



UU Study Abroad Report Form

	Contact info available at the IO.
faculty/college	Science
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Biology

destination city & country	Edmonton, Canada
name university abroad	University of Alberta
start date	1 / 09 / 2022
end date	23 / 12 / 2022

PREPARATION

exchange application process

Preparing for my exchange was easy as UU provided me with much information, and I was used to the process as I had applied during the covid period. Nevertheless, the university of Alberta online environment was a bit confusing, although I encountered no problems.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

All the counselling and support I required was provided to me, I have no complaints.

academic preparation

I did no academic preparation as I was planning on taking courses that matched my major or were of introductory level.

language preparation

I did no language preparation as I met the required language standards and had confidence in my English ability.

finances

Although perhaps I should have done this differently, I decided to increase my student borrowing to the maximum possible amount about a year before going, to save around 5000 euros beforehand. I continued to borrow during my exchange and this combined was sufficient. I planned on working for 6 months after my exchange to compensate for the borrowed money.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I took just 3 courses (18 EC total) as I did not need any credits to graduate. I took two advanced cell biology courses which were very pleasant to take although on (CELL405) was more work than anticipated. Additionally, I took PALEO201 (which is an introductory palaeontology course), this course was extremely easy (partly considering my biology background and obsessive interest in dinosaurs as a kid). All in all, these courses provided a moderate workload, although better time management could have helped reduce the workload. Also, I was still following a UU honours program while abroad. There were no issues with combining the courses and I chose courses with class only on Tuesdays and Thursdays leaving me with the opportunity to fun things on the remaining days when wanted.

academic quality of education activities
The courses were interesting and fun as I chose subjects, I knew for certain interest me. Nevertheless, the quality of education is a little lower than in Utrecht concerning my subjects. The subjects rely heavily on the professors, https://www.ratemyprofessors.com/ visit this website to find some information on your professor and courses before making a definite choice. The course descriptions were representative of the activities to expect.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
I did not require much counselling or support, although it seemed as if the international coordinators at the UofA respond quickly.
transfer of credits
I am still in the process of transferring credits, this seems to be going smoothly and as expected.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
The welcome program was very pleasant, and this is where I made most of my friends. Each residence building (HUB, Nipisiy, I-house or others) has additional introductory events in addition to the ones organized by the international office. I recommend going to many introductory events as these are great to meet people, especially the Elk Island national park trip organized by the international office. Unfortunately, the Nipisiy residence where I stayed was lacking in activities for newcomers, luckily, I had some acquaintances that took me to their residence at International-house where there were many fun activities and fun people.
accommodation
Accommodation is provided if you apply before a certain date. I recommend doing this as it makes it a lot easier to meet people, make friends and see friends often. Staying in residence was a lot of fun. The accommodation given is expensive, I stayed in Nipisiy which is very new and of good quality. Other residence buildings may be less good, but I did not hear many bad things about any building. Even though I stayed at Nipisiy, almost all my friends were at International-House, so I spent a lot of time there and I-House has a better community and is more active than many other residence buildings.
leisure & culture
There's not much to see in Edmonton, there is some nightlife and many good cafés, the campus region is very nice compared to the rest of the city I find. While on exchange I did some trips to the rocky mountains and to Vancouver and smaller trips. I was underwhelmed as it was a lot more difficult to get to the rocky mountains than expected, due to the greater distance than I thought and cars are almost necessary to get anywhere in Canada. Nevertheless the nature is beautiful and the culture is fun to experience and a lot different than the Netherlands.
suggestions/tips
Expect to be more dependent on cars while in any remote area. It's very difficult to use public transport in the Rocky Mountains and there are many rules that can make it difficult to rent a car, so be aware of this when planning trips. Additionally, if you want to go skiing, be aware of the weather, it can get so cold that skiing is not enjoyable anymore, but temperatures fluctuate from extremely cold to tolerable. I recommend magicbustours to go skiing in Jasper national park if you can't get a car like me and my friends. Try to do as many activities as you can early in the semester to make friends quickly.

CONCLUSIONS



would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Although there are probably more interesting cities in Canada. Nevertheless, the university is good, and it is still Canada, so the people are nice, and the culture is interesting to experience. Although the Canadian nature was farther than expected, Edmonton is still one of the best places to get to the Rockies. Wherever you go on exchange you will have a blast!
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Go on exchange!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Geosciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Global Sustainability Science

destination city & country	Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
name university abroad	University of Alberta
start date	23 / 08 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	23 / 12 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was pretty stressful, but that was mostly due to the complications from the COVID. I also needed a study permit, which is not required under normal circumstances, and that was quite a long process and a bit of a hassle to obtain. However, if you know what documents you need it is pretty straightforward and the exchange officers from both the UU and the UofA are super responsive if you have any troubles.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Cathelijne was very helpful in answering any questions I had, and there were about two meetings in which we got information. The information given was usually pretty clear.

academic preparation

Registering for courses takes a bit of efforts, as Bear Tracks (a platform similar to Osiris) is a little hard to navigate. Be wary that some courses are not available in either the Fall term or the Winter term. When registering in Bear Tracks, it checks for prerequisite courses, but since I did not have any from the U of A, I had to email the course coordinators for most of the courses I wanted to take, and all of them were happy to admit me, even if the course was full already.

language preparation

I did not really have to prepare, I feel like the level of English is pretty high for most uni students. UU also provides a language proficiency document, so you do not have to take any tests or anything.

finances

Canada is an expensive country, make sure you save up some money. In the months leading up to my exchange I worked a part-time job and I got the max amount from DUO, and I kept that DUO during my exchange as well. Housing on campus provided by the UofA is a little over a 1000 CAD per month plus one-time housing-related expenses, and groceries are on average more expensive than from Dutch supermarkets (the closest 'real' supermarket to campus is Safeway Garneau, but Safeway is a little expensive. Go to No Frills or even Walmart instead). I had the mindset that I would rather do nice things and live a little more luxurious than be super tight with my money, and I was able to go on a few really nice trips that I wouldn't have wanted to miss. I also went skiing, and one tip is to rent gear in Edmonton and take it with you in the car, instead of renting it near the resorts, as it is nearly twice the price there.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)



I took the following courses: Natural Resource Economics; Cities and Urbanism; Indigenous Canada; Parks, Ecology and Society and Gender and Social Justice. These are all pretty different and are also quite different from the courses that I usually take in Global Sustainability Science. I especially recommend the Parks course. I originally registered for 5 other courses, but all of those got moved to online and I wanted courses that were mostly in-person. It was easy to switch, even up to two weeks into the semester. I was enrolled in the ALES faculty.

