

What is an overview of what happened to you in first year?

I arrived at Ivey excited and intimidated. I saw all these smart people and wondered if I measured up. While the first term had a heavy workload, I have never grown so much in such a short time! I feel like I had something to offer my classmates and I learned from them. However, I recall having "process oriented" dreams, heavy on system and assembly-line imagery, during the first term. Things became easier later and I was able to spend more time doing things for myself and with others. I now feel, rightly or wrongly, that I can do anything with myself thanks to Ivey's well-rounded and thought-out system. However, the downside was that I lacked balance in my life.

I learned a lot and had fun. I made many friends, and had several new experiences. I went from London, Ontario to Siberia, Russia and Wall Street, New York. I was spoiled by recruiters and amazed at famous speakers. I strived, I competed, I grew.

Work, work, work, football, work, football.....

I learned so much about business in MBA1. However, the REAL reason to come to Ivey is to learn a new process of thinking. Three letters after your name only take you so far, but refining your thinking processes will benefit you anywhere.

Sleep, eat, study, drink... Sometimes you get no sleep, sometimes you get no study. Be sure to take some time to socialise with classmates. Dean's List is not difficult to get onto if you participate because it accounts for almost half your grade. If you say something each class, you are well on your way. So don't be afraid to talk. Raise your hand.

I came in thrilled, but got "chewed-up" a bit by the course load and adjusting to the case method (particularly for exams). I was disappointed that my marks weren't higher at Christmas. However, I kept pushing in second term and was happy with both grades and the amount I had learned. I also had a great time with classmates, both in and outside the classroom. I tried to keep the stress about a summer job to a minimum, although not everyone was able to and I think it may have taken a few years off of the lives of some fellow students' lives). I was glad to have the summer off, but was happy to be back in September.

My first year experience was different than most in that I was used to stress and juggling my schedule so I didn't have a problem adjusting in the first month. I went to information sessions for MBA2s, which was a great way to learn more about the opportunities. When exams started in November, reality hit and I was stressed for the first time but survived. It was a good experience.

I actively participated in the career management sessions to understand what I wanted from a career and how to approach setting and achieving my career goals. As a result, I landed an excellent internship placement at a strategy consulting firm.

Can you offer any advice on arranging financing for the program?

Government Student loans, previous employers, financial institutions student loans, savings, parents, win the lottery...

Use your Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) as a savings tool. Put money into it prior to starting the program and you can withdraw up to \$10,000 per year while in the program. Get a line of credit from the bank. I would recommend Royal Bank because the line is open for life, whereas I understand that other banks convert it to a loan six months after graduation. The open line gives you more payback options, which is important if you don't get a job right after graduation.

It is relatively easy to get a loan - with no money or credit history, I got a line of credit for 80,000.

If you have had years of working before returning to Ivey, remember that you are now a student and adjust your lifestyle accordingly! I have classmates who did not change their lifestyle and have graduated with mountains of debt - adding to stress during the job search and limiting what jobs they can take in terms of acceptable salary, although the jobs which might not be a good match). Modesty will pay off.

Is administration easy to deal with?

My dealings with the Ivey administration have always been very positive. One really feels that they are there to help and support you, as opposed to other administrative bodies where one sometimes gets the impression that they are doing you a favour.

Administration was always helpful and there for you, although IT could sometimes be more patient.

I am in the joint law-MBA program. Take it from someone who has experience with another grad school, Ivey cares about its students and the administrative staff is VERY responsive in comparison.

How did you find a place to live?

There were lots of listings in the University of Western Ontario's (UWO) Off-Campus Housing Office. A very helpful list was also sent out to first years during the summer from the MBAA.

I came to London in May to start looking and secured a great place at a reasonable price within a week. It was advertised in a flyer included in my acceptance package.

Through UWO's Off-Campus Housing Office. I pay only \$300 per month inclusive - you don't need an expensive apartment or you'll pay dearly for it later with interest! I had an international student as a roommate, which was nice for walking to school and comparing notes.

Drive around at look for signs. Talk to former students of Ivey and UWO.

