second-year MBA student at Tuck. I spent my summer at L.E.K. Consulting in Boston and worked on strategy and commercial due-diligence projects in their Life Sciences practice. I am very passionate about healthcare so at Tuck I am a co-chair of the Healthcare Club and Fellow at the Tuck Center for Healthcare. Prior to Tuck, I worked at Eli Lilly in Moscow, Russia and covered strategic and business planning for the area called RIC (Russia, Israel and CIS). Before Eli Lilly I worked at KPMG. Originally, I am from Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. I am studying at Tuck together with my husband – we are both Tuckies so I can talk about how we applied as a couple.

Hi good morning, I had a question on years of work experience. Does the Ad com look at work experience of around 10 years negatively for a full time MBA

Valeria: Every applicant needs to show the same qualities, but how they show them will differ. When thinking about your work experience, think about your impact, your progression, what you have accomplished and who you worked with to accomplish it. Another factor that will be important here is showing awareness (as one of our admissions criteria) - explain why you feel that you need an MBA at this point in your career. We will look at that vs. looking at the actual number of years worked.

Hi Sonovia. Sounds like you've kept busy in all your extracurriculars at Tuck! Are your short-term plans after Tuck to continue to work in nonprofit? Also, did you participate in any initiatives with groups such as Tuck Builds or Tuck Community Consulting?

Sonovia: Great questions! My short term plans are to move into for-profit work specifically consulting to expand my knowledge of different industries with the long-term goal of eventually working with social enterprises. Additionally, I did not do Tuck Builds or Tuck Community Consulting, mostly because I had similar experiences pre-Tuck, but I have several friends who were involved in both and really enjoyed it!

I understand that Tuck looks for smart, accomplished, aware, and nice candidates. How do you evaluate these criteria in the interviews. I want to understand from interviewers point of view, i.e., the second years point of view. What are you asked to look in the candidate in an interview.

Rob: Interviewers look for evidence of the criteria through questions that we ask in the interview. Luke Pena has published a blog that describes these attributes in more detail. I would recommend reading through his comments to get a better understanding of specifically what Tuck looks for in applicants.

How does the admissions officers view career switchers?

Valeria: Many people pursue an MBA because they are looking to make a career shift so a large part of our applicant pool is comprised of career switchers. Focus on telling us why you are looking to switch into a different industry, and be detailed in tying it to your previous experience and motivations.

Can you tell us a little bit about the Center of Digital Strategies and how a student without any background in the subject can benefit from participating in the Center's events?

Sonovia: Sure! The Center for Digital Strategies (CDS) is a great place for students to deep dive into topics at the intersection of business strategy and innovation. The CDS has an associate program for first years that allows students to actively participate in digital business discussions with peers and a fellows program for second years focused on more hands-on learning experiences. I am not personally involved with CDS but students from all backgrounds are encouraged to engage with the center and having a tech background is not a requirement. It's more about cultivating a group of students passionate about the topics the center focuses on.

How flexible is the course at Tuck. For instance, I have finance/ strategy heavy profile, and would want to build up on that through the MBA Is tuck a good fit?

Aidai: I believe that Tuck is going to be great fit for you. The first-year core curriculum is designed to equip you with fundamental knowledge in core areas such as finance, data analysis, strategy, team leadership and personal leadership. After the core curriculum you can select any electives

that are focused on finance and strategy. I took last year a great course called "Structuring Mergers and Acquisitions". This year I am taking an elective called "Investing and Deal-making in Healthcare" and planning to take "Strategy in the Emerging Markets"

Question for students: would you say that it is rare to see practicing engineers at Tuck? By this I mean somebody who has studied engineering and also worked in that field.

Sonovia: No, not at all! I have fellow classmates that were practicing engineers previously. The great thing about the MBA is that many people attend looking to switch careers and so Tuck has many resources built in to support students with varying backgrounds and interests.

Is there an element of Tuck that you would consider underrated and which you would encourage students to explore/utilize?

Rob: I think the most underrated aspect of Tuck is the location. Dartmouth regularly has C-Suite executives on campus to speak in classes or meet faculty on campus. The Visiting Executive Program at Tuck organizes events for these individuals to meet with students in small settings (breakfast, lunch dinner), 1:1 or for larger events. For example, David Rubenstein (founder of Carlyle) was on campus yesterday and spoke publicly to a group of 100 but also set aside time to meet with Tuck students for breakfast. This type of opportunity is unique to Tuck because when these individuals are visiting campuses of business schools in large cities, they tend to visit clients, investors, board members, etc.. instead of business school students.

Question inspired by Aidai's response on coursework: have any of the 2nd years taken any of the electives on Emerging Markets?

Valeria: Great question! It's an exciting new addition to our course offering. I just checked with the room and none of the three T'20s that are on this chat with us today have taken it yet.

Question for Students: How is a typical day of Tuck student?

Rob: Varies considerably by individual. Depending on the recruiting cycle, some time can be sent recruiting (networking calls, interviews, preparing for interviews, etc..). Part of the day is spent in

class or preparing for class. The only portion of the day is entirely up to the students' interests - starting a business, participating in clubs, social events, traveling, enjoying life in the Upper Valley, meeting with professors, etc...

