



Student Exchange Program

International Student Services

Exchange Final Report

Student Information

Faculty at UVic	Social Sciences
Major/Minor	Biology/Psychology Combined Major
Host University	Maastricht University
Host Country	Netherlands
Dates of Exchange	September-December 2019

Overall Exchange Experience

Please Rate your Overall Exchange Experience

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

What was the most rewarding part of your exchange experience? Please outline any highlights.

Maastricht felt like home for me straight away, and being able to integrate into another culture so comfortably was very rewarding and exciting as I felt like there was so much to explore and experience while I was there. Living in Maastricht was a great experience and I really love the city and the people there, and I think the overall lifestyle of living in Maastricht was very rewarding. Additionally, I think one of the highlights of exchange was just living together with so many other exchange students, because there was always a lot going on and it was a very social and fun environment. Meeting so many people from all over the world and making connections with these people was definitely one of the highlights of exchange. Also, being able to travel and see many places in Europe was amazing, and being able to travel with people that you've met on exchange made it that much better.

What was the greatest challenge during your exchange?

I think the greatest challenge I encountered on exchange was figuring out how to study and what to know for courses, since the teaching style is quite different from what I am used to at home. However, we are equipped with training during the first week and the tutorial leaders, course coordinators and other students were quite supportive in providing help when needed.

Travel

Cost of air travel \$1500.00

Cost of ground transportation (ex. monthly bus pass)

Bike cost 13 euros/month

Did host university representatives meet you at the airport?

No

Is there easy transportation between the airport and university?

Yes

Orientation

Is there an organized orientation session upon arrival?

Yes.

How easy was it to find the info you needed to know upon arrival?

It was very straightforward, once arriving at the Guest House they provided us with most of the information we would need and the university was also very helpful in providing us arrival information.

What assistance did you receive from your host institution upon arrival?

The host university had an introduction week planned for us which consisted of some fun activities, welcome ceremonies and tutorials which helped us learn the teaching style that Maastricht University employs which is Problem Based Learning (PBL).

Accommodation

Is on-campus accommodation available?

No, but the UM Guest House is close to the most of the university campuses

If yes, did you live on campus?

No

Would you recommend this to future students?

I would recommend the UM Guest House

If you lived off-campus, how did you find housing?

I found housing through the UM Guest House, which is not on-campus accommodation, but it is in association with the university and it is mainly housing for exchange students. It was quite easy to find a room if you booked early.

Approximately how much money would you budget per month for living, including accommodation and meals?

1000 euros.

Language Programs

Is there a language program available either before or during the semester?

Yes

Is there an additional cost for the language training?

Yes

Academics

Was it possible for you to get all the courses that you wanted?

Mostly yes

Please describe the course registration process

We submitted a list of our top 8 choices of courses and then the university allocated us into these courses and then told us which courses we were in. I mostly got all of the courses I was hoping for, and I think it might be possible to switch a course if you wanted.

Instruction was based on lectures and tutorials. Lectures varied in their helpfulness for learning the course, but tutorials were consistently important to learning the material. I thought that overall the quality of instruction was quite high, but it was a very different learning style from what I am used to so it was still difficult at times.

Describe the manner and quality of instruction at your host university

What do you feel is the greatest academic benefit you have gained personally from your exchange?

I really gained a lot of confidence in sharing my ideas in a discussion group. Before studying at Maastricht, I would rarely contribute to group discussions, but after participating in so many discussion-based tutorials I feel that I am lot more comfortable sharing my thoughts and making contributions to the discussion.

Personal and Cultural Connections

How easy was it to adjust to the local culture? What (if any) cultural differences did you find particularly challenging? What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

I found it very easy to adjust to the local culture. It was particularly easy because the vast majority of people speak English. I didn't experience any particular difficulties with my adjustment to the culture. I really loved the culture around biking, and it was a very enjoyable way of getting around. I also found that everyone was very friendly and willing to help, which I also appreciated.

What kinds of cultural, athletic and social activities were available for students at your host institution?

There are many athletic options for students and many clubs which specialize in most sports and outdoor activities. There is also a nice gym and exercise classes offered at the university campus. Aside from athletic activities, there is an Erasmus Student Network called ISN (international student network), and they plan many cultural and social activities such as pub crawls, pre-drinks and weekend trips to places like Luxembourg, Belgium, Netherlands, Prague and Oktoberfest.