

2017-2018

Report 1

e-mail address	<i>optional; only if you don't mind students preparing for study abroad contacting you directly</i> i.m.vanolphen@students.uu.nl
faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Liberal Arts and Sciences

destination city & country	Madrid, Spain
name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
start date	19 / 01 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	11 / 06 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

You are requested to write on the following topics. Text boxes will expand automatically while typing!

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The exchange application process already started really early (about 1,5 years before I actually left), and that was nice because it gave me time to prepare well for the exchange and get used to the idea of leaving for so long.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I thought it was nice that we had the meeting about studying abroad at the UU. Although I do think that a little more information around the start of the exchange would've been nice.
academic preparation	As a Humanities student I could only pick courses from the Humanidades section at UC3M, which was okay, because they had several really interesting courses. Some of my courses even overlapped with courses I've already taken at UU, although most of them were about really different subjects. I think that as a student from the UU you're well prepared for a semester at UC3M, because the level is doable.
language preparation	I took all of my courses in Spanish. The way I prepared for this was by the 10 Spanish courses that are part of my Bachelor Liberal Arts & Sciences at UU. Although I hadn't practiced my Spanish in over a year when I went on the exchange, I tried to keep my level somewhat up by watching Spanish series now and then.
finances	Madrid can be quite expensive, not per se more expensive than the Netherlands, but it is a fact that you do so much outdoors (especially in the beginning when you're just getting to know people) like going to restaurants, going out, sightseeing and travelling, that things can easily add up. So I advice you to save up before you leave.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	My study programme was really diverse: I took classes about classics culture, logic and argumentation, art and heritage and geografy. The content was really interesting in the courses and the pace of the courses was quite high. However I do not think that it was too high. Luckily, there weren't any organisational issues in my case, my teachers were super nice, always on time and the classes always started on time, so no complaints about that.
academic quality of education activities	The academic quality of education activities was alright, for example we've been on two very interesting excursions for the Geografy course. For the Art and Heritage class we had to make our own turistic route (and

report about it), which took a lot of time but was kind of nice. Although, I think that this was more of a high school like activity.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Luckily, I never needed counseling or support, but I think that the University's organisation was good.
transfer of credits
I am currently still in the process of waiting for this to be completed, so I don't know yet.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The welcome day was okay, although I entirely missed out on the fact that there was a introductory powerpoint presentation and a buddy programme. I was not well informed about that. For the courses, there wasn't an orientatio programme at all. Neither was there one for public transport. However there was a housing organisation asking people if they could help them find a place (but I only heard back from them after wees, so too late).
accommodation
People had recommended me to look for a room while I was in Madrid, instead of already finding one while I was still at home, because there turns out to be a lot of room scamming here. So this was what I did and I found a room within a week ad stayed in hostels at first. I would recommend looking for a room while you are already here, because you can actually visit the room and see if you like it. But a sidenote is that I learned that it's smart to already send out some emails and set some visiting dates BEFORE you leave, because I only started looking while I was already here and in most of the cases people took about a week to respond to my messages (if ever).
leisure & culture
There are a lot of cultural activities in the city and also plenty of organisations that offer them for good prices. You can think of city trips, bus tours, (salsa) dancing, Flamenco shows etcetera.
suggestions/tips
Find a room in the city centre, it's so much nicer to be able to do everything by foot.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend this university and destination to others. First of all, from what I've heard Carlos III is the best University of Madrid and I really liked the atmosphere there (although the Getafe campus is quite far from the city centre). Second of all, there's nothing that I dislike about Madrid. The atmosphere is great, there aren't many tourists, it's such a fun and big city and there's lots to do.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
I do not.

Report 2

e-mail address	<i>optional; only if you don't mind students preparing for study abroad contacting you directly</i> igordegroot@live.nl		
faculty/college	humanities		
level	bachelor's	master's	PhD
name study programme	History		
destination city & country	Madrid, Spain		



name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
start date	15 / 1 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	29 / 5 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

You are requested to write on the following topics. Text boxes will expand automatically while typing!