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality was a little lower than in Utrecht I would say, and the biggest difference is that my courses were pretty much only lectures, no labs or tutorials, but I have heard this is different for other faculties than mine. Most of my courses were easier than my courses in Utrecht, especially in terms of exams and the strictness in grading. It was still intensive though, as this time I had 5 courses at the same time and for 4 months, instead of 2 courses for 2 months. But this way of studying gave me plenty of time to enjoy non-academic activities.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I did not really need much counselling or support, but I believe there are many different options available if you need help in any way.

transfer of credits

I have not completed this process yet.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There was a pretty good welcome/orientation program, although a bit limited due to the pandemic. I believe there was a residence-specific welcome program, a faculty one, an exchange specific one and a general one, so lots to pick from. Most of these activities were held in the week before classes, and I met a lot of people from the international community through these activities (but definitely not all of my friends, don't worry).

accommodation

As an exchange student you get offered a room on campus. Due to most residences being full already, I got placed in Graduate Residence instead of Nipisiy, International House or HUB Mall. It was a two-bedroom apartment, and still very nice. Be wary though that the rooms do not include some basic things such as a shower curtain, bedding, pans, cutlery, etc. Most people I met lived in either Grad Res or I-House, and both residences are really nice, although I haven't heard the best things about HUB mall. All the residences also organize activities throughout the semester, so that is nice. Especially the I-House community is very tight and I feel like everyone knows everyone there.

leisure & culture

You may have seen in a lot of these other student experiences that Edmonton is a little boring, but I do not really agree with that. The campus is really pretty and has a lot of facilities; definitely check out the (free) gym, climbing centre and swimming pool, as well as the campus bar Dewey's. Whyte Ave is definitely the place to be, it has a lot of nice independent shops and some cool places for going out, such as Cook County Saloon, The Buckingham, Beercade and a little off Whyte is Midway. Downtown is a typical North-American cityscape, and is fun to walk around in, but becomes a bit dead after 5pm. Be aware that the city is huge (about three times the area of Amsterdam) and that you will likely use the (free) train (LRT, 5 minute walk from residence) or bus to get around. The river valley is pretty to walk around in too. The biggest appeal of going to study in Edmonton is, of course, the nearby National Parks; Banff, Jasper and Elk Island. Banff and Jasper are 4/5 hour drives away, and Elk Island is only 30-40 minutes outside the city. Elk Island especially is really nice for a day trip, just hiking around and seeing some bison. Banff is simply amazing, I went in September and in December and both season



settings were gorgeous. Going hiking, visiting landmarks, exploring the town, all amazing. I also took a 5 day trip to Vancouver and a 10 day road trip where we went to Quebec, Montreal and Toronto, and I would definitely recommend seeing Vancouver. Some of my friends also went to Vancouver Island, which was beautiful as well.

suggestions/tips

- Be as open-minded as possible, and remember that many people are in the exact same situation as you (culture shock, knowing nothing, etc.) Meeting people and making friends is super easy on exchange, especially since you all live super close, so don't be afraid of being lonely all the time, you won't be.
- Definitely go on as many trips as you can, especially the Rockies, they are beautiful in every season
- Teachers are super approachable, and if you have questions about anything, they will gladly answer.
- -30 degrees is not as frighteningly cold as you may think due to the dry atmosphere, but still layer up! If you go in Fall term, you will experience warm weather in September, super nice autumn colours in October and Snow in November and December. It's pretty much always sunny in Edmonton.
- Try to see the Northern Lights! You don't need to go to Yellowknife to see them, we saw them twice in the city.
- Get a credit card, you usually cannot pay with your normal Dutch bank card
- 5 courses at the same time is tough, but you should not and don't have to spend all your time studying
- Go to see a Edmonton Oilers hockey game in the stadium at least once
- Movie tickets are cheap!
- Edmonton has some nice concert venues, especially Midway and the Starlite Room
- Communauto, a car sharing service, is usually cheaper than renting a car
- The West Edmonton Mall is cool to experience at least once, the water park is pretty nice
- Made by Marcus on Whyte Ave has the best ice cream ever.
- Take into account that when you return to Utrecht, reverse culture shock is a real thing – I still would like to go back even now

CONCLUSIONS

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

Edmonton was not my first choice, but the city is surprisingly fun and the surrounding nature is gorgeous. Canada is just beautiful and Canadians are super nice and welcoming. Definitely go and see the country and don't let the cold or the name 'Deadmonton' scare you.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I don't think it matters exactly where you go, exchange will always be a super great experience. Just go! Even if Edmonton was not your first choice.



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Bètawetenschappen
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Biology

destination city & country	Edmonton, Canada
name university abroad	University of Alberta
start date	01 / 01 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22 / 04 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

This all went rather smoothly for me. But during the months before the exchange, I was very stressed about the advice from the government changing which could cancel the exchange. because of covid I was very stressed in the months before

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The international office was easy to reach via email. But because of covid I never met up with Cathelijne or other students who are going to the same destination.

academic preparation

It was a lot of work for me to choose courses because of the many courses you can take at the UofA. This took me a lot of time because not all courses are given in both semesters and some were also full very fast. Because I had some courses that I wanted to take had prerequisite courses which I did not have as an exchange student. Therefore, I had to email the professors personally for permission to take the course.

language preparation

I did not do any language preparations beforehand. I did not experience any problems with my English as an UU student.

finances

Most things like groceries are a bit more expensive in Canada compared to the Netherlands. I rented I room on campus for 700€ which is more than what I was used to in the Netherlands. I recommend saving beforehand not only for the higher expenses but also because for trips you can make during the semester.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The UofA has a very big variety of courses which I found very nice. You have to take 3-5 classes but most people I met did 3 or 4 which I can also recommend since this leaves you time to do fun stuff. I took one level 200 course, two level 300 courses and one level 400 courses which I found very doable. I took history of post-confederation Canada, comparative vertebrate anatomy, northern ecology and biology of mammals. These courses were very fun because they thought me more about the natural world and history of Canada.