Another question for the 2nd years that consider themselves active: what would you say your 2-3 favourite things to do at Tuck are in terms of keeping fit / exercising at Tuck?

Aidai: I try to keep myself fit by attending Flip Classes at Alumni Gym at Dartmouth. First-year students who stay on campus use gym facilities at Tuck. Also, there are many trails around Tuck so there are always small groups hiking. I can also talk about my husband's experiences. He loves soccer so he is one of the co-captains of the Tuck's Soccer Team. Their team practices at least twice a week. They won Yale MBA cup last year. He is also one of the captains in the Tripod Hockey league, and plays at least 2-3 games per week (and that is a great physical exercise). Tripod Hockey is extremely popular at Tuck (around 80% of the class participates)

How difficult is it to recruit for jobs in Montreal or Toronto from Tuck, and do representatives from companies in those cities visit the school?

Rob: It's not uncommon at all to recruit for positions outside of the United States. There are many alumni at firms in both Montreal and Toronto across all industries and many will come on campus to recruit. What's unique about Tuck is how strong the network is, and how willing these individuals will be to speak to you about career opportunities at their firms.

Hi Valeria, Rob, Adai, Sonovia! First off, thank you all for taking time out of your busy days to chat with us. As it relates to career path flexibility, so to speak, with what frequency do second-year students pivot away from their summer internships rather than pursue / accept full-time offers?

Sonovia: I think it really depends on the student but it's certainly not uncommon for people to change course after an internship when thinking about full-time. The great thing about the MBA is that the internship is a great chance to test your interest in a company/industry before making a commitment. So when you come back for second year, you're able to make a more informed decision about what you want to do post-MBA and employers understand that that happens.

Hi! If we're lucky enough to be admitted to Tuck, what would you recommend we do between our admittance and starting orientation to prepare?

Aidai: The most useful thing to do is to come up with the recruiting plan. I had a list of companies that I was interested in and several recruiting routes. Plan A was healthcare consulting so I reached out to my career development coach and discussed what I should do to be successful in terms of networking, resume, cover letters and case prep. Plan B was Commercial Leadership Programs with biotech/pharma, and I reached out to Tuck alumni who worked at the target companies. I would also recommend to participate in pre-term program before Tuck. They are very useful in way that you are coming to Tuck already knowing 30+ people so the transition process is much smoother.

Are there any kinds of potential applicants you think would not be a good fit for Tuck?

Valeria: That's a tough one as no two people are alike and there's no one path to Tuck. I would suggest thinking deeply about our four admissions criteria and if they speak to you and excite you. If they absolutely don't then Tuck might not be the best school of you (vs. you not being a good fit for Tuck). Also consider that a lot of the work done at Tuck is done on teams and in study groups. So pay special attention to the nice criterion and what it means for you.

Where do you see Tuck heading in the future - i.e., what capabilities or areas of expertise are you all excited to either grow further or begin developing?

Rob: There are a number of areas that I personally am interested in exploring and am leveraging the network at Tuck during my second year to speak to individuals in those industries. More broadly, Tuck is very agile in terms of where it is heading in the future. As a school with a smaller student body, the administration is very responsive to feedback from students and can change plans quickly with changing business conditions. For example, the school recently changed it's curriculum to increase its focus on Data Analytics and building the skills to manage and lead Data Analysts.

How competitive is selection for OnSite Global Consulting in 2nd year? Is there a bidding process or application that students have to fill out to get selected?

Sonovia: OnSite is a popular international option for second years and it requires an application involving submission of a resume and cover letter. That being said, the process can be competitive if you are only focused on a select few engagements, however, most students are staffed to a project if they apply. The great thing about Tuck is that having an international experience is mandatory, so 100% of students are able to participate in a global experience during their time at Tuck.

Well-noted, thank you, Sonovia. I would also love to hear a bit more about the Center for Entrepreneurship. What sorts of resources are offered and what is the involvement among students, mentors, career advisors, faculty, etc.?

Sonovia: Sure! (Quick disclaimer that I am not a part of the center so I am not as familiar with their offerings). Tuck's Center for Entrepreneurship consists of experiential learning opportunities and also houses the Tuck Social Venture Fund. Additionally, Tuck's Center for Entrepreneurship works closely with Dartmouth's Magnuson Center for Entrepreneurship which provides facilities for entrepreneurs and access to angel investors and VCs.

This is a question from outside our forum, but one that I think applies: Per the WSJ, how do you feel about the drop in applications? Is Tuck going to do anything different to address this?

Valeria: Did we notice a drop in application numbers? Yes, we did, same as the majority of our peers. Despite this drop we're incredibly proud of Tuck class of 2021 that matriculated this August. This class set an all-time high for average GMAT score, highest percentage of U.S. minorities, and greatest international representation. We will continue to work hard on attracting candidates that are smart, accomplished, aware and nice. As an institution our focus remains on the two year full-time MBA so all our resources are dedicated to attracting the best candidates to this program.