I visited London and found a place through UWO Housing Office. Try to secure a place by mid-August.

lived in Dorchester, although I wouldn't recommend it.

The best would be to visit London in April-May to secure a place, but there is plenty of availability later. Don't take the first that you see. If you have a car, try and find a place with covered parking to avoid scraping ice off the windshield every morning.

I went to UWO's Off-Campus Housing Office. It took me only six hours to find a great place to live.

The MBAA provides helpful resources. Based on their list, I found my apartment within two days. Luxury and regular apartments do not have large price differential. If you don't want to spend the time between class and group meeting in the library, find a place close to school.

I drove to London in July and found a place on the first day. I simply opened the local paper and called places. I also spoke with an Ivey alumnus in advance, who gave me some advice on the different areas.

Any advice for settling in?

Get to London three or four days before Pre-Accounting. It takes a great deal more time than one might think to get to London and get settled to the point where on the first day of classes you have nothing to think about but school. That was my approach, although others didn't mind dealing with moving in as classes started.

Try to settle in before O-Week or Pre-Accounting starts, as this is the time you should be meeting people - not unpacking!

If you are a foreigner and cannot take furniture with you, the budget that was indicated on the MBA application brochure is totally inaccurate. Consider a minimum of Cdn\$3,000-4,000 to completely furnish your apartment.

Definitely get there early and take the time to get oriented before classes start. You can take care of administrative details around campus ahead of time, and avoid having to stand in long line-ups with all the other students during the first week of class.

Describe a typical day or week

Get up at 7:15am, shower and head to school. 7:45am Grab a cheese croissant and Starbucks coffee and eat while surfing the net for the latest soccer news. Classes last from 8am-12:40pm and I really like them. Eat lunch and hang out until 2pm. 2-6pm hang out with friends in a classroom while working on tomorrow's cases. 6-7:30pm meet group. 7:30-9pm Eat dinner and watch television. 9-11pm More casework. 11-12pm watch television and fall asleep.

8am to 10pm Monday to Thursday, Friday 8am to 1pm, then another 6-10 hours on Saturday or Sunday.

Get up at 5:30am and work out with my significant other. Arrive at school at 7:30am to read the business section of the paper before class. Try to get at least one level-three rated comment in for each class. Grab lunch, prep cases for the next day and meet with the study group at about 6 pm. Head home, grab dinner with my significant other and begin preparation for cases for the day after next. At the end of the week, I try to break a little on Thursday to watch Friends and Will and Grace. I try to prep enough for Monday so that I can take at least one day off on the weekend. Do something with section-mates on Friday, then try to make it up to my life partner on the weekend by dedicating one day to each other. Then, begin the whole week again.

Classes all morning, individual preparation of cases and exercise in the afternoon, group meetings in the evening.

Get up 7am and into class by 7:45am. Plug in LAN-card, check e-mail and sports scores. Get a coffee. In class until 12:40pm. Participate at least once in each of the three classes. Get together with my learning team (or not, sometimes) with a take-out lunch. Home by 2:30pm to start reading cases (1.5 hours or more per case), sometimes calling classmates or learning team for help. Take a 1/2 hour break between each case to work out, eat or do laundry. Finish my last case around 11pm. Watch television or read until I fall asleep at midnight. Repeat until the weekend, when I would take one day completely off (except the first month - you settle into a routine soon).

16 hours a day, six days a week for year one; 10 hours a day, five days a week in year two.

Class in the morning. Eat lunch on the way to a two hour group meeting. Go home and study for 3-4 hours. Dinner. Study or watch television depending on the cases.

Classes 8-12:45pm. Lunch (or recruiting sessions with free lunch), study group 2-3pm, squash 3-4pm, study 4-6pm, dinner 6-7pm, study 7-9pm, drinks 9-11pm.

Up at six... in class by eight... DON'T be late! Three classes daily until 12:40pm. Classes vary according to professor's timetables and curriculum. After class, a quick lunch while taking care of administration. If you hurry, you can squeeze in a squash game before rushing off to the library to prepare cases until early evening. Head home for dinner and more case prep until 12-1am. Do this every weekday for eight months. Weekends give you more time off but there is still 12 hours prep work for the next week.