academic quality of education activities



I took mainly biology courses and found the quality of these courses to be very similar to the courses I have taken at the UU.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The international office of the UofA is very helpful and respond quickly. Michal was always very helpful if there was an issue.
transfer of credits
This all went very smoothly and quickly.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
I arrived when covid still put limitations to orientation activities so this might have influenced my experience with this. For us there was no real orientation or welcome programme when we arrived. But luckily some other students in I-house invited everyone to go out for dinner and to pubs the first couple of days. So I quickly met a lot of people.
accommodation
You can live on or off campus at the UofA. I lived on campus, and I would definitely recommend this although it might be a bit more expensive. I lived in I-house which was a great place to make friends and meet people from all over the world. I would recommend I-house because it is very easy to meet people there. But I also had friends living in Nipisy and graduate residency which were also very nice.
leisure & culture
Edmonton does not have the most vibrant nightlife compared to most European cities, but it's a big city and has a lot of nice pubs, restaurants, and nightclubs. And you can also have house parties on campus ofcourse. Edmonton is only a three-hour drive away from the Canadian Rockies which makes it a nice destination if you want to go skiing or hiking or do other outdoors activities.
suggestions/tips
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• During winter the temperatures in Edmonton can drop to minus thirty so layer up! But this does sound worse than it actually is. Because of the arid air in Edmonton and a lot of sunshine these temperatures are doable.• Definitely go to the Rockies to go hiking or skiing. If you rent a car the drive between Banff and Jasper is also very beautiful and passes a lot of beautiful lakes, canyons, and mountain views.• We also frequently went to Elk Island national park which is only a forty-minute drive from Edmonton in which large herds of wild bison and other wildlife live.• White Avenue is a very nice place close to campus that has a lot of nice shops, restaurants, and bars.• A big tip as well is to use the exchange as an opportunity to travel. If you save money before the exchange, you can see a lot of Canada and perhaps even the rest of North America (flights are very cheap inside the US and Canada). I studied during the winter term and my last exam was April the 22nd. Because I had so much time left after this, I had the opportunity to travel to Vancouver, San Francisco, New York and even to Hawaii! I did all this with friends I met at the UofA. If you might want to travel after the semester, I recommend not booking your return flight in advance which gives you more freedom.• I had a layover in Toronto on my way to Edmonton and decided to make a six-day trip out of it which was a cheap way of travelling there since I was passing it anyways. I did the same thing on the way back in New York.• Even if you don't live in I-house ask someone who lives there to put you in the international hangout group chat. In this chat people proposed activities and everyone is free to join. This was a great way for me to meet people.• Download an aurora alert app. It is possible to see the aurora in Edmonton sometimes!



CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, my exchange in Edmonton gave me the opportunity to experience another country, visit a lot of Canadian cities, see some really beautiful nature and above all I met some really good friends.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I can't recommend going on an exchange enough! Even if it is not in Edmonton, it is a great way to experience another country and make friends from all over the world.



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	FSW
level	bachelor's
name study programme	Psychology

destination city & country	Edmonton, Canada
name university abroad	University of Alberta
start date	07 / 01 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	23 / 05 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The university of Alberta provided me with clear instructions for everything to do. Michal, the exchange officer gave updates from the moment he knew I was coming. Especially the information around the current COVID situation was very helpful. The site from Utrecht University was also clear, even though the estimated expenses were far of.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The only information I got from UU was what was on the website. It was mostly complete but as we all know COVID made things more complicated. It was very uncertain if things would go on. The UU was very unclear about this, 'wait with making arrangements, but don't wait too long', is not something that can be called advice... When did arrange something properly they told me to fix it, without any further explanation.

academic preparation

Every study programme has obligatory courses. In order to be able to study abroad, I made sure that I finished all the prerequisite courses for psychology. Having started my thesis in the first semester, I still had to work on that while in Canada. This was very challenging, because of the double workload and the time difference for meetings. But all at all, I managed.

language preparation

Before I went to Canada, I was sure about my English language capabilities. As an extra preparation I decided to follow classes in English in the semester before I left. This made me even more sure about my English. When I arrived, it was still needed to get used to speaking English 24/7. At home everyone used to speak with a fat Dutch accent, arriving there it took some time to get used to all the different accents. It might sound surprising, but the Brits were the hardest to follow.

finances

I knew for a long time that I wanted to study abroad. So, naturally I prepared to study abroad for a long time. On top of that my parents also provided me with some financial support. Strangely, UU did not have ANY scholarships for Canada. This was very surprising since all the other Dutch people I met from different universities got scholarships, worth at least 1.000 euros.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)



In order to enrol in higher level courses, you had to have followed other courses. Since I followed those in Utrecht, the system used in Canada, was not able to register me in those courses I wanted. This problem occurred multiple times, with multiple people. In order to make this more accessible, this should be told before. The people who have to manually sign you in, were of course only responding during working times. Whereas students sign themselves out of the courses during the evening, it was hard to join the courses I wanted. This was a very stressful time, and I didn't feel I received the support they could have provided.

academic quality of education activities

Most of the classes were organized very good. Especially the 400 level classes in seminar form I followed were of a very high level. Having seminar discussions with one of the leading researchers in the field was an unique chance of learning to have scientific discussions. One of my classes was organised by a very messy professor. The information was provided week per week. The classes were on Tuesday, and information was send on Monday which was not ideal. When we had the online exam it took her 45 minutes to realise that she didn't provide us with the code to access the exam, very stressful.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The information received from the exchange officer was great. However, as mentioned before the faculty didn't provided me with as much support as they could have.

transfer of credits

This was very strange. The 400 (4th year) classes I followed were scaled as lower level than the 200 level classes I followed. This also happened to one of my friends who studied abroad. I also thing that there should be a differentiation between the amount of credits received for the different level classes. That first year classes which are extremely easy yield the same amount as fourth year classes, which are way harder, is crazy. Also make the document in which we have to provide our classes a Word document. A PDF is a pain to edit.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

As far as I was aware there was no welcome or orientation programme. I arrived in freezing weather (-28 C) and they didn't even show me how to get to my apartment. The room wasn't properly cleaned, not to start about the bathroom. All the welcoming I had was organized by students, who were not obligated to do this by university. I have to say that I am very grateful for the great community they built.

accommodation

I lived in an the Nipisiy house. This housing is provided by university and on campus. University has a monopoly on housing around campus, this results in very high rent. However, the house I lived in was for 6 people. Half of my stay I lived there with only the 2 of us. Since classes were partly online, a lot of students decided to follow them from home. This resulted in a very spacious living space for me. At the max we lived there with 4 people which was great too. In Nips you share a bathroom (shower + toilet) with two people, and a kitchen + living room with 6 or 4. This is really nice, since you will always have someone to have either a quick that with or even a deep conversation. Me, moving in with 3 people who had already living in the house for the first semester made it really easy. They already bought things like cutlery and pots and pans. Be aware that furniture means that there is only furniture and all the other things have to be bought.

leisure & culture

As north America isn't known for its culture, you should be aware of all the opportunities there are. Going to a hockey match is a completely new experience and something you definitely should give a go when in Canada. Alberta is known for its cold in the winter. Personally, I love winter and snow, but to be fair Alberta took this to a whole new level. I loved hiking in temperatures 30 degrees below 0. Speaking about hiking, Banff in really



close! Well for Canadian standards, I guess. It is only an 8-hour drive. Endless white woods and the Rockies, what do you need more for a perfect hiking trip? Looking for a weekend trip, go to Elk Island, there are plenty of Bison there and even the possibility for tours provided by trained rangers, all free because you are a student! If go on an exchange to go out, Edmonton might not be the best place. The biggest club, Midway closes around 02:00 which is very surprising. AS you might expect, going-out culture is quite different.

suggestions/tips

Few small tips in the previous topic.

