
My Desire to Transition to Study at Ut Austin

After eleven years of post-soviet education, I had to adjust to a new paradigm of learning. For the very first time, I was introduced to self-education and independent research, principles which lie at the heart of western thought but were not encouraged by my teachers back home. Upon arrival at an international boarding school, I had to adopt those skills quickly in order to pursue American education to its fullest. My social transition into a new world was accompanied by my educational adaptation to an environment of creative and critical thinkers.

Sadly, in Russia, skills like eloquent writing and thoughtful reading are not taught in class, and are not required for academic success until one enters university. Although the path was rough, my newly made international friends offered substantial support through tough times, from the first day at high school to enrollment in the school I thought would become my home - Fordham University. The ability to create something from nothing has always fascinated me. And at my boarding school, in a community of like-minded enthusiasts, my passion for entrepreneurship could finally flourish. Although I couldn't materialize any of my dreams in Russia, the American environment made anything possible. After days and nights of hard work and planning, organizing meetings, teaching the staff and negotiating with the school administration, I opened a Student Cafe at my boarding school. With the assistance of my close friends, it turned out to be a success, feeding hungry students at night while providing valuable work experience for others. I learnt that entrepreneurship is not something that one simply studies, it's a style of thinking and living that few are born with. When I first arrived at college, a rush of emotion overcame me; I was excited to start my studies in an environment of like-minded people. Disillusionment, however, quickly swept over me. Unable to find an active extracurricular community that shared my interest in finance and entrepreneurship, I found fitting in difficult. I realized that I had very little in common with my northeastern American counterparts, so I decided to take up rowing to keep myself focused.

I continued my search for people with common interests. Although I met a lot of unique and bright individuals, none of them could really relate to my keen interest in entrepreneurship. I also did not see a diversity of thought that I was accustomed to in my boarding school. Since my first semester classes did not seem challenging after a rigorous IB Diploma program, I decided to take some time off to work on an e-commerce project that me and my high school friend had conceived long ago. Bigger disappointment, however, came with my first meeting with the dean. When I stated my educational goals, she regretfully revealed to me that students at Fordham cannot pursue double major in disciplines from the Gabelli School of Business and Fordham College. That was the moment I realized I had to transfer. Although the business school here offers numerous opportunities for internships and experience, I knew that a major in math is

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something I cannot give up.

My Russian high school gave me a strong mathematical thinking framework, which continues to help me solve day-to-day problems analytically. Academically and socially, Fordham did not fit my needs and desires, forcing me to find my next home elsewhere. Nevertheless, I see my future degree in Finance and Mathematics as merely an intermediate stop on my journey of becoming an entrepreneur, which would give me the necessary skills to, if not transform, at least impact the world. I'm intrigued by the opportunities that UT Austin has to offer. Endless research opportunities in the field of Finance and Math captivate my imagination. Take for example last year's collaboration between the UT Math department and Briscoe Center to decipher the secret telegrams of the Confederacy, which turned out to be a huge historical contribution to the American South. That would not be possible without the world-class faculty of UT.

Apart from various Finance-related clubs and activities on campus, I'm particularly excited about the Entrepreneur in Residence program, which has no equal. I would absolutely cherish the chance to learn from masters of the field, such as Frank Muller. Not only would I love to learn at UT Austin, but also I wish to offer my unique international perspective on issues. It is clear that UT Austin is the only school for me.

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