The workload for MBA Directs (HBA graduates that return to Ivey directly into MBA2) is similar to HBA2. Independent study skills are important, as your case-writing/research supervisor may not provide deadlines. Don't end up churning out a paper in the last two weeks!

Weekdays: up at 7:15am, race to school for 8am. Classes MBA1 M-F 8-1, MBA2 M-T. Between class (MBA2) and after class (MBA1), time occupied with learning team and other group meetings, managing communication (especially e-mail) on academics (course notes, presentations) and extracurricular activities (clubs, MBAA), and getting started on the next day's cases. 5pm, get some exercise (squash, rugby practice, workout, run, intra-murals) then head home, running any errands on the way (groceries, dry cleaning). 7pm dinner, then hit the books big time until midnight. Read the paper or article that I'd meant to read all day and pass out wishing my alarm wasn't going to go off in seven hours or less. Weekends: Sleep in a bit, hit the books for most of the day. Do something active with friends, spend one night partying and the other relaxing or working.

How did you manage the workload? What was it really like?

I knew that killing myself working was not the answer because I came from a very overloaded schedule pre-Ivey. It is not as bad as they say, but it's harder than any other school I've heard about in Canada. It challenges you in one manner or another.

The workload of the Ivey MBA program, particularly in the first year, is very intense. You rely on your learning team, your classmates, and your support network. The relationship with your peers is very collegial and people are always willing to help you out by explaining concepts. I sometimes found myself questioning my decision and wondering whether I should leave the program - most people do. Being surrounded by all of these exceptionally bright people is a challenge most people are not familiar with and takes getting used to. After Christmas of the first year, you start to get a better idea of the demands and how to handle them. The workload seems to become more manageable, just in time for the added demand of summer recruiting. People close to you should be aware of the time commitment you will be facing in the program. If you have a partner, there is a support group in 'Section Five' to share experiences. At the beginning of the year, people will tell you that you can do two of the following; academic, social, or exercise - personally I found this to be very true.

One of the really important things to keep in perspective is your physical and mental well-being - especially for the first three to four months. The first semester can seem quite intense at times and can lead some people, myself included, to drop everything else to focus exclusively on studying. I urge you not to do so. Finding a way to relax and unwind, whether it is through working out or any other method, is crucial to ensure your long-term success in the program. You will thank yourself many times over if you manage to set aside a few hours a week for the activities that you have always enjoyed. Remember that you are not doing yourself a favour if you burn out in November.

The workload is high but not too conceptually difficult. It takes some time to get used to the pace, but time flies and it is lots of fun. You will be finished the program before you know it.

Can you offer any advice on the job search?

Start early, and turn up all the connections that you have. Be patient - things will happen when the time is right.

I spent one hour every day during my first year working on my resume, interviewing skills, and finding out which job I wanted. Start early and get focussed. The summer job is paramount. If you don't like it, you can try something else.

Ack....I hate cover letters. Start early is my advice.

Start early, do as much outside the program as possible. it is easier to find a job on your own than it is to compete with your classmates. Employers are surprisingly receptive to students that go looking on your own, but be sure to use a proven approach - talk to Career Services first!

I found my job separately from Career Services - through a network of my undergrad alumni.

My job search was mainly through Career Services as it was relatively easy - they posted jobs and I applied. In the end, my summer job was the one contact I decided to pursue as an alternative to Career Services. My advice therefore is not to put all your eggs in one basket - especially in the current economic climate.

Take the Career Management course in second year! Nothing could be better than getting a credit for taking the time to do essential reflection... It was VERY useful to me!

Be sensible with a signing bonus! I am happy to not have got one because many of those that did spent them immediately then had their start dates pushed back. They now have to either wait six months or look for something else and repay the company - hard to do when you are already heavily in debt and unemployed!

Most MBA Directs (HBA graduates that return to Ivey directly into MBA2) come back to school in order to change careers, so it is an extreme shock when the recruiting process starts in September and you've barely had a month away from your old job and no time to reflect on what you want to do next. There is one way around this - consider doing the MBA Direct program starting in January, taking the summer off or working in a new prospective field and then finishing your degree September to December of the same year. The school doesn't advertise this option, but it is available with the permission of the MBA Director and Admissions Director. If you don't want to do this, then come to school prepared in September with your resume in hand!