Also, since you are already on the other side of the world, might as well take a few extra flights to Vancouver and explore Vancouver Island. Or even the USA! Make sure to sign in for the newsletters of some Canadian Airlines, since they have a lot of sales.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes! I never enjoyed my time as much as I enjoyed it there. The nature, the people, and even University were a blast!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Feel free to send me a message for more tips!



level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Rechtsgeleerdheid (Utrecht law College)

destination city & country	Edmonton, Alberta Canada.
how did you travel to and from your destination?	By Airplane
name university abroad	University of Alberta
start date	02 / 01 / 2020 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	17 / 03 / 2020 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The exchange application process did not go very smooth since the international office forgot to send me the application, luckily I found out in time. However I only had 3 days to fill out the forms and to get all the documents necessary. The application process itself is not very difficult.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	For me the Utrecht University was very helpful, when I had a question that would always help me and their were willing to make it as easy as possible for me. In my experience, studying abroad can be a bit overwhelming sometimes. I did learn that reaching out to the university with questions or concerns you might have can be very helpful!
academic preparation	I did not have to do any academic preparation.
language preparation	I did non need any language preparation.
finances	I worked a lot the year before I left and I also loaned money to safe up for the trip. I would really advise to safe up some money so you can do a lot of stuff while being abroad without worrying about the money all the time.

(interrupted) STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
welcome & orientation programme	I arrived in Canada at the second semester, and the welcome/orientation programme was not very big. I heard that the welcome/orientation programme is much bigger in the first semester. However the first week I was at the campus, there were daily activities arranged to meet other people and to get to know the campus. The activities might seem a bit boring or awkward at first, however I do recommend to just go to the activities because it is a great opportunity to meet other international students. The orientation programme from the university itself, was extremely boring, however I did meet a few friends there.
study programme (content and organisational issues)	Since I study Dutch Law, I took classes in Canada just for fun and for the experience. It was all extra for me. I had to sign up for some classes before I left to Canada, however you are able to change classes in the first 2 weeks or so. I changed almost all my classes and that was not difficult at all. I took 3 classes in 3 different faculties. Sometimes it says on Beartracks (the Osiris of the university of Alberta) that you are not able to take a



class, however sometimes when you email the coordinator it is possible to take that class. Three classes is the minimum amount of classes and 5 is the maximum. Since the exchange was all extra for me I decided to take 3 classes only, in order to have enough free time to also do other things than studying. This was a very doable workload.

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality in Canada is a bit lower than in Utrecht I would say. For one class I only had lectures, and for the other two I had lectures and seminars. However the seminars are quite different than in Utrecht, the seminars are less interactive.

transfer of credits

Because of the coronavirus outbreak during my exchange the University of Alberta decided to stop giving grades, you would only get a pass or a fail. This was a disappointment to me since I actually received some good grades. Once I received my final grades (so in my cases a pass or fail) I sent the official transcript to the University of Utrecht and there were very understanding of my situation.

CORONAVIRUS CONSEQUENCES

support guidance of host university

As stated before the orientation programme at the University of Alberta was not very broad, however I did learn a lot about all kind of institutions where you can go to for help. Also the international coordinator in Canada is extremely kind and very helpful.

support guidance of home university

The support guidance in Utrecht is also good. Sometimes the given information can be a bit limited, but if you have questions you can always ask and they are always willing to help. In some periods it can take a while before you get an answer to an email.

online offer and quality of digital courses

Since the corona pandemic started during my exchange I was forced to go home 2 months before planned. I had to follow the rest of the classes at online in the Netherlands. This was a very transition for me, since it was not what I expected at all of course. I did go on a exchange to study in my own living room in the Netherlands. Following the online classes was kind of annoying since the classes were live and mostly not recorded, and there was a time difference of 8 hours for me.

suggestions/tips on digital exchange

Make sure that the classes are recorded, so that people can watch it twice or that they can watch it at a time that suits them. Also make sure that you answer emails as quickly as possible, I sometimes had a question about the material and I had to wait a few days before I received an answer.

CONCLUSIONS

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

First of all I would definitely recommend going on an exchange, I don't think it really matters where you will go you will have an unforgettable time everywhere I think. Second of all I would recommend the University of Alberta to everyone who really wants to experience what it is really like to live in a different country. Because Edmonton is not huge and because the campus is not far away from the city centre I really had the feeling that I Experienced what it is like to life in Canada and not just what it is like to study in Canada as a foreign student. Edmonton can sometimes be a bit dull, it is not a party city. However there are a lot of nice places you just have to get to know the city. If you want to party every night this might not be the exchange for you. If you want to know what it is like to live on (a campus) in Canada, with beautiful nature close by this is the exchange for you.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



At first it can be really hard to be in a different country with nothing or no one you know. The city and the campus can maybe feel unwelcoming however try to see pass this. Canadian people really are as nice as everyone says they are. Try to go to as much as activities as possible to meet new people, as soon as you have some friends everything gets easier. Also try to get to know the campus as soon as possible this makes you feel at home. I would also recommend to join one of the clubs, I joined the Outdoors club which was very nice. I for example went on a camping trip, and to a hockey game. Through this club I met other international students but I also met some Canadians. Try to say yes to every opportunity you will get and really enjoy your time there! If you want to travel try doing it during already during the semester and during reading week. I had to leave 2 months early due to the coronavirus but luckily I already travelled to a few places. You never know what will happen, so if you get a chance just take it!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Sciences
level	Bachelor
name study programme	Chemistry

destination city & country	Edmonton, Canada
name university abroad	University of Alberta
start date	26 / 08 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	19 / 12 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was fairly easy. At the University of Utrecht everything went smoothly. Only had to write a motivation letter and put together some other documents to apply and after that everything went automatically. The application at the University of Alberta was also simple. We only had to fill in an application form and send it up by mail together with a transcript and then the process was started. The university took care of most procedures and the communication was really good and straight forward. There is a lot of information on the website of either Utrecht University and the University of Alberta. Therefore, it was very clear when you had to submit what.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I did not really use the counselling at Utrecht University. The information meetings were very clear and if you had questions during the meetings the people could answer them or send you info later on.

