

**Transcript from the January 13, 2009 UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School Women at Kenan-Flagler Chat**

**Dawn\_KFBS2010:** As stated previously, I am Dawn Norvell a member of the class of 2010. Prior to business school, I worked in non profit management and after business school I will work in brand management. I am being joined today by Lindsey Aponte (Class of 2009), Sara West (Class of 2009) and Lesslie Ray (Class of 2010) and Peggy Tate from Admissions. Please feel free to ask question focused on women's issues.

**Lindsey A.:** I am a second year student (Class of 2009). Before business school I worked in Project Management for a Financial Services company. I will be working with Deloitte Consulting after school in their Human Capital practice. I am also involved with the Carolina Women in Business (CWIB) organization as this year's Chair of the Women in Business Conference.

**Peggy T.:** Hello, I'm Peggy from the Admissions office. Welcome to today's chat.

**Sara W.:** Hi everyone, I'm Sara West, a second-year MBA student. I have a background in non-profit management and am concentrating in real estate. I plan to work in community development finance after I graduate. I'm also President of Carolina Women in Business, a student-run organization that offers a variety of events specifically for women here at KFBS. I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have!

**Lesslie\_KFBS2010:** Hi. I am Lesslie Ray and a first year student focused in real estate finance. I have a background in real estate banking and acquisitions. I am pursuing RE opportunities this summer on the investment side. Most recently I moved from Charlotte NC.

**Dawn\_KFBS2010:** Come on ladies don't be shy...who will be the first to ask a question?

**B P.:** For all the first years, can you talk about how the first semester went?

**B P.:** Difficulties you had getting back into classroom life? Etc.

**Dawn\_KFBS2010:** It went well and fairly quickly.

**Hyewon:** Hello, Dawn, Lindsey, Peggy, Sara, and Lesslie~!

**Lauren K.:** Did any of you relocate to Chapel Hill with husbands or families? If so, how did that go and what resources were available to help with the transition?

**Lesslie\_KFBS2010:** Lauren K - I relocated from Charlotte NC with my husband. It was a great transition. The school has a partners program that only includes partners - this includes planned dinners, events etc throughout the year. It is a great way for the partner to meet others involved in KFBS outside of the partner that is a student. All events

**sponsored by the school also encourage the student to bring their partner and family - this is a great way to make easy introductions.**

Lauren K.: Lesslie, thanks! My husband and actually live in Charlotte now, so it's great to know you had a similar transition and that it went well.

Neelam: I'd like to know if any of you participated in the STAR program and how that experience was.

**Lindsey A.: Neelam. I actually participated and lead a STAR project last year. It was a great experience to really take things that we had learned in the classroom with a company. I definitely recommend it**

Avanti: Did you have time for your families after school started?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Avanti, you definitely have time but you have to schedule it as a part of your day.**

Leshab: Did any of you leave boyfriends/husbands/fiancées behind to go to school?

**Lindsey A.: Leshab. I left my boyfriend in PA. It was definitely a hard transition but you make it work.**

GD: Have you seen a rise in the number of female applicants this year? Also, do you have any stats on the number of students that applied 1st round and what percentage were accepted. How many out of those were females?

**Peggy T.: GD, I don't have specific statistics yet since we are only in the second of our four rounds of admissions.**

Rachel Z.: Are you the only female in your team? If yes, have you had any difficulties being the only female?

**Sara W.: Rachel, I wasn't the only female student in my study group and am rarely the only female in any room at business school! While our class is still majority men, it really isn't as big of a deal as I thought it would be.**

Lucy T.: Hi everyone... If any of you were from out of state, how did you get comfortable with the environment and how did you qualify for residency?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Lucy, I got acquainted with the area by coming to Chapel Hill prior to school starting. Please refer to the admissions page regarding residency.**

**Amrinder\_KFBS2009: Lucy: This is the link with residency information:  
<http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/Programs/...>**

Lucy T.: Thanks Amrinder

Neelam: What are some of the most popular clubs and organizations for women to join at KFBS?