How do you recommend Career Services are used as part of your job search?

FOLLOW THE PROGRAM! They have an excellent self-examination program with tons of professional advice available, but you must FOLLOW it and devote some time to it or it won't work. I found it to be very useful because I was disciplined and didn't wait till the last minute to do it.

As a resource only - not as a sole means to a job. They will help you as best they can, but they are NOT going to find a job for you. They are only as good as their network, and with 560 MBA's and several hundred HBA's, their resources and referrals are limited and it is difficult to get time with them!

YES. They help you focus and they have the best postings if you want a "traditional job".

Get appointments early. Start working on your resume. Talk to the industry coverage people and the career counsellors to find out what you want.

DO NOT place your all your bets on Career Services! It is great for the Dean's List folks, but most of us got our jobs through other means and networks. You will too - so don't get stressed. Avoid the "herd mentality" at interview time in first year. Stay focussed. The Ivey network and your own network are 100 times more important. Your own independent search will be far more sustainable and result in a better "fit".

They should be used as one of many sources of job leads and as an information source - discussing career goals and resume critique.

It is VERY important to realize that Career Services is a resource that can provide tools, not a guaranteed way to find a job. The people at Career Services can be very helpful with resume suggestions, career counselling, job search techniques, and tips on informational interviewing. In the grand scheme of things, the people that get jobs out of Career Services postings are the minority and are generally in very specialized areas. You are responsible for your own career and as such you should expect to take responsibility for this component of your MBA experience as well. For my summer job between first year and second year I found Career Services helpful for career counselling and found a job at a consulting firm by networking with students from the year before and contacting Ivey alumni. For my permanent job after MBA2, I found the tips I gained on informational interviewing from Career Services indispensable. After three months of doing informational interviews, I had learned a lot about my new industry

What was your favourite course, case or classroom activity and why?

Marketing cases. They touch on many aspects of business and also use a "quick and dirty" approach to understand how the company makes money and what decisions need to be made. I have used these analytical skills repeatedly in consulting situations.

First year - all of the courses. In MBA2, challenging courses were generally more interesting. Courses that overlap worked well - I took three finance courses and the tie-in between them was great.

Management Science. Besides being an interesting subject, the professor made a difference. Many of the school's professors are leaders in their field and can teach you a lot. A small number of the professors were not as good, but this was the exception rather than the rule.

Finance. I had done poorly and hadn't understood anything in undergrad, so it was a fantastic feeling to prove that I could handle it.

Marketing and Accounting, because I have a technical/science-based background so these subjects were new to me. I didn't enjoy the large quantity of reading for The Global Environment of Business (GEOB).

My favourite classes were in the last half of Management Accounting, when we discussed setting up systems that actually get people to do what they're supposed to. It is amazing to me what gets done in business without the right information and the wrong incentives! I wasn't so keen on Information Systems. The professor was good, but I think the course itself has problems. If you know anything about technology, it doesn't really help you.

My favourite activity was class breaks, which I would use to relax and chat with classmates. This is the most important part - making friends and connections.

Too many to mention. Any course with Mike Leenders is interesting, as are classes with Claude Lanfranconi and Bob White. Mike mixes things up and keeps the classes varied, Claude is a great storyteller/entertainer and keeps things simple. Bob has such a wealth of knowledge, peppered with the odd bit of dry wit, that you've got to love him (provided his microphone is working!). Almost all of my professors were exceptional instructors.

My favourite case was Starbucks. My favourite classroom activity is hanging out at the bar after exams.

Definitely SABRE, a marketing simulation. Your team runs a company which competes with others in your industry. Results are computer-generated. You can develop products, market them towards different segments, produce, price, distribute them, etc. We broke the record for profits, liquidated our competitors and forced them into bankruptcy!

My favourite case was one on Singapore from GEOB. It was fascinating to identify factors leading to the creation of this economic juggernaut. It was particularly interesting to me to compare Singapore to Trinidad, the country of my birth, as we have similar characteristics but very different standards of living.