academic preparation

The only hazard is to register for courses. Beartracks can be kind of a confusing website and I had to email sometime to register for my courses, because I wasn't able to register on the website. However, the people responded really quickly (in a minute) and were very helpful. In my faculty I did not have to do a lot of academic preparations as all my courses are in my 'profleringsruimte'.

language preparation

Be sure you are fluent in English. But most dutch students that had in English in high school have the right level of English. We got a prove of language from the University of Utrecht to sent to the University of Alberta and that was enough. We did not have to take an English test or anything. You don't need French in this part of Canada 😊

finances

Make sure you have some money. Living in Canada can be expensive (groceries and rent) and you want to enjoy the experience. Keep some money separate for travel, cause it's worth it, but not cheap! I worked for a year and put together around 4000 euro for 4 months with that and together with a maximum rent at Duo that was really enough to live a quite luxury life with enough travel.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The University of Alberta offers really interesting courses! I had courses in Environmental Chemistry, Greek and Roman Mythology, Geological Environmental courses and Physical Dynamical courses. It was fairly easy to register for these courses, even when it did not work the first time through Bear tracks, it was just one email



and it was settled. The communication with the teachers was really good and if you have trouble during the course, they are very willing to help you. The classes in these universities can be quite big, so it can feel a bit impersonal sometimes, but even in those classes, if you contact the teacher they will do everything they can to help you.

academic quality of education activities

I think the level might be a little less than at the Utrecht University, but overall the difference wasn't that big. The courses are interesting, however it is a lot of just lectures and they expect that you do a lot of study on your own. But I think that is generally how the universities in North America are setup. Also, keep in mind that it can be quite competitive in the classes here. The way the system is set up is a little different than at our home university and it creates quite a competitive environment. However, we as students of University of Utrecht have quite a high level of education, so we are fine. But it is just a different environment. Overall, the education quality is really good and they have really interesting and different courses than we do at home! So it is a good academic experience 😊

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I didn't need a lot of counselling, but they offer great services at the university. The international counselling is awesome and they have an office on campus which is open a lot and you can just walk in with any question you have. They also offer a lot of mental services, if you have problems with that and everyone is very willing to help you (very Canadian 😊)

transfer of credits

I don't have my grades back yet from the university, so I don't know about this yet.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

I arrived in the fall semester and they offer a full week of orientation before class starts if you stay on campus. They have a lot of fun and useful activities and it is a nice way to get to know people. If you don't stay on campus they also have an international orientation and a faculty orientation to explore the campus and meet people. So either way, you are good! I think there is also a shorter introduction program for the winter semester.

accommodation

I stayed on campus and I really recommend that. It's not cheap, but it is a really nice place to live in the best area of the city and you will meet a lot of people there. Either go to I-house or Pinecrest (don't stay in hub, didn't really hear nice stories about that). The communities are great in I-house and Pinecrest, although you will have to do with meeting mainly international people cause there are not a lot of Canadians in these residents. If you don't want to stay on campus find a place near the university area, cause that is one of the nicer areas of the city, downtown seems a bit sketchy. I think craigslist has some housing offers outside of campus.

leisure & culture

The city of Edmonton is nice but not very exciting. I mainly stayed around the university area. There is a really nice cinema just on the corner of campus that plays awesome classic movies and activities. Whyte ave has some nice bars and places to eat. But it is not a really big party city, there are not really clubs. The real reason to go here is nature. Travel around in the weekends, go to the Canadian Rockies and enjoy the absolute beauty of the mountains. Elk park is just an hour out of the city with bison and stuff. It really is an outdoorsy city. Riverside park is also really nice to do little walks in the snow between classes. As a student at University of Alberta you also have free access to the big gym, swimming pool and climbing hall, the facilities there are really good.



Also, make sure you have a good winter coat! Layers will save your life! (If you don't, there are some second hand shops where you get cheap winter clothes. The outdoors club can lend you stuff sometimes and Kijiji is like the dutch marktplaats. It has everything you need for cheap!)

suggestions/tips

Join the outdoors club! They organise really cheap trips to the mountains and outdoorsy activities around Edmonton. It is also a nice way to meet other people on campus.

CONCLUSIONS

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

If you love the outdoors and nature, 100% yes. The University of Alberta a really good and nice university. Although Edmonton itself is not that exciting, the area around it is amazing. Canada is a really beautiful country with really nice people. They are very open and welcoming. The University of Alberta is very open to international students, they do everything in their power to make you feel welcome to Canada. The international community in Edmonton is really good and welcoming. And the snow and the cold seems scary, but it is really quite awesome to experience it for a while!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Even if you don't go to Edmonton, go on an exchange. You learn so much and it doesn't matter where you go, it will be an amazing experience!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Media and culture
destination city & country	Edmonton, Canada
name university abroad	University of Alberta
start date	02 / 07 / 2019
end date	21 / 12 / 2019

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process went pretty smooth and isn't that complicated, but it's not something you can do at the last minute. You need to write a motivation letter, make a study plan with the courses you're planning to take at your top-pick university and get this approved by someone from your faculty. At the information meetings, they give you the name and email address of the person from your department, so make sure to go to the meeting!

After being assigned a spot by Utrecht University, I got some documents from the International Office that I needed to fill in and send to the University of Alberta. Start filling this in as soon as you get it! You need to get another stamp of approval for your study plan and send the physical documents to your host university, which costs money and time. Luckily someone I knew was in Edmonton at the moment, so he could print it there and deliver it to the International Office at the University of Alberta. But if you need to send it through the postal office, it can take a few weeks. Especially if you want to live on campus (which is guaranteed if you do it before a certain date), you should do this quickly as it takes a while before they accept you.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

There was a lot of information sent out by email from the International Office and also a few information meetings (general meetings, but also specifically for North American destinations). The pre-departure meeting was helpful, as you get to ask questions to people that have actually been to the place you're going to and have already gone through the process. During my stay I didn't have a lot of contact with Utrecht University, but everything went quite smoothly for me, so I didn't really need it.

academic preparation

The courses I took were mostly outside of my own academic discipline. For two courses, I was automatically admitted, for the other two I contacted the department those courses were given in (Political Science in my case), since I didn't have the prerequisite courses. Because of the minor I have taken in Utrecht, they enrolled me in the courses immediately. So, I didn't need any extra academic preparation. As long as you show your motivation and can show you have some experience in the area (if you're taking higher-level courses like I did), they are happy to enrol you in the courses you want!

language preparation

I feel like the level of English of most Dutch people is pretty high, especially after meeting people from other countries. I had never followed courses in English, but all of my literature is in English, so I had some experience in using it in the academic context. Most courses at the University of Alberta are in English and I had no trouble following the discussions or lectures. The University provides an English proficiency document, so you don't have to take any extra tests.