**Sara W.: Neelam, one of the most popular clubs for women is Carolina Women in Business. We organize a variety of events for women at Kenan-Flagler. Other popular clubs are career oriented (finance, consulting, etc.) and others such as Net Impact (sustainability), the MBA student association executive committee, etc.**

Mary M.: Do you anticipate there will be space left in the class in R3? Should I wait until R1 next year?

**Peggy T.: Mary M, don't worry about space in round 3. We will have slots available; it will more limited by Round 4 however, so I would definitely encourage you to be in round 3 if at all possible.**

Ingrid: Hello all, I'm interested in the challenges of a late 30's, career changer, with husband and young kids.

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Ingrid, I'm 30 something with kids and husband. They are in St. Louis while I'm in school here. It has definitely been challenging yet rewarding. It has allowed me to focus on school as well as being social. I do find that I have a lot of practical experience that is good for the classroom as well.**

Avanti: was the transition from work back to school a hard one?

**Lindsey A.: Avanti, I think that depending on how long you have been out of school impacts the transition. Personally, I found the biggest thing to be getting used to being in the classroom again. I found that ASW was very helpful in transition back to the life of a student.**

Hyewon: Are there anyone who study with husband?

**Lesslie\_KFBS2010: Hyewon - There is no one in this room that studies with their significant other, but we do have a few partners that do study together here at KFBS. From the outside it appears to be a great process. The partners are not put on the same study teams or groups so they work directly with others on projects. Of course some of their classes overlap, but there is no extra attention towards those couples. They are treated individually.**

Hyewon: Thank you Lesslie

Robin: Has it ever been discussed how to balance family and work AFTER business school? I am wondering how to be successful with my career and have a family (having kids, etc)

Dorothy G.: I second Robin's question about balancing work and family post business school.

**Lindsey A.: Dorothy G, as a women entering consulting, this is something that I am particularly invested in. For me, I think that I have learned that being able to prioritize is by far the most important thing. I have learned a lot about doing this in business school. Unfortunately, I don't think that there is a recipe but it becomes more about setting boundaries and being clear about what you will and won't do. Hope that helps.**

Dorothy G.: Thanks, Lindsey. Very helpful. Is paying back your student loans a concern for any of you (providing you have them)? It is a little scary to be burdened with those loans while also looking to start a family.

**Sara W.: Dorothy, I have student loans and the thought of repaying them is sometimes very daunting! But the increase in my salary after business school will really allow me to cover the payments without much difficulty. You really have to consider business school as a long-term investment.**

Alexandra P.: Hey everyone, I was wondering what some of your favorite experiences and events through CWIB?

Vidya R.: Hi.. I am interested in CWIB. What kind of projects and/or programs are executed there?

**Sara W.: Alexandra and Vidya, my favorite CWIB experiences have included the Women in Business conference, held each spring for students and alums. We also organize workshops and career panels, along with more fun and social events like golf outings and dinners with female faculty.**

Yesenia G.: For those of you that are already students at KFBS,I would be interested to know why you chose this institution over others.

**Lindsey A.: Yesenia. I decided to come to UNC in large part because of the people and culture. I believed that the academic experience would be similar to other schools but found the people to be engaging, fun, and collaborative. Much more so than other schools that I visited.**

Radhika S.: Hello, I would like to know what are the popular/preferred specialisations that one would take in KFBS

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Radhika, there really isn't one we are pretty well dispersed among all concentrations.**

Abhi: what are the activities taken up by the women's club..

**Sara W.:** Abhi, I just wrote a little bit about CWIB's activities. This year we are focusing on power dynamics and persuasion; work life balance; and communications in the workplace.

Neelam: What are the biggest challenges for women at KFBS? What do you find most rewarding about your experience there so far?

**Sara W.:** Neelam, I think my biggest challenge was readjusting to being back in school and away from work. I really missed my job at first! And I was intimidated at the thought of taking classes again. But my transition back into school was really pretty painless - the students and faculty are collaborative, supportive, etc.

Annette K.: I understand that women students are underrepresented in MBA programs as a whole...what activities does UNC participate in to help close this gap?

**Peggy T.:** Annette, Kenan-Flagler is a part of Forte which encourages and supports women in graduate study. We also have a Women's Weekend each fall to give women an opportunity to look at our school and meet our students.