PREPARATION
exchange application process
Like anyone else I had to manoeuvre through the maze of the exchange programmes that were offered. I applied for UC3M. This university was quite late with confirming
counselling & support at Utrecht University
Utrecht University has been very clear about the requirements of the programme. The different people involved with the exchange always responded quickly.
academic preparation
I did not need any specific academic preparation for the courses I have followed. As an exchange student I could apply for all courses in the faculty of humanities and the faculty of social sciences. Some courses may require some prior knowledge.
language preparation
One of the reasons I chose for this university was the fact that they offered a broad range of English courses. The English courses were offered by the faculty of social sciences and law. I was enrolled at the faculty of humanities. They do not offer a lot of English courses. But as a history student I was allowed to do courses of the faculty of social sciences.



finances

Spain is cheaper than the Netherlands in general. But Madrid is the most expensive place in Spain. This means that life is about the same price as life in the Netherlands. You do get an Erasmus grant that is aimed for a cheaper country though.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

In UC3M you choose five courses per semester. Choosing these courses is a bit complicated. You have to check yourself whether the times of the classes overlap. After two weeks it is possible to change courses. Courses that are not interesting can be dropped then, to be replaced by more interesting courses.

academic quality of education activities

Spanish people in general speak worse English than Dutch people. In most classes the level of English was good though. I did mainly first year classes. These were more easy than the classes I had taken in Utrecht. Higher level classes are also offered though.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

At the university the European Student Network (ESN) offered help with various problems you might run into. The International Office might sometimes take a while to complete your documents but I did not run into any problems.

transfer of credits

Since this university has a contract with Utrecht University, I assume all credits are transferable.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

During the first two weeks a lot of activities were organised for international students. This way you can easily get to know new people. During the rest of the semester different activities were organised as well.

accommodation

The faculties of humanities and social sciences and law are located in Getafe. Most students live either in the city centre of Madrid or in Getafe. Getafe is well connected to the city centre. The southern neighbourhoods of Usera and Villaverde would be good places to live as well. Apparently the university offers some accommodations as well. I do not know how to get them though. Madrid is not an easy city to find a cheap accommodation. But I was able to find a place in three days.

leisure & culture

Madrid is a bustling city with millions of inhabitants. There are plenty of options for enjoying yourself. On the campus in Getafe there is not very many activities organised. But there is a sports centre. Here it is possible to do a wide range of sports. There are plenty of very good museums. Bars are located in the neighbourhoods of Malasana, Chueca, Latina and Lavapies.

suggestions/tips

Speaking Spanish really adds to the experience in my opinion. It is perfectly possible to live in Madrid without speaking Spanish as well though. The university offers courses in the Spanish language. ESN offers a buddy programme to learn the language. There are also other very cheap places that offer Spanish language courses to Dutch people.

Spain – Universidad Carlos III de Madrid**CONCLUSIONS**

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain

Yes, I would recommend this university. Madrid is a very interesting city. The university offers a wide range of English speaking courses. In my opinion the university was very well organised.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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2016 – 2017**Report 1**

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Language and Culture Studies

destination city & country	Madrid, Spain
name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III
start date	02 / 09 / 2016 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	24 / 01 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)

You are requested to write on the following topics. Text boxes will expand automatically while typing!

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was a bit slow because it takes some time for the International Office to respond sometimes, although this is understandable due to the number of students wishing to study abroad. Read the instructions on the UU site carefully and start filling and sending the files early, so you will have everything done before the deadline for certain.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

You can always contact the International Office, although keep in mind they might not know what applies to your bachelor. Because I have a doublemajor I only need 22,5 ECTS, which is the minimum requirement to keep the Erasmusgrant. Ask your study advisor so you know for certain if the requirements are met or not.

academic preparation

I didn't need much academic preparation. I was going to study in English, so language-wise there was nothing I could have done to prepare. I was planning to study journalism abroad (ended up studying film instead), but since this field is available to all the studies of Humanites I didn't require preparation.

language preparation

My courses were all in English, so I didn't need preparation. I did learn some Spanish beforehand since I knew many Spanish people don't speak English that well.

