

2018-2019

Report 1

Please use Tab to go to the next (text) box.

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	French language and culture

destination city & country	Nice, France
name university abroad	Université Nice Sophia-Antipolis
start date	03 / 09 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	12 / 01 / 2019 (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 is quite intensive and you will have to hand in many documents. However, everything is clearly indicated on the site of the UU and the International Office will absolutely try to answer your questions.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The International Office was very helpful and always responds fast when you send a mail.
academic preparation	It is quite difficult to really prepare yourself for the French courses. This is due to the fact that you will probably have to change (a number of) your courses mentioned in the original study program after arriving in France. For me, my bachelor courses were my academic preparation. Nevertheless, it is important to know that the educational system in France differs from the system in the Netherlands. The 'handboek voor uitwisseling', which you will receive after the pre-departure meeting, will give you some practical information about these differences. This might seem a little bit strange, but I would recommend watching some French videos on YouTube about the French universities ('Comment s'organiser à la fac?') because they will help you to understand the French educational system and to improve your French.
language preparation	Since I am a student in French language and culture, my French was adequate enough to attend courses abroad.
finances	During the application process of the UU, I needed to make a financial plan. This was very helpful and gave me an idea of the costs. It is important to realize that Nice is a very expensive city and that your rent can be very high. Especially during summer before going abroad, I have worked a lot in order to save some money. I would definitely recommend applying for the 'CAF' (Caisse Des Allocations Familiales)

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	

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In september, there were some organizatory changes in the studyprogramme which is partly due to the fact that most courses will be rewarded for 2 or 4 ECTS. When I arrived, the courses which were mentioned in my studyplan did not exist anymore. As a result of that, I simply had to attend courses in order to see if they were interesting and not too difficult. It was quite challenging to find courses and to put them in a timetable, that is why it took me about 4 to 5 weeks before really knowing which courses I was going to take. Nevertheless, at my arrival at university they told me that I had the possibility to contact one of the teachers who would help me choosing and finding the subjects that matched my interests which was really helpful. I really like the courses that I have taken. I really like literature and I was glad to be able to take 6 courses in literature and 1 course in didactics. Nevertheless, students had the possibility to take courses in almost all courses at the faculty of humanities.

academic quality of education activities

The French educational system differs a lot from the system in the Netherlands. In most courses, the teacher will tell a story and it is your own responsibility to write everything down that might be useful. Personally, I would recommend trying to get in touch with the French students or at least ask if they would like to compare their notes. In general, they really helped me and some of them proposed to help me studying for the exams. In some courses there was a powerpoint, but most teachers would not put it online so you really need to be focussed during class. I really appreciated experiencing a new way of studying even though it was quite difficult at the beginning.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I was very happy with the International Office at the humanities faculty. If you send a mail, they will respond fast and they will absolutely try to help you. Sometimes it was difficult to get correct answers to questions but this was due to the organizational changes.

transfer of credits

Because of the 'contrôle continu' I received all my French notes and I got my transcript of records in the second week of February. However, these are the french notes and that is why I do not know exactly how these courses will be graded in the Netherlands.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Before the beginning of the courses, there was a meeting for international students organised by the International Office and after a few weeks they organised a meeting during which they offered some specialties of Nice. In France, there is the ESN (Erasmus Student Network) which organizes many activities for international students which gives you a great opportunity to meet other Erasmus students.

accommodation

At first, I wanted to find an accomodation in one of the affordable CROUS residences but they did not have enough rooms available. I really wanted to find a room before going to France and that is why I decided to rent a small studio in a private residence (Résidence France Riviera). I had a really good time in this residence. It was really clean and well organized and most importantly trustworthy. Other students told me that they had found a room at leboincoin.fr

leisure & culture

Nice is such a lovely city! You are extremely close to the sea and the old town is beautiful, I have been there so many times and it stays interesting. It is easy to take the bus (1,50) or train to explore the 'Côte d'Azur' and other parts of France and even Italy. At the humanities faculty, they organise each month the 'sorties culturelles' for exchange students in order to teach them more about France and the french culture. These trips

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are very affordable so I would definitely recommend to participate. Another great thing about Nice is the free entrance in most museums for students.

suggestions/tips

I love ballet and I had the possibility to see a ballet performance at the opera of Nice for only 5 euros and once I got a ticket for free. You will also receive mails of the university in which they present the cultural programme for a specific month which was really great. I was very lucky to meet some really nice French students who did not only help me finding my way at university but also invited me to go out. For example, we went to french movies and they showed me where to go out or go for a (affordable) dinner. I would absolutely recommend getting in touch with the 'locals' in order to improve your language skills as much as possible.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend this university and destination to others. It is true that the French organization can be a little bit difficult but you will forget this when you will have a sea-view from your classroom. In general, the weather is amazing and I found it really hard to say goodbye to Nice. I even considered staying the whole year and I will go back really soon.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Do not be afraid of exploring France and French culture and try to talk as much as possible with the French people. It is really great to have other international friends but (depending on your specific Erasmus goals) I would highly recommend trying to make some French friends or to talk French with other Erasmus students.