Annette K.: Thank you, Peggy. How does CWIB interact with Forte Fellows?

**Lindsey A.:** Annette. The Forte fellows are involved in helping to plan the Women's Workshop which is held each fall.

B P.: Can you let us know where current students (without families) tend to live?

**Amrinder\_KFBS2009:** B P.: Most students tend to stay at Alta Spring, Autumn Woods and Baity Hill (married students).

Vidya R.: Dawn, i'm interested in marketing and brand management... can you tell me what you found in unc that helped you the most?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010:** Vidya, I'm a 1st year so I've only been in school for 2 mods. However, marketing is a part of the mod II so I got the basics pretty early. In fact it helped with interviews.

Vidya R.: thanks Dawn... i also wanted to know how the job market is now. a little info about the placements and internships available...

Diane G.: Has anyone here participated in the OneMBA program?

**Lindsey A.:** Diane G. We are all full-time MBA students.

Radhika S.: what is it that made you'll choose KFBS over the others?

**Lesslie\_KFBS2010: Radhika - I chose KFBS due to the quality of the Real Estate program and the disposition of the students I met during my visit.**

Radhika S.: Thank you Dawn and Lesslie

Megan K. : Sara, Do prominent women speakers come to the business school?

**Sara W.: Megan, prominent women do indeed come to speak at the business school! This year Cherie Blair (Tony Blair's wife) is speaking. Michelle Buck, Chief Marketing Officer at Hershey, has already spoken, and so has Kellie McElhaney, the former Dir. of Berkeley's Center for Responsible Business.**

Annette K. : How well do women transition into brand management positions for major CPG companies

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Annette, the transition is no different than that of men. We've been successful in entry level and executive level positions.**

Annette K.: Thank you Dawn and Lindsey

Virginia O.: I am interested in applying to KF next Fall for the Fall of 2010. Does it make sense to visit now and then in the Fall also for that Women's weekend?

**Peggy T.: Virginia, you are more than welcome to visit in advance of your application. Coming to the Women's Weekend is a great idea.**

Virginia O.: Ok, thanks Peggy. I live pretty far away, so that's kind of why I was wondering. I would like to visit if at all possible this Spring, however the Fall weekend sounds like it has the most going on.

GD: Have you seen a rise in the number of female applicants this year? Also, do you have any stats on the number of students that applied 1st round and what percentage were accepted. How many out of those were females?

**Peggy T.: GD, I do not have final stats on round 1 now. Overall, I would say that are proportion of female applicants is consistent with past years, but again we are only in the second of two rounds.**

Rachel Z.: How was interviewing for internships/full time positions been this year given the turn in the economy?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Rachel Z and Vidya, the 1st years are just beginning the internship process so it's difficult to answer that question. However, I do know that some companies in different industries have less internships to offer.**

Virginia O.: On another topic, I am wondering from Dawn how she chose brand management coming from the non-profit world and if it has been okay not having had a professional marketing role (if that's the case)

Avanti: I am a little apprehensive of leaving my job and going back to school since the economy is not doing so well. Do all of you have job offers after you graduate?

**Lindsey A.: Avanti, we are not unlike other business schools in terms of seeing some impact from the economy. People are still pursuing opportunities but is not unusual at this time of the year. I do not have any exact numbers because some functions- particularly real estate- always have a later recruiting season.**

Avanti: thanks Lindsey

Virginia O.: Does the Women's Group sponsor anything for visiting prospective applicants?

**Sara W.: Virginia, each fall the Admissions office (with some help from CWIB) present a Women's Workshop for prospective female students. You'll have a chance to meet current students, faculty, alums, and the admissions committee. Attending the women's workshop was a fantastic experience for me and was a key factor in my decision to attend Kenan-Flagler.**

Virginia O.: Thanks, Sara, I will definitely mark that down!

B P.: Virginia O - I went to the Women's Weekend this past fall and I agree 100% with Sara. great chance to meet the professors, faculty and the potential incoming class

Virginia O.: Ok so is that women's weekend all-invited?