Finances

I saved up some money by working the entire year before I went on exchange and of course DUO is a nice source of income as well. In general, life in Canada is a bit more expensive than in the Netherlands: living on campus was almost twice what I pay per month in Utrecht and groceries are more expensive as well. However, you get used to this and living on campus was definitely worth it! Try budgeting to keep an eye on your finances and set your priorities straight. For me, the main thing I wanted to do next to studying was traveling and seeing the mountains. This meant I had to be a little more strict with certain other luxuries, such as buying groceries but in the end I got to go on some amazing trips. I was a bit hesitant about raising my loan at DUO at first, but realized pretty soon that in a few years I will look back at my exchange and remember the amazing things I did, that I wouldn't have wanted to miss out on because of money issues.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

At the University of Alberta, 5 courses count as full-time study. Most international students take 3 – 4 courses and I would definitely recommend this if you don't need all the credits. Some people that had to take 5, didn't have as much time to go out and explore as I did. You can drop and add courses pretty easily until two weeks after classes start: this gives you some time to determine whether a course is what you expected from it.

I ended up taking four courses: Historical Perspectives in Native Studies, Canadian Politics, Ecology & Politics, Environmental Feminisms and Social Justice. I didn't need the credits to graduate, so I just took courses that seemed interesting. The first two were mainly to get a better understanding of (the history of) the country, the other two I took because of my interest in climate change issues. All courses were super interesting and taught in similar ways to what I'm used to in Utrecht (small classes of about 20 – 30 people, a mixture of lectures and discussions). What was different, was that it's taught over the course of four months (instead of two blocks of 10 weeks in which you take 2 courses, like in Utrecht). Sometimes this was a bit overwhelming with overlapping deadlines and readings.

academic quality of education activities

There's four levels that you can take which give you an insight as to how hard or easy a course is: 100, 200, 300 and 400. There's definitely a difference if you're taking an introductory course or a more advanced course, but in general, I would say the courses are not necessarily much easier or harder than what you get in Utrecht and it really depends on which level your taking: of course it's going to be easier than back home if you're only taking 100-level courses when you've already been studying for a few years in Utrecht. I didn't want to take only first-year courses, but I know some people that did and they had a little more free time. I took one 100-course, one 200 and two 300, which was a pretty good combination of being challenged but also being able to chill a bit more in other classes.

I do feel like teachers grade papers and exams a bit milder than what I would've gotten for similar papers in Utrecht, so it's quite easy to get a high grade if you put a little effort in it. There is also a strong culture of getting A's and having a high average GPA, instead of just passing a course with 6/10 like in the Netherlands.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

There's a lot of ways in which the University of Alberta offers help to international students: there's programs from all kinds of organizations, like residence services (if you live on campus), the international office, your faculty and general things such as health care, financial help and the student union. It can be a bit confusing who you need to turn if you have an issue (there is not one specific person that you're in contact with), but they do send you to people that might know more.

transfer of credits



It can take a few months until your credits are fully transferred, so I don't know a lot about this yet. I did get an email from the university with an explanation of how to request a transcript of your grades (which UofA will send to Utrecht University) and this was pretty easy to do online. Don't forget to apply for a case in Osiris to get approval for the courses you are taking (once you're sure which ones you're taking). I thought just approving your study plan was enough at first, but you need official approval from the exam committee.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There's different orientation programs going on during the week before classes started. There was a general orientation for all new students, for international students and for your residence. This was pretty extensive since I went the first semester, I believe if you go the second semester it's only one day. Some of the things were a bit boring and not a great success, but you could see they put an effort in it. It's also a good way to get to know people from your residence, learn about different clubs on campus and the student life in general and there's tons of free food and other free stuff, which is always great. Most people I ended up being friends with, I met during the orientation week, so I would definitely recommend going! After the orientation week, things kind of die down when classes start, but there's still things being organized all the time (mostly in residence).

accommodation

I lived in Pinecrest House with three other international students, with whom I shared a living room/kitchen and two bathrooms. There's also a laundry room, common area on every floor, a gym in the building next door, a library across the street and activities being organized every few weeks. The bus stop which gets you to Whyte Ave (where the supermarkets/bars/other cute shops are located) is a few minutes away.

Even though it's much more expensive than living in the Netherlands or off-campus, I would definitely recommend living on campus! Most of my friends also lived in Pinecrest (or other residences that were next door, like Tamarack or International House) and it's a whole new experience to live on a campus with your friends a few doors down (instead of having to cycle across the entire city to see them). It's also pretty sweet you can wake up 5 minutes before your class starts.

I-House is also nice because you get your own bathroom, but you do share a kitchen with about 14 people I think. HUB-mall might be a little cheaper but I haven't heard great things about it and it's situated right above the mall on campus. If you want to live off-campus, it's a little cheaper and not as hard to get a room as in the Netherlands. However, I think it would be a lot harder to make friends in just a few months if you live off-campus.

leisure & culture

The campus itself always has a lot of things going on and all the sport facilities (gym, swimming pools, ice skating rink, climbing centre and more) are all free! You can join one of the many clubs, from sports clubs to film/gaming/language clubs: there's something for everyone. There's also some restaurants, a small mall and a bar on campus.

Even though Edmonton is not the most exciting city in the world, there's a lot of things to do around town. Whyte Avenue has a lot of shops and bars and it's always nice to have a walk in the River Valley, which you can access easily from the campus. It is also known as the "festival city", as there are festivals all year round. Even in winter, there's tons of things going on. I would also recommend going to an Oilers ice hockey game, it's pretty fun and a real Canadian thing to do. Elk Island National park is only 45 minutes away if you want to escape the city for a bit and it's a nice day trip.

One of the main reasons why I wanted to go to the University of Alberta was its (relative) proximity to the Canadian Rockies. In four hours you could be driving through the mountains, which are really beautiful! I joined the Outdoors Club: they organize trips to the mountains almost every weekend for a cheap price! They also do



skiing and climbing trips and organize social activities and weekly running/climbing groups. Not only do you get to meet a lot of nature-loving people, it saves a lot of money if you don't have to rent your own car (since many Canadian students have their own car).

suggestions/tips

- Try to explore as much as you can! I was away on trips to the Rockies almost the majority of the weekends, either with the Outdoors Club or with friends. I also did some longer trips: to the Rockies in the summer, to Vancouver Island in the reading week in November and 4 weeks in the US at the end of the exchange. Canada is beautiful, so don't spend all your time studying!
- Get a credit card! I didn't use my Dutch "pinpas" once during almost six months, you can't use it anywhere.
- Go to NoFrills instead of Safeway for your groceries. Safeway is closer, but super expensive. Even though you have to take the bus (which is free with your student card) to get to NoFrills, you'll save a lot of money by getting your food there.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Definitely, I had a great time! Canada is a beautiful country and the people are super nice. The University of Alberta takes good care of their (international) students and has a lot of facilities. For me, the proximity to the Rockies was one of the best things about the exchange. However, if you prefer a hustling and bustling city and are not a big fan of the outdoors, I would try to find another option.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Don't waste your time studying, but try to get outside every once in a while! The Rockies are amazing and winter time makes the mountains even more magical.



