Studying abroad: LMU München (August ’15 – April ‘16)
Who?

- Me (Mark Coelen)

- Master History and Philosophy of Science (graduation planned December 2016)
  - Direction: Philosophy of Physics

- Other stuff I do that takes time: internship at Investico/Groene Amsterdamer, literature, skiing, art, traveling and testing beers, wine and liqueur.
Structure of the talk in a nutshell

1) Answers to several practical questions

2) My experiences

3) Evaluation of my experiences

4) Questions/discussion
WHY!?

- Adventures are good fun (main reason).
- You meet interesting new people (and you avoid routine).
- Your abilities to speak/write English proportionally improve.
- For me in particular: there were interesting courses at an University abroad that enabled me to write a better thesis.
When did you start organizing your study abroad?

- Around November 2014 I started to orientate.

- “Problem” of my field of research: there are not many places where you can study/do research in philosophy of physics.

- But, be creative with regard to the possibilities: a significant amount of credits in your program may exist out of (basically) every kind of course.

- That is: I was also enrolled to a course in political philosophy & philosophy of economics.
Why did you want to go to this country/location?

- There were two options: Budapest or Munich.

- In a way my choice is arbitrary.

- Nevertheless, mean reason: LMU Munich has “the Munich Centre for mathematical philosophy”.

- I lived in Berlin for a while and the German culture has advantages over Dutch culture (although Munich and Berlin differ quite a lot).
What kind of forms did you need to take care of?

- The UU site really offers a good guideline.

- First, you need to hand in a request. Mainly everybody gets a place, but sometimes not the first round. Your study program during the first request is just an approximation.

- If the request is accepted, you need to apply for a Erasmus fund.

- You should get in touch with the Erasmus employee of the University Abroad

Punch line of this slide: an exchange and assertiveness are strongly correlated!
Was it easy to find accommodation and how did you organize this?

- The housing policy of LMU Munich is not appropriate.

- Munich is not cheap (somewhere between Utrecht and Amsterdam prices, varies per neighborhood).

- I was not able to attend at those “hospiteeravonden” so finding a room from a distance is very hard (so visiting your place in advance is not at all a bad plan to to take care of housing).

- So, I finally hired an apartment (real estate organization):
  a) advantages: calm and you decide exactly what you would like to do.
  b) disadvantages: if you want to do something you need to organize it, while if you live together with other students, that kind of stuff automatically happens.
What was your budget?

- I did subrent my room in the Netherlands (= saving costs).

- I had some savings and my parents are mainly very sweet.

- So, I believe if you get a normal room (something I failed to do), it is not that more expensive than living here.

- And: If you need to visit the Netherlands during your stay abroad, EU-flight-tickets these days, if you book in advance (about 1 month), are just 50-60 euro’s.

- In Munich public transport was partly funded by the government (for students): I paid 150 euro’s (unlimited) for 7 months.
Did you get any scholarships? And if yes, how did you get them?

- Yes, I did: Erasmus Grant (like almost everyone).

- Nevertheless: it is important to explain the relevance of your stay abroad in order to get the grant.

- Be aware of the fact that you need to complete your stay officially: the idea is that you receive 70% of your grant in advance, and the rest you will receive if you did meet the requirements (e.g. getting enough ECTS’s).
What did I do there (I) ?

- I was enrolled to three courses:
  a) Analytic Metaphysics
  b) Philosophy of Physics
  c) A course about political philosophy & philosophy of economics

- I was writing my master thesis, 52.5 ECTS, which takes lots of time.
What did I do there (II)?

- I arranged to be enrolled to a history of science course in Utrecht during my stay, in order to write an big essay about the (history of) the *Deutsches Museum* (= Science museum).

- Very interesting to do because you create a strong connection with the city (since you are familiar with its history).
What did I do there (III)?

- Skiing in the weekends: the Alps are just 1.5 h away.

(already around 10\textsuperscript{th} of December)
What did I do there (IV) ?
- Walking, reading and having beers and coffee in the city Park “Englischer Garten” (about the same size as central park, NY).
What did I do there (V) ?

- Having official taste tests all around the city of Munich with friends to evaluate the quality of the local beers.
Evaluation of my time in Munich

- If you don’t do anything not happens: obviously an exchange costs time and effort, but it is all very doable and there are people to help you.

- Munich is a very nice city with a great public transport network that enables you to visit every part of the city within 20-30 minutes (which is nothing in comparison to Paris, London and Berlin).

- LMU Munich is a very good University.

- And, the German academic culture is way more liberal: Germans are punctual in a different sense.
Any questions?