I highly recommend the second-year option of writing a case (Bus 699).

GEOB and Accounting. GEOB dealt with political and social issues in a business context. I still learned something in Accounting, despite my extensive background in this area. I just expected a refresher course in bean-counting! I disliked one course because the lecturer was new to the case method and so I did not obtain the maximum utility from the course.

Do you have any advice for getting through difficult course work?

Work hard consistently, take time off daily (i.e. an hour or two to hang out with friends, get outdoors or get active) and ask your friends for help often.

Don't stay up all night, as you'll suffer the next day when it comes to participation.

Firstly, be organized. It's good to have time to dedicate to the hard work and not have to rush to something else. You may learn more from that one really difficult case that week than you will learn from all the others. Secondly, make sure you get help from your learning team at the time of the case. We seem to think we can get to it later, but we rarely do and then nothing is fresh so you could end up missing some of the key learning points.

Talk to your peers for assistance and don't be afraid to go and see your professor. They understand.

Keep to a schedule. Don't worry about "cracking" the case; try to come up with questions to ask during class, comments to make. Try to eat during meetings or while you read cases. After two hours of preparing a case, stop and go to the next one. If you finish a case in one hour, then don't do a second case in three hours - stick to the two-hour maximum. Do not go back to review every case after the class, but ask your learning team for help if you do not understand something. Sleep is important. Be sure to schedule your free time, as well.

Think it through. Who can help you? Do you need to do more work, or just work smarter?

Just hang in there, and speak with friends and relatives. It may seem grim at times, but you WILL make it over this mountain.

Focus on the concepts not the details. It's easy to get bogged down and burn yourself out. The toughest challenge is to figure out what is important and what is trivial ...

Rely on your team mates. No one can do the program alone. Your study groups will help you to get through.

Ensure that you've done the required work and readings and then go talk to one of your classmates if you don't understand. I've always found that level of communication to be the best. Really use your study group as you'll find that most people find the same courses difficult. Finally, see your professor.

Do you recommend LEADER Programme, China Teaching Project or Exchange experiences?

Yes... it gives you a chance to review much of what you've learned in first year and it gives you the opportunity to meet and work with people from second year and other first years. You make some great friends, establish new contacts, and gain an incredible, once-in-a-lifetime experience. The programs are well-known among recruiters and give you a lot to talk about in interviews.

I went on the China Teaching Project and it was one of the most fulfilling experiences I've ever had. Not only did I get to visit a part of the world I'd never been to, but I also went there with all the things my Chinese classmates had taught me in mind and got to see what they really meant. Teaching was great because it allowed me to work on my public speaking and to refine my understanding of the case method. It is amazing how much different teaching a case is from learning a case. We taught at one of the best universities in China and were welcomed by both staff and students. The team experience was also powerful. A small group lands in a foreign country to do a job together. They have to come together and the novelty of being so far from home really helped that happen.

I had a great experience on LEADER. The culture in Russia is so different - it is amazing. A reporter followed us around, and there is going to be an article in the Canadian Business Journal. I was interviewed on television a couple of times as well.

Yes... go to the information session (there is no risk in doing this). Then decide for yourself.

PLEASE VISIT THE WEBSITES FOR THESE GROUPS:

www.leaderproject.com

<http://groups.ivey.uwo.ca/chinateaching/>

www.ivey.ca/exchangebook

Is LeaderLab worth attending? It provides Ivey with access to extraordinary and inspirational speakers.

LeaderLab is a fabulous student-initiated program that started in the 2000-01 academic year. Because Ivey is a training ground for future leaders, the organizers of LeaderLab thought it would be appropriate to have outstanding leaders come to the school and share their experiences. Speakers that have attended thus far usually charge large speaker fees and are in high demand. To have the opportunity to attend these events while in school is a tribute to the reputation of the school and its students.

LeaderLab is the best free activity there is for Ivey students - nowhere else will you be able to listen to world-class speakers AND have free pizza.

Yes, good information. You get speakers from different places and learn from their experiences.