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Humanities
level	bachelor's
name study programme	Language and Culture Studies

destination city & country	Edmonton, Canada
name university abroad	University of Alberta
start date	07 / 01 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	01 / 05 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The process of applying for Utrecht University wasn't that difficult. Just make sure to start in time, since you want to make a decision that is well thought out. After I got selected for the UofA, it took some time to collect all documents for the actual application for the University of Alberta. Make sure you don't procrastinate much since you have to send them by paper mail and this may take a while. Luckily Michal Guzowski, the Exchange Programs Coordinator of the UofA, was really helpful and responded to my questions very quickly.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Even though in the end, I didn't need their assistance a lot, the International Office was very helpful and responded quickly. They also organized a pre departure event, going into detail about Canadian culture and academic systems which was quite nice.

academic preparation

I didn't do any academic preparation since I was able to choose multiple different electives which didn't need precognition.

language preparation

Since almost all courses at the UofA are taught in English, I didn't need any language preparation. During my stay I noticed that the English of Dutch people is generally above average. Utrecht University also provides a Declaration of English Language Proficiency, so you don't have to think about doing tests as TOEFL.

finances

Canada is quite an expensive country but with financial support from my parents, some help from uncle DUO and the OV-vergoeding I think it is not too bad. Some groceries and booze are a little more expensive but you'll get used to what to buy. Go to No Frills instead of Safeway! Although it is a little farther away from campus, prices are way better. In the end I spent more money than I initially was planning to, but this was mainly caused by my frequent trips and not by daily costs. The UofA has many clubs organizing events such as trips to the Rockies. If you're planning to join these trips you should start saving some money, since they are generally more expensive. Especially if you're into skiing, this can cost quite a lot of money! (It is amazing whatsoever)

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I signed up for four completely different courses: Aboriginal Canada (Native Studies), Criminology (Sociology), Colonial Latin America (History) and Topics in Italian: the Sopranos (Modern Languages). Since I didn't need all the credits and the course required a lot of reading, I ended up dropping the course on Aboriginal Canada. Most



international students take three/four courses since they usually don't want to spend all their time in the library. It is really easy to drop/switch courses through Beartracks (Kinda like the Osiris of the UofA) up until the second week of classes. Therefore you can take a little time making up your mind!
academic quality of education activities
<p>The academic quality of courses at the UofA is generally a little easier than what we are used to at Utrecht University. Papers and exams are generally graded higher compared to similar works in the Netherlands. However, the courses were more intensive since you're following more courses at the same time and involve more reading. It was also more normal to go for an A instead of just trying to pass a course than I was used to back home.</p> <p>Courses are divided in different levels: 100, 200, 300, 400. This way it is quite easy to predict the difficulty of a course.</p>
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Exchange students get great support at the UofA. I didn't need their assistance a lot, but they offer help in all kinds of ways: student life, the Canadian weather conditions, where to get help for academics and even help with immigration stuff. Even if they didn't know the answer to any my question, they redirected me to the person who could.
transfer of credits
By the time of writing this, I still don't know anything about the transfer of my credits. This process may take a while because the faculty has to approve the credits you got in your courses before generating a transcript that can be send home.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
<p>Since I went the second semester, the orientation was not that special and covered only one day which I partly missed because I overslept. It was also mainly directed at international students who wanted to stay in Canada. We got some nice information however about the university, Edmonton and how to protect ourselves against the harsh Canadian winters. We also got a campus tour and free food which is always nice. Gavin Palmer, the guy who led the orientation was really welcoming and funny too!</p> <p>The residence also hosted an orientation which was a bit lame but a nice place to meet other international people. Also, free food again!</p>
accommodation
<p>I got on-campus residence which I can really recommend! I shared an apartment in Pinecrest house with three other internationals. It was one of the cheapest but quite fancy. We had a shared living room/kitchen, two bathrooms and each our own bedroom. Most internationals are placed in here so people who lived elsewhere on campus or off campus came to our residence to hang out or for parties. It also has a lot of facilities such as laundry room, a fitness space nearby and common rooms to chill at, drink (although technically it isn't allowed) or study.</p> <p>I would recommend I-house if you like more privacy. The rooms are individual only sharing the kitchen. They are a little more expensive then Pinecrest but if whatever rocks your boat. Don't go to Peter Laugheed, it has mandatory meal plan which is crazy expensive. Also avoid U-House, it may be quite cheap but it is housed above a mall which is stinky and really busy.</p>



Living off-campus is also a good option since public transport in Edmonton is really nice and free with the U Pass. Living off-campus can also be quite a bit cheaper.
leisure & culture
<p>The UofA has many clubs you can join, ranging from sport clubs to karaoke. I joined the outdoors club, which hosted some nice trips to the Rockies, ski club and did trivia nights at the campus pub. It's a great way to meet new people, and also one of the easiest ways to meet Canadian people. Even though Canadian culture is quite alike the Dutch one, it is really nice to notice the small differences with people.</p> <p>Edmonton as a student city can sometimes be a bit dull, especially during winter season but if you know your way in town, this isn't too bad. The city hosts some cool festivals all year round and Whyte Avenue is a cool street with some nice restaurants, bars and pubs close to campus. Edmonton and Canada are also trying to reintegrate Indigenous culture in Canadian society. Being in a city in which Indigenous culture plays a growing part really was a plus for me since it is so different from the Netherlands. Getting a basic understanding of this would give you a much better perspective on Canada as a country and the people who live in it.</p> <p>Edmonton is also close to the Rockies (for Canadian terms at least), so it is easy to go there multiple times during your exchange. Within a few hours you could be in the mountains where you can see bears, moose and eagles! Moreover, the city is located in the middle of Canada, which makes it perfect for making trips around the country too. Flights are generally quite cheap and major cities only take a few hours by plane. During my exchange I was able to visit the Rockies, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and lastly Mexico with friends from the UofA!</p>
suggestions/tips
Make sure to have a credit card! I didn't touch my Dutch debit card for the entire time I was abroad since every transaction required one. It's also makes booking trip ten times easier.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend the UofA to everyone who is interested in following some different courses from back home, loves to be outdoors and is not afraid of getting a little cold. Don't expect Edmonton to be the most lively and busy city but if that's not your thing, Edmonton could definitely be the place for you!
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Go to the Rockies multiple times throughout your exchange. Every season is something special to do, to experience and to look at there!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Faculty of Medicine
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Biomedical Sciences