finances

It is hard to find a decent place for a decent price in Madrid. Many people will try to take advantage of the

Spain – Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

shortage of available housing to Erasmus students and overcharge you for a room in a very old house. Eating out however is quite cheap compared to the Netherlands, so at least that helps.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

My courses were more practical than I expected, but still enticing. Normally I write about 8 essays per semester at Utrecht University, but at Carlos III I only wrote one because most of my film courses required me to either hand in videos or scripts. All in all I found this to be the creative change I needed.

academic quality of education activities

As I said the courses were more practical. I liked it, but it was not entirely devoid of theory either. I feel the academic quality really depends on the courses you choose. What I found a bit disappointing is how syllabi are hard to come by. I only had one professor who made one. This feels a bit weird when you're used to how organized the average professor is at Utrecht University.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I usually got replies from the host university very quickly. The one thing that bothered me is that it took me over a month to get my university student card, and in the process I was sent around to people who didn't know how to get me a card. Sometimes I feel the organization is a bit messy.

transfer of credits

Carlos III didn't send over the Transcript of Records until the end of February. It is still within the deadline of March 1, but it can be troublesome. It took me a while before the Language Center could send over the certificate of the language course (worth 4 ECTS). I send multiple emails which all received no reply. Luckily, one phone call was enough to receive the certificate on the same day. Whether the credits of the language courses will be accepted is still uncertain, but other than that I am quite satisfied with the way the transfer went.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

ESN tries to make you feel welcome by organising trips, tapas dinner and more. It is relatively cheap and accessible. It's a great way to meet international students, but don't forget about meeting Spanish students!

accommodation

It is hard to find a cheap place with other international students. However, since public transport is cheap (€20 a month for those who are 25 years and younger) you could live a bit further away from campus if you don't mind travelling a bit longer. Keep in mind that the public transport in Madrid is quite reliable, and this comes from a person who really hates Dutch public transport. In my case, my campus is in Getafe, but I really wanted to live in the center. Getafe is a nice small city, but there is not much to do. If you really want to experience Madrid I would suggest you live in Madrid instead of Getafe. I spoke with students living in Getafe and they always complain about the lack of fun things to do. Also, at midnight the train (Cercanias) start their last route, so late night shenanigans will be hard if you want to travel back to Getafe from Madrid.

leisure & culture

Madrid is the city where going out at 11PM is considered very early. You could go out at 3 AM and you can still enter many places. During daytime you can visit museums. Some offer discount or even free entrance for students (like Reina Sofia) while others grant free access during specific times (Museo del Prado: 6 pm - 8 pm on weekdays, 5 pm - 7pm during the weekend). You can sign up to Citylife Madrid, Be Madrid, or Smart Insiders. These organisations have reoccurring events for students in English you can join, either for a fee or for free.

Spain – Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

suggestions/tips

Learn Spanish! Most Spanish people don't really speak English, so a little bit of Spanish will get you a long way. Also, don't forget to visit El Tigre; it's a place where you get a plate full of tapas for ordering one beer and they will keep on giving as long as you keep buying beer. All in all Madrid is a good place to have some fun.

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain

I can recommend Madrid and Carlos III wholeheartedly. Cheap food (seriously, a three-course meal for €10-€15 is normal), friendly people and a nice change from Utrecht University if you need it.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

The online environment at Carlos III is not the best (I missed an exam because I couldn't find the exam data), so don't be afraid to ask the Spanish students for help! Also, keep track of your stuff since Madrid is notorious for its pickpockets.

Report 2

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/>
name study programme	Erasmus exchange

destination city & country	Madrid , Spain
name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
start date	05/09/2016
end date	16/01/2017

You are requested to write on the following topics. Text boxes will expand automatically while typing!

