



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Gainesville, United States
name university abroad	University of Florida
start date	18 / 08 / 2022
end date	18 / 12 / 2022

PREPARATION

exchange application process

Everything was well explained by Universiteit Utrecht and also the application process of UF was also very clear. But I had some problems with my finances form. I needed to submit a letter of my bank, that I had a certain amount of money on my account. The problem was, that UF did not approve my letter and therefore I was very late with applying for my visa documents.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Utrecht University was very helpful and I could always expect a fast reaction for my questions.

academic preparation

Nothing

language preparation

Nothing, it is not required for UU students to do a English test.

finances

I saved a lot of money and had a student loan from DUO. Also my parents gave me some money, which was really kind.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I followed 4 courses, which were in total 15 credit (30ECTS). Two of these courses were International Trade and Environmental Economics. I chose these, because my Bachelor lacked some economics in my opinion. Both of these courses had optional attendance, which was really nice because some classes started really early. The third course was called Life in the Universe, which I chose because of personal interest in the universe. This course had mandatory attendance, because I had in class assignments which counted for my grade. The fourth course was Principles of Entrepreneurship, which was an online course. I really recommend to chose one online course, because you have more spare time to do fun stuff.

academic quality of education activities

I would say that the courses I followed were quite easy. I have to say that I didn't get the best grades, but I passed all my courses with little effort. Also compared to other students, the courses I took had little to none



assignments. So my workload was minimum and I had a lot of spare time compared to other students. Overall I think the quality of education is below Dutch universities and is more comparable with HBO.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
I took quite some time for me to receive an answer of Amila, our contact person at UF. She said she received a lot of questions of a lot of exchange students and she was the only one who worked at the international office at UF, so I cannot blame her.
transfer of credits
Every credit at UF is 2 ECTS. I was required to get 30 ECTS so I was required 15 credits.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
In the first week we had a campus tour, which was really nice. They showed us some of the buildings and along the tour you could talk to other exchange students. Besides that there wasn't really an orientation programme to get to know other exchange students.
accommodation
I stayed at Weaver Hall, which was a really good choice. Weaver Hall is one of the many students complexes on campus, but this hall is especially for exchange students. I shared a dorm with a roommate. First I thought this would be an issue, because I didn't really like the idea to share one room with another person for 4 months. But I was very lucky, because his parents lived in Orlando. So over the weekend he went back to his parents so I had the room for myself for 3 to 4 days. Weaver Hall has 4 floors, 2 for women and 2 for men. You share one kitchen and 2 bathrooms, with 6 showers, with 40 people. But everything is cleared every day so most of the time it was pretty clean. Also, the kitchen was okay to use. Most of the people have a meal plan so it was no issue make dinner. Another pro of living in Weaver Hall is that you get to know a lot of other international students really well, because you see them every day. Now I know a lot of people around the world and even made some plans with them to see them again. Also, Weaver Hall is really close to the stadium, gym and midtown, where some bars and clubs are.
leisure & culture
<p>There are 2 pools on campus, one of which is right next to Weaver Hall. So in the beginning of the semester it was like 35°C so after your classes you could jump straight into the pool. Also there are 2 gyms on campus where I spend some of my time after classes. Me and some other exchange students also rented a car a couple of times. I went to St. Augustine which is one of the oldest cities in the US and is next to the beach, Daytona Beach, Savannah, got a free ticket through GatorDays for Universal Studios, went surfing with RecSports, an Orlando Magics basketball game. Besides these 1 to 2 day trips I also did some longer trips. With all of the Dutch students from Universiteit Utrecht we went to the Bahamas for six days, my dad came to the US and we visited New York, and during thanksgiving I went with some other students to Miami and Key West.</p> <p>Night life in Gainesville is also really fun! Most of the time I went Midtown where I had the best time in The Social and Grog's. It is also possible to go downtown, but if you are under 21 it can be harder to get in.</p>
suggestions/tips
<p>Buy a season ticket for the Football games, they are 100\$ but totally worth it! And if you do not like the football games you can sell most of the tickets with a lot of profit.</p> <p>Go to one of the springs nearby, rent a car or go with an Uber. They are so beautiful.</p>



CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes I had the best time of my life at UF. The weather is always great, you meet so many new people, the football games are insane and there is so much to do around campus.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Even if you are not planning to go to UF I would really recommend to study abroad. It is such a cool and unique experience.



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Gainesville, United States
name university abroad	University of Florida
start date	16/ 08 / 2022
end date	16/ 12 / 2022

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I had started the application process on time (the deadline was December 1). Once the application was approved, it was a matter of waiting for the exchange university. A lot of things needed to be arranged, such as applying for a visa. This process took a very long time, mainly because of the late notices from the exchange university and the crowds at the embassy. So start on time!