Absolutely, because 1.) The speakers I saw were fantastic, world-class leaders with amazing presentations 2.) You get free lunch (though after a recruiting season another few slabs of Dominos pizza may induce the gag reflex) 3.) I am friends with Andrea Lekushoff and would have heard about it if I hadn't attended.

Some of the speakers were incredible.

Leaderlab is definitely worth attending, even if it's just to get inspired by people's stories about their challenges and how they overcame them.

PLEASE VISIT THE WEBSITE FOR LEADERLAB:

www.leader-lab.com

What did you get out of the pre-Ivey Accounting Seminar?

Tons! I had no accounting background and this prep course was invaluable to me

I hadn't touched accounting in five years, so it was a refresher, a chance to see the school, meet classmates and get a feel for the place. It provides you time to get settled in before classes start. This gave me some kind of a home field advantage.

It was an initial scare, but once classes started, I realized that one week of struggling with debits and credits put me at ease with some of the initial cases when others were struggling.

I got a good basic framework for accounting, the case method, and met a few friends. I had a leg up when I started the program.

Very useful, even for those with a business background. Much of that is taken for granted in the Accounting course.

Pre-Accounting was important for me because I went from knowing nothing about business to at least understanding what was being said. I wished there were more prep-courses, such as statistics and computer software (PowerPoint, Excel, Word).

Is it worth attending Orientation Week?

Orientation Week was very important for me. I met second year students who would give me great advice and made me feel as though I had made the right decision. There is so little time to get to know students outside of your section during the rest of the year.

Sports Day, Hypnotist, Pub-Crawl.... Need I say more?

O-Week is definitely worth attending. Aside from the fun, being able to meet people ahead of time will give you a great start to the year. You might not otherwise meet some students. The more people you know from different backgrounds and sections, thus perhaps different professors and perspectives on a case, the more chances you will have at being able to find someone to help you. The opposite is also true - the more people you know, the more people may ask you...

Absolutely! I made so many friends that week! You don't have much time for those sorts of activities later.

Yes. Nothing else needed to say.

It forges strong friendships throughout the MBA program, as well as helps form 'real' study groups.

You would be foolish not to.

O-Week sets the stage for your first experiences while at Ivey. You can let loose, meet some people, and enjoy your first interactions in a fairly stress-free environment. It is a good way to ease yourself in to the Ivey experience - it can be a little overwhelming meeting so many people at the same time. Making friends is particularly important because these are the people you will come to rely on for the next two years. O-Week gives you the chance to meet people who may not be in your section in first year, but whom you may have other dealings with sometime during the program. After attending O-Week, you will be eager to volunteer for the following year!

If you want to have friends...

How did you use the MBA2 class as a resource?

Get to know them - they've been there and are generally happy to help. Use them as a resource, but treat them as friends first. You will find then that they will help you out - often before you even know you need a hand.

Mainly for frameworks and job advice. They have been through everything, so they can show you the ropes. They are a great resource for the academic program, as well as job placement.

My big sister was great... we would get together for lunch and she was able to provide moral support and advice and point me in the right direction when I was stuck for resources.

Friends, big brother program, study note sharing and social committee.

I did not really have many interactions with the MBA2's, but those that I did have were mainly for fun.

Used them for questions, tutoring, and an example that you can make it through first year. Be sure to get exam frameworks from them to review and provide a base for your own frameworks. If you talk each class, then you can afford to take a couple of days off from participation to focus on preparing for exams. The professors don't expect you to talk every single class.

I hardly saw the MBA2 folks in the first semester, but used their knowledge of the job search and interview process extensively in the second semester.

The MBA2s are the best resource at Ivey for networking and finding out information about jobs. Not only are they experienced (having gone through summer recruiting), but they are more honest and in-touch with the job scene than career management or professors. They may come back and offer you a job. Treat them well and don't expect them to be at your beck and call.

What was your social life like?