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The exchange application process wasn't too hard or difficult, as things are normally quite well organized in Utrecht. I don't really remember which forms I had to fill in exactly, but I don't remember it to be the most stressful.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I didn't need any counselling, but whenever I had a question I could just send an e-mail and then I got my answer. Even when I didn't know exactly what was my next step in the exchange process with regard to documentation, they would answer my question and even send the correct form with it. I very much appreciated that.

academic preparation

I didn't need any academic preparation. I could just enroll after year 2, in the first semester of year 3.

language preparation

I also didn't need any language preparation, as I study Spanish Language and Culture, so I already spoke Spanish and had classes in that language.

Spain – Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

finances

I'm really lucky my parents could support me financially during my stay in Madrid, because the accommodations are really expensive. You can compare it with the rooms in Utrecht. The Erasmus grant is definitely not enough to pay for that.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I had to adjust my study programme a week before school started at UC3M, but not too drastically and eventually I was happy with the subjects I chose.

academic quality of education activities

I was really happy that my classes were in Spanish, so I could learn to understand the language better, while learning new things. I was happily surprised that the academic quality was quite high, because I'd heard from other students the quality wouldn't be too good. It turned out UC3M is known for their academic quality, and I could definitely notice that.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I didn't receive that much support at the receiving university. The teachers were very nice and helpful, but I didn't speak anyone from the international office, except for when I e-mailed them, and I didn't have a problem with that.

transfer of credits

I didn't receive my actual ECTS yet, but the grading in Spain is a little bit different than it is here. To pass you only have to get a 5 (out of 10) and the grading really depends on the teacher. For the most subjects I got higher grades than I normally got in Utrecht, but that can also be because I really focused on my school work in Madrid.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

On the first day at the university there was a Welcome Day which was really nice. It can be a bit awkward at first because you don't know anyone, but most of the other exchange students are there alone and need some social contact. It was a great way to meet some people.

accommodation

I had a room in a old fancy home that belonged to an old lady, who seemed very nice at first, but turned out a bit crazy. We (the other tenants and I) couldn't bring any guests over, so I wouldn't recommend renting a room in the house of the owner.

leisure & culture

Madrid is a city that never seems to sleep. Even walking home alone at night didn't feel scary, because there's people everywhere all the time. If you like art, music and good food, Madrid is the place to be.

suggestions/tips

I really liked to go running in the Retiro Park. It's a very big park and there are always people running or skating there. Also, it's so much nicer to walk everywhere in Madrid instead of always taking the Metro (which is very easy and fast). The center isn't too big and you see interesting people and architecture everywhere.

CONCLUSIONS

Spain – Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend Madrid as a destination for your study abroad. Getafe, where the university was, is a 20-30 minute (depends on where you live in Madrid) Metro ride, but a lot of exchange students go there and they have a nice library to spend an afternoon studying in.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Don't choose the subject Prehistoria y historia antigua at UC3M. It was horrible and even the Spanish students think it's too boring and too hard.

2014-2015**Report 1**

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Spaanse Taal en Cultuur

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The process of application was quite extensive, which I consider is positive given the fact that it is easy to forget what you have to arrange before leaving. The extensive process makes sure you don't forget about things that seem obvious, but you are quite easy to overlook in the bigger picture of going to study abroad. Besides, the procedure and all the documents were very clear, so it didn't complicate the process.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The meetings arranged by the international office were very helpful, not only informative but it also makes you more excited about going, and you know a little bit more what you might expect, not only about the study process, but also your personal change and emotions involved in the whole experience. Furthermore, you could always go to the office hours if you had any questions, and they are sure very helpful, and happy to help you with everything you doubt about.
academic preparation	Being a third year student, and only going in the fourth year, I think I had enough academic experience to go and see how it all goes abroad. My advantage was that a lot of former students told about their experiences with Spanish universities so that I kind of knew what to expect. I really don't know what else I did as academic preparation, but just talking to other students, and knowing how the educational system of your destination country is.
language preparation	Given the fact that my major already is studying a language, I had already the required level to follow classes in Spanish. Therefore I didn't do much more to prepare, but I learnt a lot during my stay. Nonetheless I took a Spanish intensive course at the end of my stay, and noticed that I learnt a lot by being there.
finances	The fact that you had to hand in a financial plan for your application, made me aware of what my adventure probably would cost. I decided to save a lot, so I could do everything I wanted, instead of holding back because of money. You can prepare yourself, but knowing what your financial situation is going to be is still uncertain.