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The international office at Utrecht University helped me whenever I had questions. Due to busy times, it may sometimes take longer to get an answer.

academic preparation

I took courses that aligned with my Bachelor's in Utrecht, so I had enough knowledge to be able to take the courses well.

language preparation

In Utrecht, I took many courses in English, so this was not a problem for me.

finances

Beforehand, you will be asked if you have a certain amount for your exchange and if you can prove it with a solvency statement.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I specifically chose courses that aligned with my studies in Utrecht. I could register for these myself through Canvas (a kind of BlackBoard). Whenever a course was full that I wanted to take, I could always email the professor and ask if there was still room. Often some extra spots are kept free for exchange students.

academic quality of education activities

Studying in Florida is different from studying in Utrecht. In my opinion, I found the courses easy to follow. On the other hand, you have a lot more assignments and tests than in Utrecht. Every week I had a paper and a test. Personally, I liked this because I had one topic completed per week.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad



First, the teachers were always willing to help you. You could always email them with questions or schedule a call for additional explanation. I personally didn't experience any problems while studying, so I didn't need extra help.

transfer of credits

As of this year, the University of Florida no longer sends transcripts to Utrecht. Therefore, we had to order them ourselves. Now I have to wait until my transcript arrives in Utrecht. However, I have already received my transcript digitally.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

A grand tour of the campus was organized with all the international and exchange students. Through this you also get to know other students. In addition, it was nice to get to know your way around because the campus is incredibly large!

accommodation

I chose to live on campus. You could sign up for this in the application process. I lived in a large four-story dorm, sleeping in a room with a roommate. We had a shared kitchen and two bathrooms per floor. I am extremely glad I had chosen this, because we became a very close group. The dorm was especially for exchange students. We often went on activities together and it was always fun. In addition, I liked the feeling of living on campus.

leisure & culture

There is plenty to do, on and off campus. There is a large lake that you can walk around and there are several parks, a butterfly garden and a museum. There are also several gyms and lots of different clubs you can join. I myself joined the salsa club, where I could dance every Tuesday and Thursday for free! There are also many entertainment venues next to campus.

suggestions/tips

Prepare for high costs. Don't get into money trouble or unable to do things. This would be a great shame. After all, you are only on exchange once. Also, I would choose to live on campus. Once you have to go home alone late at night you will feel a lot safer than if you still have to travel far. In addition, you make friends very quickly because there are always people in the building going through the same adventure as you. Also, besides studying, make sure you have enough time to do fun activities. For example, I joined the Navigator association, especially for international and exchange students where you are paired with an American student.

CONCLUSIONS

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

YES! I had the time of my life. Never did I think I would love it. First of all, I am especially happy that I met so many new people, from all over the world! We were such a close group all together. I think it's very special how you can form beautiful bonds with each other in such a short time. In addition, I really enjoyed the courses I took. I was more hands-on with the things I was learning. This allowed me to understand the theory better and I was constantly active. In addition, I had the full college experience because you are completely immersed in American student life.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



Universiteit Utrecht

If you choose to go to Florida, go to a football game! This is something special. The whole town comes to the stadium fully dressed in blue and orange. Young and old, students and parents, everyone is a fan of the Gators. Buy a ticket and you will have the time of your life. GO GATORS!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

	Contact info available at the IO.
faculty/college	Department of Information and Computing Sciences
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Business Informatics

destination city & country	Gainesville, United States
name university abroad	University of Florida
start date	20 / 08 / 2023
end date	16 / 12 / 2023

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The actions required for the application for Utrecht University were clear and easy to follow. However, getting the J-1 visa (visa for exchange students) to be able to enter the United States was an extremely long and stressful process. Do not underestimate the time you spend on this, especially because you need to arrange things as soon as possible once they become known because of long waiting times for example at the embassy. The estimated waiting time at the time of my application embassy was two months. However, you can try to plan something and call the embassy to check if there are earlier appointments available, because spots open up often due to cancellations.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The exchange coordinator at Utrecht University was always available for questions. The J-1 visa application was difficult, but this was out of the control of counsellors at Utrecht University as the long application process was a government issue. The support that was provided from Utrecht University (explanations, presentations, information sessions) was good.

academic preparation

Some of the courses at University of Florida had some prerequisites, but other than that there was no academic preparation needed.

language preparation

As the University of Florida did not require any additional language proficiency tests, there was not much language preparation needed.