**Sara W.: Virginia, the women's workshop is open to all who are interested in attending Kenan-Flagler. More information will be posted to the Admissions website as the event draws nearer.**

Neelam: What is a typical day like in the first year? How does it differ from a typical day in the second year?

**Lesslie\_KFBS2010: Neelam - The typical day for a first year is 2 - 3 classes with classes being an hour and 20 minutes. There are also many group projects to work on with the team that you have been assigned too at the start of the year (5 person team). The classes are core classes so you are taking all your required classes the first four mods. A second year no longer has required core classes, they have the flexibility choose your classes to fill a concentration or if you have no concentration, then whatever classes you would like to take. So in your second year, you have more flexibility in choosing your classes.**

Annette K.: Are there any women's events that are coming up between now and the 4th round deadline?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Annette K. They are not women specific events but you are encouraged to visit.**

Annette K.: Great...thanks!

Radhika S.: What programs is KFBS known for? How are the placements or the internships? How often do the interns get a PPO

**Lindsey A.: Radhika. I am happy to answer your question...what exactly do you mean by a PPO?**

Radhika S.: Pre placement offer, what I meant was how many students do get a permanent job at the company where they do their internship

Vidya R.: In the field of marketing, how would women have an advantage over men? Is there anything companies look for?.. like a different perspective in some particular domain...

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Vidya R, I don't believe that there is an advantage based on sex. It is more about your unique perspective as an individual and consumer.**

Vidya R.: Thanks Dawn...

Robin: I am not able to visit until March (which is after my admissions decision). Should I still set up a campus visit now or just wait to see if I am admitted?

**Peggy T.: Robin, you are welcome to get your visit scheduled now so you have the date and slot pinned down for your planning,**

Virginia O.: You mentioned the Forte Foundation; are there any Forte scholars at UNC? Are there scholarships specifically for women at KF?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Virginia, every admitted student is considered for fellowships. Yes, there are Forte fellows at UNC. Please contact Alison Jesse (alison\_jesse@unc.edu) for more specific information regarding UNC and Forte.**

Virginia O.: Great! Thanks.

Hyewon: Is it okay to visit in January? Any women specific events in Jan.?

**Amrinder\_KFBS2009: Hyewon: You can certainly visit us in January and meet some of our women students but we don't have any Women event specifically in January.**

hyewon : Thank you Amrinder. It is not easy to visit from Korea, but I'd like to.

**Amrinder\_KFBS2009: Hyewon: We have a number of students from Korea.**

**Peggy T.: There will be a transcript of this chat posted on the website in about one week. In case you missed some of the responses.**

GD: Was it difficult transitioning from having a steady income to no income at all?

**Lindsey A.: GD-It is absolutely a transition. I took a look at my existing budget (pre-  
bschool) and considered what costs might change (rent, etc). You should know what your  
scholarship (if any) and/or loan amount will be before you come to school. Depending on  
what your current expenses are really impacts how much of an impact being a student will  
have on your lifestyle.**

GD: Thanks Lindsey. Did any of you attend AWS and if so, 1 or both sessions? Do you recommend it?

**Lesslie\_KFBS2010: GD - I did attend ASW I & II and it was a great experience. If it  
works for you individually, I highly recommend it for the following reasons: it gets you  
back into the swing of sitting in class, it gets your mind back into the swing of studying, and  
it helps to refresh your quantitative skills specifically for accounting, econ stats and  
finance. However, those who did not attend ASW adjusted very well too.**

GD: Thanks Lesslie

Radhika S.: What are the chances of a scholarship? or does one get time to work part time on campus?

**Lesslie\_KFBS2010: Radhika - The scholarship is based on the qualifications of that year  
and can vary year to year. Working part time is more of an option for the second year due  
to the time required to complete the required classes the first year i.e. grading, tutoring**

Dorothy G.: Hey Sara, would you also be able to afford to purchase a home in the next few years out of business school given your loans?

**Sara W.: Dorothy, I'm planning to buy a condo in the next two years. It will probably be  
somewhat be modest, but that's totally fine with me.**

Dorothy G.: Very helpful. If you don't mind my asking, what city are you planning to live in?

Dorothy G.: I guess a better question would be about the difference in salaries...do you find the largest salaries coming from NY, LA and Chicago? Or is the difference negligible?