destination city & country	Edmonton, Canada
name university abroad	University of Alberta
Departure date	21 / 08 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
Return date	25 / 12 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was a bit harder than I had expected. From some other students that went to other universities I had heard that they could just send the exchange coordinator of their university abroad an email with their application forms, but I had to send hard copies to the University of Alberta using courier services. Because this would probably take too much time, we used a special delivery service, which guaranteed that the hard copies of my application forms would be in Edmonton within two business days. We also used Track & Trace Services, but we didn't know that with these services it wasn't possible to track the delivery process abroad. This made us think that the delivery process took longer than two business days, but after a few calls to PostNL we found out how to track a package abroad, and it turned out that the application forms had already been delivered to the exchange coordinator's office at the University of Alberta. I also received a confirmation email from the exchange coordinator. After sending the application forms, it didn't take too much time before I heard that I was accepted at the University of Alberta. After that, I was able to apply for housing and to register in courses. One thing that you have to be aware of when registering in courses is that many courses that you'd like to take may already be full by the time that you're able to register, so you definitely need to know which other courses you'd like to take if you cannot register in the courses of your first choice anymore.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I found the counselling and support at Utrecht University quite helpful. Both the university-wide exchange programme and my faculty organized a pre-departure meeting where I was able to meet other students that went to the University of Alberta, and where I received useful information for my stay abroad.

academic preparation

I didn't prepare for the courses that I took at the University of Alberta. I mostly took courses that were quite related to my bachelor's programme (Biomedical Sciences), and therefore, I already had the knowledge that I needed to be able to take those courses. My courses had some prerequisites, so I wasn't able to register for my courses in Bear Tracks. I had to send the teachers an email to register in the courses, and some of the teachers asked me to show which courses I had already taken at Utrecht University in order to show that I had the knowledge that I needed to take those courses.

language preparation

I did not really prepare for my exchange by taking language courses. My level of English was already quite good, but in order to be sure that my English level was good enough, I took the TOEFL test before going abroad. This test also showed that my English would be good enough to take courses in English.

finances

The exchange was much more expensive than I had estimated beforehand, but that was mainly because I went on a few quite expensive trips during my exchange. Fortunately, I received a grant from my faculty, but that was



not nearly enough to cover all my housing and flight costs.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

As I wanted to take 300- and 400-level courses at the University of Alberta, I couldn't register in courses in Bear Tracks because of the prerequisites. I didn't know what to do at first, so I sent an email to my faculty at the University of Alberta to ask them about a different way to register in courses. They told me that I needed to send an email to the teachers that would be teaching the courses I wanted to register in. Some of the teachers sent a response fairly quickly, but I also had to send a reminder to some of the other teachers. Because some of the teachers wanted to make sure that I had the knowledge I needed, they asked me to show my transcript in order to verify that I had already taken courses at Utrecht University that were similar to the prerequisites.

academic quality of education activities

The way of teaching at the University of Alberta was a bit different than at Utrecht University. All of my courses only consisted of lectures, whereas my Utrecht University courses usually also include labs, seminars, and tutorials.

Apart from that, I think the academic quality depends on the courses that you're taking. My 300-level courses sometimes seemed a bit easier than my Utrecht University courses, whereas my 400-level course was sometimes even a bit more difficult than my Utrecht University courses.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

At the University of Alberta, there are many different organizations to help you when you're having problems: mental health problems, problems with writing, problems with studying, et cetera. I did not really need any support during my time abroad, so I didn't use the help offered by those organizations, but you can easily get their help if you need it.

transfer of credits

My official transcript wasn't automatically sent to Utrecht University, so I had to order it myself. This took a bit longer than I had expected, because my statement of results was not available until the end of January 2019.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The welcome & orientation programme was very nice. In the week before classes started and in the first week of classes, the university and my residence (International House) organized a lot of welcome and orientation activities for the new students, which allowed me to easily meet other new students and to make a lot of new friends. There were so many different activities, sometimes even at the same time, that I couldn't go to all of them, but I tried to attend as many activities as I could.

accommodation

Fortunately, I was able to get a room in an on-campus residence. I stayed in International House, which is a bit more expensive than some of the other East Campus Village residences, but paying a bit more money was definitely worth it. International House organizes a lot of activities for its residents, which makes it easier to meet the other residents and to make friends. I met most of my closest friends during I-House activities. One other advantage of I-House is that you have your own bathroom, and that you only have to share the kitchen and the lounge with the other residents from your floor wing. Also, the rooms were way bigger than I expected based on the pictures that were posted on the U of A Housing website.

leisure & culture



I went on quite a lot of trips during my exchange. I visited Banff and Jasper, but I also went to St. Albert, Elk Island, and even the peninsula Yucatán (Mexico).

Before going on exchange, I was told that life in Edmonton would be quite boring, but I found life in Edmonton actually really interesting. There are a few very nice clubs on Whyte Avenue, and especially the River Valley is really pretty. I also went to many different cafés and restaurants with my friends, and one of my friends took me on a trail ride in the forest as well, which was awesome.

suggestions/tips

Definitely become a member of the Outdoors Club! They organize a lot of trips, for instance to Banff and Jasper, but of course they also have the California Trip during Christmas break! Unfortunately, I couldn't go on the California Trip because I didn't have the money to pay for the trip, but some of my friends went and they told me that they had a lot of fun.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend this university to other students! I had an awesome time, because the people in Canada are so nice and the Canadian nature is very pretty. Furthermore, Edmonton positively surprised me. Beforehand, I was told that not much would be happening in Edmonton, but almost every weekend there were multiple activities at different places in Edmonton, and during regular school days, the university itself often organized activities as well.

Also, the campus is really pretty. I loved the combination of the different buildings: on campus, buildings with a more classical architecture were mixed with buildings with a more modern architecture.

Another thing that is really nice about Edmonton is the snow. At the beginning of the Fall Term, many local students warned the new students for the 'horrible' winter, but if you leave before the end of December, you're safe, because around that time, it's probably not that cold yet, but it will be cold enough to have quite a lot of snow. During my exchange, the first time we had snow was mid-September, which was a crazy, but also a very special experience.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

My advice is to do as many different things during your exchange as you can, since it'll be over before you know it. Enjoy every single second! My exchange at the University of Alberta was, without a doubt, one of the best experiences of my entire life, and I'd immediately go back if I could.