Spain – Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
	The website of my receiving university was very clear and organised, which made it easy to look up courses, and what their content would be. The only thing was that the time schedules were only known two days before subscribing, which could lead to problems, but luckily for me I only had to change one course.
academic quality of education activities	
	The quality of the classes were higher than expected, based on the experience of other students who went to Spain. I was happily pleased that the level on this particular university was really high, and the expectation of the professors as well. You needed to attend all classes, because it was part of your grade, and also participate, when asked, in discussions. Also, the grading system was divided in two options, a continuous evaluation with weekly writing assignments, presentations or comments on a text, or the extraordinary evaluation in which you only had to make the final exam, but pass it with a mark higher than 8.3. I have to note that this was my experience and opinion, because other exchange students of other faculties had more problems, especially with the organisation and grading method. For the faculty humanities, everything was perfectly arranged, and the grading method for me was the same as at Utrecht University, because at my bachelor we also have a continuous evaluation system.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	
	The same as in Utrecht, the international office was always available to help you, although the help given is of course culturally marked, and might be different than you expect. For me, I didn't need anything, but I know that there were different possibilities to get counselling and support at the campus.
transfer of credits	
	The credits given were from the same system as in Utrecht, so there were no difficulties or things to mention about the transfer of credits.

STUDENT LIFE	
welcome & orientation programme	
	The first day we were all expected to attend a welcome meeting from the university, where they held different presentations and everything was told what you should know in general about the university. Then we had a guided tour around campus, which was helpful. In addition, the Erasmus Students Network was quite big and active in Madrid, so there were two weeks of welcome activities with the rest of the exchange students, which gives you the opportunity to meet people, and exchange your experience in the first weeks. They also help you to get around the academic system, so they were not just to provide fun activities, they also could help solve a lot of doubts concerning the first classes and getting around campus.
accommodation	
	There were various ways to get your accommodation. The university has multiple student residences with different options of service and therefore different prices. I didn't live in one of the residences, but I met a couple of students who lived there, and really enjoyed their stay. The university was not in the centre of Madrid, but had campuses in the suburbs, mainly in Getafe and Leganés. A lot of exchange students chose to live in the centre, but the accommodations are terrible, prices are high and you live with too many people in one house. The centre is fine, depending on what you want of course, and travelling to the suburbs was easy and didn't take much time. I chose to live in the suburb Getafe, because my faculty was at that campus, and I really enjoyed living there, in a perfect accommodation. So different possibilities, and for everyone what they would possibly want is to find near the university, and gives no problems for exchange students.

Spain – Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

leisure & culture

In Madrid, you can do every day something different, and still find out new places and streets you hadn't seen before. The cultural life is really good accessible for students, because a lot of musea are for free, and theatres and monuments give a big discount when you show your studentcard. Besides, Madrid is in the centre of Spain, so you can easily go on daytrips to surroundig cities such as Toledo, Segovia and Alcalá de Henares, and also on trips a little bit further because the busses and trains have a really good connection, so basically you can go on weekends throughout the country without being on the road for to long.

suggestions/tips

If you go on trips in Spain, and you can speak spanish, i strongly suggest that you take a look at blablacar, wich is quiet big in Spain. You can book a seat in someone elses car, and ride with them to a destination, and savily because on the website you can see the profile of the driver and other passengers. A fun way to meet knew people, see the beauty of spain, practise youre spanish and travel really cheap.

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain

I would definitely recoment this university, not only if you speak spanish, but also just for english speakers. A lot of course are offerd in english, so you won't have any language problems, and the clases are really good. If you are looking to serious studying, this university is probably the best in Spain to go to, and if you just want to have fun, all the other universities will do just fine.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Really enjoy every moment you are there, make sure you know what to expect and you will have a wonderfull semester abroad. It is a change you only get ones, so make sure you really want it, and make the most out of it, whatever that means for you.