**Amrinder\_KFBS2009: Dorothy: We do not have Women salary statistics information  
specifically but our general career statistics can be found here: [http://www.kenan-  
flagler.unc.edu/Programs/...](http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/Programs/...)**

Virginia O.: Do you find that there is a big diversity in the student body or have most people come from similar undergraduate schools, states, and career backgrounds?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Virginia O, One of the things I love about KFBS is the diversity of the student body from undergraduate institutions to careers and personal interests**

Virginia O.: What advantage does KF have over comparable private schools like Kellogg and Harvard (in your opinion)?

**Sara W.: Virginia, I think the most important thing you should focus on is how the school fits you. That being said, I preferred Kenan Flagler over other top schools because the environment is collaborative, the class size is small (280 students), and the faculty are so accessible.**

Virginia O.: Thank you!

Radhika S.: If one is undecided about one's specialization, is that held against the person during the admission process. I am still exploring options after MBA and i would like to be aware of all options.

**Peggy T.: Radhika, many of our students are changing careers or exploring options in their first year. You just need to be able to articulate why the MBA and your career direction for the admissions process. We focus on your accomplishments, your leadership experiences, etc**

Radhika S.: Thanks Lesslie and Peggy

Annette K.: Do many of the marketing students stay in North Carolina or do the majority of them move to cities such as NY, Chicago, Atlanta, etc.?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Annette K. It is my understanding most of the marketing students move from the NC area. Though there are some good companies in the NC area like Burts Bees and Hanesbrand.**

Annette K.: Thank you, Dawn...that's what I figured but I wasn't sure. Are the marketing agencies in Raleigh fairly large and do they recruit at UNC?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Annette, unfortunately I don't know the answer specifically however please reach out to Wendy Dukes in our Career Center (wendy\_dukes@unc.edu)to get more insight**

Annette K.: Will do, Dawn. Thank you.

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Annette K. You are welcome**

Virginia O.: Where do single people tend to live? Is there student housing?

**Lindsey A.: Virginia O. There are a number of great places to live. UNC actual provides a list of local apartment complexes in the Admitted Student binder. I would say a lot of students live in Alta Springs which is a short drive from campus. As for on-campus housing, there is some but the first priority is given to families although if there is room they often open it to single students.**

Virginia O.: ok thanks.

Radhika S.: Does KFBS offer student loans to students?

**Lindsey A.: Radhika- yes. there are opportunities to finance your education. It is done through FAFSA to determine your need.**

Neelam: Is there a significant alumni presence on the west coast?

**Lindsey A.: Neelam. There is a growing presence on the west coast. Often, I think business schools find students settling in near-by areas as well as the major business hubs (NYC, Charlotte,etc). We see that as well. We had a number of students attend the west coast career forum earlier this month which has increased UNC's presence.**

Neelam: What are some of the opportunities you see at KFBS? What would you like to see changed or improved?

**Lesslie\_KFBS2010: Neelam - There are obvious opportunities to learn a great deal in class but many opportunities to gain experience outside of the classroom and take on leadership roles. We have approximately 40 clubs on campus each with opportunities for participation and leadership. These clubs include focuses in careers (finance)or activities (running) or diversity (women in business). There are also opportunities within admissions as a liaison and development.**

Alexandra P.: Do you find that faculty are supportive and invovled in the women's events on campus?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Alexandra P. Yes, they are very involved and supportive.**

Alexandra P.: Thank you Dawn

Mary M.: What qualities make KFBS students different from those in other MBA programs?

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Mary M. KFBS students are different in the sense that we are committed to community as well as individual development. We are strong leaders who excel in a collaborative environment**

Ali: Has anyone or does anyone plan on studying abroad?

Annette K.: To piggy back off of Ali's question, are there global trips that students can take advantage of during the first and second year?

**Sara W.:** Ali, I'm not studying abroad this year (because I'm president of a club) but I did participate in Global Immersion Elective and traveled to Dubai and Turkey this spring. The trip was amazing - both a great learning experience and a lot of fun. A number of my classmates are studying abroad in places like Chile, Thailand, Singapore, etc.

