



Student Exchange Program

International Student Services

Exchange Final Report

Student Information

Faculty at UVic Faculty of Arts
Major/Minor Geography / Business
Host University Utrecht University
Host Country Netherlands
Dates of Exchange September 2018 – January 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

Learning more about myself, developing my self-confidence, and meeting new friends. This was the result of a combination of things, including: moving to a new country, saying yes to new experiences, and having the support of my home and host university.

What was the greatest challenge during your exchange?

Travel

Cost of air travel This was expensive – my family needed to help me.

Cost of ground transportation (ex. monthly bus pass) Public transportation is expensive, however, I cycled to university instead.

Did host university representatives meet you at the airport? They did not, but my family came to the country with me for the first week.

Is there easy transportation between the airport and university? Yes, the transportation between the airport and university is fairly straightforward.

Orientation

Is there an organized orientation session upon arrival?

There is a very well organized orientation session upon arrival. This was excellent, and where I learned a lot about the university, got inspired, and met most of my good friends.

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

Information was easy to come by upon my arrival. The university had a special app just to explain important information. In addition, during their orientation event they had many people out helping.

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

My host institution was diligent about asking me about my accommodation situation. They also would send me emails telling me at what times orientation started, and where I could find further information prior to orientation (i.e. apps, websites, etc.)

Accommodation

Is on-campus accommodation available? Not enough accommodation is available.

If yes, did you live on campus? No I did not get accommodation on campus.

Would you recommend this to future students? I would highly recommend living on campus if you're able to get a spot.

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

I found housing using websites that the university recommended during their housing webinar. The main housing websites I used were Kamernet and Direct Wonen.

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

I would budget around 850 euros for accommodation and meals (my rent was 600 euros).

Language Programs

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

Yes, there was a free 10-course program you could enrol in at the beginning of the semester.

Is there an additional cost for the language training?

No

Academics

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

Yes, I was enrolled in all the courses I asked for. However, it is very difficult to change courses once you're enrolled. As a result, ensure you sign up for courses you're pretty sure you will find beneficial.

Please describe the course registration process

The host institution has a webpage for geosciences courses that exchange students are able to enrol in. I chose courses that were available for me to register in. I also looked at other departments within the faculty and chose a course that was offered in English. My host university did the rest and were able to enrol me in my top choices.

Describe the manner and quality of instruction at your host university

I found that instructions at my host university were always high quality.

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

I have gained a lot more interest in my studies and learned more about the facets of my studies that I'm most passionate about.

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?

It was quite easy to adjust to the local culture. The language barrier would be the largest cultural difference, however, almost everyone I've encountered in the Netherlands speaks fluent English. It was a great place for exchange, as the culture is much different than at my home institution, but the fluency in English makes it easier to go about daily errands (i.e. shopping and interacting with people).

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

There are many cultural, athletic and social activities available for students here. The club days at the beginning of the semester showcase this, as there are a large variety of student clubs and associates for pretty much anything that someone could be interested in.