My social life was entirely Ivey-based. I regret that a bit. It's great to hang out with classmates and people from other sections, but when that is the only thing in your life, it can seem narrow. However, you don't really have time to go have a social life outside of Ivey, so it's nice that there is at least some social scene at Ivey. I was worried that everybody would be serious and afraid to let loose, but people had a great time together and if ever someone did something embarrassing or moderately-illegal, Ivey students reserved judgement and just supported their friends for who they were. That was a pleasant surprise.

I am married, so most of my social time was spent nurturing my relationship and ensuring that I was returning the same level of support that I was getting.

On a scale of one to 10, if zero is a local priest, and ten is Richard (Dong) Lee, I was probably an eight. I went to most group events and was out at least one night each weekend. However, I often sacrificed a Saturday night for the books. I enjoyed a wide range of activities including sports, movies, dinners and drinks. There is always a chance to hang out, which is what MBA life is all about. The business undergraduates are pretty "hot", but there are currently few integration opportunities.

I was lucky that my study groups were comprised largely of friends, so work did not always seem like such. There are a lot of Ivey event. Sections usually have a strong social identity and tend to do things together. I admire those students who maintained relationships/marriages during MBA1 - it is a very difficult thing to do.

Amazing. If you want to study all the time and not spend time with students on an informal basis, that is your choice. There are always activities going on if you choose to participate.

It very quickly focuses around your MBA friends and is generally restricted to a few hours on weekends.

What were your favourite non-academic activities?

There are lots of groups you can join, but only do so if you are interested.

Wine Tasting Club events did not have the stuffiness that I expected. Hockey gave me an outlet for frustrations and built camaraderie.

Rugby, spring break and the squash ladder.

The Women in Management Conference.

As many as you can fit into your schedule, plus one. Choose the ones that interest you - you will meet people with similar interests, have fun and retain some sanity.

Rugby. Consulting and finance clubs - Good career management activities.

Consulting, Wine Tasting, Finance, Entrepreneurship and Snow Touch Football. Meet people, fun & information

Wine Tasting - cheap and the best social club on campus.

E-xchange Conference, Harvard Cyberposium Conference. I was interested in technology - great learning and fun.

Ultimate Frisbee; broomball.

At the bar watching "Survivor".

Rugby, MBA Games, Celebration Week, Wine Tasting.

Definitely Wine Tasting and then any of the clubs that pertain to your career goals (i.e. Finance Club).

Attend a conference. I went to Harvard and met new people with similar interests.

Having a pint of beer with a group of students on Tuesday to break up routine. Go for an hour to relax and not talk about school. It helps keep your sanity.

Is it worth getting involved and volunteering?

I find that you get out of an experience what you put into it. By becoming an active part of the school, you will find your experience much more rewarding and will have more opportunities to interact with different students. Getting involved broadens the demands that are placed upon you and provides some variety to the experiences that you have. There are many different initiatives so that there is something to interest everyone. I was a member of the MBAA, which gave me greater insight into the changes and activities within the school. I participated as a volunteer for O-Week - a great opportunity to meet students and answer questions while having loads of fun. As a judge for the case competition you contribute to the learning of students in a supportive environment. I was also involved in creating a panel for the MBA conference, which allowed me to interact with people in industry, make contacts and discuss business issues.

Without hesitation. It is a great stress reliever.

Absolutely! Most students agree that it's the PEOPLE who make the program what it is. So it makes sense that getting involved will make your experience that much better. The tricky part is that it's harder when you're an Direct (HBA graduates that return to Ivey directly into MBA2) to get involved. Many MBA Association positions and convenorships are decided before the school year starts, so it's up to you to be proactive and get in touch with the MBAA President as soon as you decide to come back and find out what positions are available.

YES... you get a chance to meet people from second year and other first year students who you don't regularly have classes with.

GET INVOLVED. It is the best way to meet people. It also looks great on a resume.

Yes, but keep an eye on your workload. The burnout factor is HUGE at key stress times during the year.

You learn more outside the classroom than inside.

Get involved because you meet more people, which is what the MBA is all about.

JUST DO IT.

It is good to get involved, but find the right level of involvement for you. I was involved with the China Teaching Project and playing hockey. That was enough to keep me interested, but not so over-committed that I had to sacrifice my first priority: school.

You don't have to do everything, but get involved in something.