Ali: thanks sara

B P.: Are there any books you would suggest reading before classes? Any other preparations?

**Amrinder\_KFBS2009:** BP.: You can read some business publications and some students subscribe to Wall Street Journal.

**Lindsey A.:** For those interested, there will be a Women in Business conference held in April. If you are interested in attending, please email me at [Lindsey\\_Aponte@unc.edu](mailto:Lindsey_Aponte@unc.edu)

Virginia 0.: What does the Women in Business conference entail? If I visit in April, it would be good to tie that in if possible!

**Lindsey A.:** Virginia. The theme of this year's conference is "Redefining Business: Creating change through individual development". We are still working on finalizing the programming but it will include topics like the importance of mentoring, work/life balance, innovation, diversity. If you would like me to send you more information when it becomes finalized, feel free to email me ([Lindsey\\_Aponte@unc.edu](mailto:Lindsey_Aponte@unc.edu))

Virginia 0.: Thanks! Do you know the date?

**Lindsey A.:** I don't know that date just yet. We are hoping to have that finalized by the end of January

Virginia 0.: Sounds good, thanks.

Neelam: Are there any case competitions between schools that are attended predominantly by women?

**Lindsey A.:** Neelam. Honestly, I am not aware of any case competitions specifically for women. Although, KFBS has a whole internal website dedicated to providing information on upcoming case competitions.

Virginia 0.: Do you have many students at UNC who are sponsored by their companies or are most students paying on their own?

**Peggy T.:** Virginia, we do have some students sponsored by their companies, but the great majority are paying on their own.

Robin: I have to leave, but thank you for your time. It was very helpful.

Alexandra P.: I have to leave as well, thank you so much! This was very informative.

Neelam: What have you enjoyed most about your experiences at KFBS?

**Lesslie\_KFBS2010: Neelam - The diversity of the students, collaborative environment and the approachability of the professors.**

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Neelam, what I've enjoyed most about the KFBS experience is a very difficult question to answer but since you are making me pick one I will say all the friends I've made from countries and cultures.**

**Sara W.: Neelam, one big benefit that I didn't even expect was the opportunity for significant personal growth and development. I have learned so much about my communication style, leadership style, and strengths and weaknesses and have dozens of opportunities to try to improve.**

Neelam: Thank you so much to everyone for taking the time to answer my questions. I appreciate all of your input.

B P.: Following for Sara's answer, can someone talk a little bit about the Leadership Initiative?

B P.: Have you found the assessments from classmates helping in developing?

**Amrinder\_KFBS2009: B P.: We have a Leadership chat on 1/21/09 at 12.45PM and you can also refer: <http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/leadership/>**

**Sara W.: BP, I have found feedback from my classmates extremely helpful. I've received constructive feedback around my listening skills and conflict management and have been working hard to improve them - and I've actually heard from others that they can tell I'm getting better! The school is also considering rolling out a more comprehensive feedback tool at the end of Mod I next year, for all students.**

B P.: Great - thanks Sara

Virginia O.: That looks very cool!

**Dawn\_KFBS2010: Everyone...we have 15 minutes before the chat concludes.**

Avanti: thank you for answering our questions

Ali: Thank you!

Hyewon: I read women make up 29% of the MBA class of 2009. I'm wondering how many international students among women are.

**Lindsey A:** The class of 2009 is 32% women, we do not have a breakdown of how many of that 32% are international. But overall, international students represent 34%.

B P.: Thank you all very much for your time

Vidya R.: Thank you for the inputs everyone. They have been very informative!

Ingrid: Thank you.

Abhi: thank u all for your time.

**Amrinder\_KFBS2009:** Hi, we have 4 minutes left, please ask us any last minute questions.

Virginia O.: Thanks so much.

Virginia O.: I learned a lot!

**Dawn\_KFBS2010:** Thank you for attending the chat. We hope it was informative. Please note that a chat transcript will be made available approximately 7-10 business days from today. Please check out other chats via the following link <http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/Programs/...>

**Peggy T.:** Thanks for your participation today. Lots of good questions!!

**Amrinder\_KFBS2009:** Thanks!

Hyewon: Many thanks everyone.