Does Tuck also offer some elective Law courses? I have increasingly felt that some formal education in the subject will come in handy, when working in a strategy/ finance profile.

Aidai: That's a great question! There are several electives such as "International Business Law: Managing Risks Abroad" and "Managers and the Law" that highlight how to manage legal risks while operating both within the US and outside of the US.

Does a recommendation have to come from a supervisor at work?

Valeria: Ideally, yes, as these are usually the people that are best positioned to speak about your achievements. However we understand that there are times that applicants don't want their supervisors to know they are applying to business school. In these situations, a client, previous manager, or contact from an extracurricular organization can be useful. If you are not providing a letter from your supervisor, we suggest you include an explanation as to why in an optional essay.

What has been a moment where you were impressed by the kindness of your classmates?

Rob: Great question and hard to answer given it happens so often at Tuck. The first example that comes to mind is how a classmate helped me with topics I was not comfortable with the night before an interview last year. Both he and I had an interview at 8am the following morning and at 9pm the night prior, he spent more than an hour helping me prepare. It certainly was not in his best interest to do this, but he was willing to spend the time to help me. This is very common at Tuck and something you'll see very often.

For Students: What is the most exciting thing when you think of being an MBA student at Tuck?

Sonovia: One of the most exciting things for me about being a student are the opportunities to build deeper relationships with my classmates. Specifically, I enjoy participating in small group dinners which are a great way to get to know classmates you may not interact with regularly in a more intimate setting outside of the classroom.

Aidai: There are many incredibly exciting things about Tuck. I can talk about my experience - I participated in the pre-term program called Outward Bound, and I spent 5 days with my classmates

in a sailboat in the sea. The experience was incredibly challenging in terms of physical requirements i.e. mobile phones were not allowed; there was very little space on the sailboat; some of the tasks required significant physical power (putting up the sails for instance). What impressed me the most was incredible collaboration and support from Tuckies. They helped me with rowing, putting up the sails, remembering the commands and cheering me up, when at times I felt too overwhelmed. That was the moment I realized that I made the right decision when I chose Tuck.

Sonovia, just touching on your response about group dinners. Are these typically set up by students themselves or through specific clubs/groups?

Sonovia: We have a Small Group Dinner (SGD) club that organizes a formal SGD each term and students also take it upon themselves to organize more informal ones throughout the term as well.

One of the main reasons I applied to Tuck is its heavy focus on teamwork and collaboration. I understand this is prevalent, particularly through projects and assignments in the core curriculum. Would you say that even in most electives, the focus is on teamwork and collaboration? Or is this focus mostly on the core curriculum.

Rob: Great question. The core curriculum definitely has a lot of teamwork and collaboration given how often you work with your study group on projects and presentations. There are many elective classes that also have a considerable amount of teamwork - you will set a group at the beginning of the term and submit projects together. However, there are also classes in which the work is done individually. If working in teams is a big focus of yours, you will have plenty of opportunities in the elective curriculum to do so.

Is there a grace period after a round deadline for recommenders to submit the common LOR, assuming the candidate submits the rest of the application before the deadline?

Valeria: LORs are due at 5pm on the deadline day with your application. In extenuating circumstances please reach out to our office.

How about taking recommendation from someone who holds a prestigious post(Managing director) ,but in the past he was the head supervisor?

Valeria: The recommender need not be the CEO, CFO or other head of a company, especially if he/she has had little direct contact or interaction with the applicant. It is more important to have someone who has worked directly with you than someone with an impressive title. So if your previous head supervisor that's now a Managing director worked closely with you and can highlight your alignment with the Accomplished criterion then they might be the right recommender for you.

For the 2nd years: youth is wasted on the young. What do you wish you knew as 1st years, that you definitely think newcomers should know?

Rob: As an international student I wish I knew how to network more effectively. I spent 8 years working in Russia, and business relations are very different there. Nobody really networks, and here, in the United States, it is very important to network to land the interview with consulting companies. I would invest more time in coffee chats with second-years, participate in more office hours and initiate more networking calls.

Moderator: Thanks very much Valeria, Rob, Aidai, Sonovia for visiting our forum today to chat with Tuck applicants. Hope you enjoyed chatting with us. Thanks to all participants. Do visit the Tuck application thread to stay in touch with fellow applicants and share application updates. [https://gmatclub.com/forum/calling-all- ... 95791.html](https://gmatclub.com/forum/calling-all-...95791.html)

TuckAdmissions: Thank you so much, GMAT Club and all those who attended. Please write us at tuck.admissions@tuck.dartmouth.edu or call us at +1 603-646-3162 with any additional questions or concerns.



Meet a Tuck admissions officer, alumni and current students on the road! Stay up-to-date on Tuck's [upcoming events](#) and note that they will be adding more events throughout the admissions season.

We encourage you to [create your Tuck profile](#). This is just the first step in helping Tuck get to know you, so please be sure to update your profile throughout your journey to Tuck.