2016-2017**Report 1**

faculty/college	Geesteswetenschappen/Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Communicatie- en informatiewetenschappen

destination city & country	Nice, France
name university abroad	Université Nice Sophia-Antipolis
start date	09 / 01 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	12 / 05 / 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 exchange application was due long before really getting into the exchange preparations. It was difficult to choose courses to take abroad this much in advance, but at the same time it forced me to think about the courses already and saved me time afterwards.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I don't recall getting a lot of support at UU, but that may be due to my own tendency to work independently. When I had questions I could always get answers at the International Office by e-mail.
academic preparation	It was very hard to determine which courses abroad would be a good continuation to the courses taken at UU. Not all bachelors/masters are exactly the same and not all entry requirements were equal. I found that part of my courses were more difficult than I expected of the matching courses at UU, even though they were not said to be more advanced. I suppose this is due to different secondary educations and different bachelor programs. It would be very hard to academically prepare perfectly for the semester abroad, since you never know what courses should match.
language preparation	I had been studying the language since long before preparing the exchange, so there were no specific preparations necessary.
finances	The financial plan due at the beginning of the preparations turned out to be a good indication for my actual finances during the semester.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	As said before it is very hard to decide which courses will match the bachelor. Also, the systems might work differently at the different universities. For instance, in my original bachelor it is usual to select different courses which may be from different majors. At my host university, one bachelor contains mostly or only

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obligatory courses. It was a challenge to select courses I wanted to take, make them suitable for my prior knowledge (since I did the first semester at UU), and to also fit them in a timetable.
academic quality of education activities
I was satisfied with the average level of academic quality, but in a way I found it distracting that the bachelor consisted mainly of courses with few ECTS. The master's course that I took was a lot better suited and was also rewarded with more ECTS.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Any questions I had I could ask my responsible at the university. Unfortunately, another person took over from the beginning of January, right when I started my semester, which I found confusing. Teachers and people in the International Relations Office at the host university would sometimes give different answers to the same questions, so it was hard to find out who actually had the knowledge about Erasmus-events and examination for example.
transfer of credits
In the beginning it was not clear to me where I could find my grades (again, I asked at the International Relations Office and I was given an answer that turned out to be incorrect). Through a classmate I found out how to access my grades. I have been told by my responsible that the grades will be transferred to UU automatically.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
I did not participate.
accommodation
I tried to find accommodation at the university website, but it turned out to be impossible to reserve a (cheap) room to stay in for the second semester. I got no reaction so I sent an e-mail to the organisation which gave me a link to another website. There, however, the rooms were twice as expensive, so I looked at websites to find another room. Eventually I found a room in an elderly couple's house, at roomlala.com.
leisure & culture
In the city and the environment there are many things to do. On top of several touristic events (especially in summer) there are a lot of clubs and bars. By becoming friends with locals (or people very well integrated in French culture) you really get to enjoy the culture of getting together at a soirée (which can be anything from a small house party to hanging out at the beach to drinking tea together) and dedicate a considerable amount of time to eating during a nice lunch or dinner (wine included, also during lunch). Many people in the city are very open to conversations and might just start talking to you on a bus ride. The high amount of foreigners in the city makes it easy to make friends, since many people are very eager to get acquainted.
suggestions/tips
I have found it very interesting to get acquainted to both local students and foreigners, instead of just the latter. I was also staying in a home owned by an elderly French couple. These things helped me a lot with figuring out the specifics of the culture of Nice and what to pay extra attention to!

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
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I would definitely recommend this destination. There is a nice and open atmosphere at the university and in the city. There is always something to do, but on the other hand there are always possibilities to relax as well. Making contact with people is easy, and the city has many different aspects.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Be careful with the choice of semesters. The second semester starts earlier than in the Netherlands and finishes in April already. With regard to the university courses it might be advantageous to go to Nice during the first semester, however I found that the second semester was culturally very interesting (probably more than the first). So decide which semester might be best for you considering your specific Erasmus goals.