finances

Do not underestimate how much the exchange will cost. Living in the United States is extremely expensive, from transport to food to housing. Make sure you have enough money left so you are also able to go on trips, because that will make your exchange a much more valuable experience.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The study programme was good, although registering for courses at Master's level was a bit hard. Most courses at Master's level required prerequisites which I did not follow, and the courses without prerequisites



were not open to exchange students, they were full, or they were not sufficient for my Master's program. It took quite some time to find some suitable courses.
academic quality of education activities
The level of difficulty of educational activities was a bit lower than what I was used to at Utrecht University. The courses do have lots of assignment, but they are not very hard.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Counselling & support at University of Florida was good. The exchange coordinator was always available for questions (although replies to emails took often long, but calling or visiting at the office always worked).
transfer of credits
Be aware of how long it takes to transfer the credits to Utrecht University. My grades still have not been transferred, and I am waiting for two months now. This also depends on your department, as most of the waiting time lies with the board of examiners at Utrecht University. The transcript at University of Florida could be send digitally so that did not require a lot of time.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
We had an orientation week at the beginning of the semester, which was great to get to know the campus and the other students. I would recommend arriving a bit earlier, so you have enough time to meet people before the courses start. Especially in the first weeks I would recommend going to as much events as possible to get to know other people, because this is when you make friends.
accommodation
I stayed in the international dorms (Weaver hall) and got a single room, which was the best living option in my opinion. It was close to the lectures, close to the football stadium, close to the gym, close to the bars, and close to the pool. Besides, it was extremely nice to live with other exchange students, as we did a lot of things together.
leisure & culture
I would suggest signing up for the Navigators who organize activities for international students and request a buddy, as this is how you meet other Americans. Also you can try signing up for a sports club as another way to meet American students.
suggestions/tips
Whenever you have time, go on trips to other colleges or states, especially in the beginning of the semester when you still have time. The trips were the best moments from my exchange. There are already plenty of things to do in Florida, so also go on daytrips when you have time (for example the springs or the beach). Besides that, the sports games were also one of the best activities, so whenever you have the chance get the student pass for the football games or get student tickets.

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend this university to others. Living in a college town on campus was such a cool experience, and you really get to experience the American way of life. There are so many students living in Gainesville, so even though it is not a well-known city in Florida, you will have everything you need in Gainesville. And to make it even better, the warm weather was extremely nice.
do you have any additional advice or comments?



Universiteit Utrecht

Even though it will cost a lot of time and money, it will definitely be worth it so definitely take the opportunity as it is a once in a lifetime chance to experience college life in America.



UU Study Abroad Report Form

	Contact info available at the IO.
faculty/college	Faculty of science
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Pharmaceutical sciences

destination city & country	Gainesville, FL, United States of America
name university abroad	University of Florida
start date	24 / 08 / 2022
end date	16 / 12 / 2022

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	<p>I learned about the possibilities of exchange programs during a presentation given by the international office. During this presentation they explained the first steps of applying for an exchange. The most important part was picking a destination. I picked my top three by looking at previous exchange reports and the available courses at the host universities. I also had to write a motivation letter and apply in Osiris. Then it was time to wait for approval. In January I got an e-mail from the UU saying I got accepted to go to UF! After the approval of UU, you have to apply for UF. Be prepared to fill in a lot of forms. The UU had send us a manual with instructions to apply for UF, which was super helpful. Next to this, you will get the contact information of the other UU students that will apply at UF. In my year, we immediately made a group chat where we could help each other out. You need a signed immunization form, this was a bit of a struggle to get. In the end, my primary physician signed it. Make sure to be as quick as possible with the application for UF. The fastest people have more chance of living on-campus. Once UF had accepted the application as well, you receive your DS-2019. With this form you can start applying for an US visa. This process requires a lot of forms again and there are long waiting lists for visa appointments at the US consulate. Make sure you hurry a bit with scheduling an appointment at the consulate. Most probably you'll get an appointment after the day you're supposed to be in the US already. I managed to get an earlier appointment by checking the website on new spots three times a day. It's going to be a very stressful period, but all the work is definitely worth it!</p>
counselling & support at Utrecht University	<p>To me it felt really nice you can always reach out to the international office at the UU. Although they sometimes take a while to answer your questions, you can always call them in case of emergency. They are really willing to help you. The manual with application instructions for UF was really handy and was a nice overview of one of the many steps of applying. The international office also organized a Q&A session with UU students that went to UF before. This was a nice opportunity to ask questions and get some tips. I would definitely recommend attending this session. Overall, I think having contact with the other UU students is most helpful.</p>
academic preparation	<p>I didn't have to prepare for the education. You just have to send the courses you want to follow at UF to your board of examination.</p>
language preparation	



I didn't have to do any preparation regarding language. UF accepts the level of English of Dutch high schools. So there was no test to proof proficiency. Furthermore, I trusted the process of improving your English very quick once you've arrived. Sometimes it was hard to speak English all the time, but you'll get used to it very easily!

finances

I saved a lot of money during my youth because I knew I wanted to do something like this. Next to this, I started working more once I knew the probability of me actually going was getting bigger. One thing to realize beforehand, is that the US is an expensive country. Especially when you want to explore the country and do fun activities costs can rise. You have to pay for everything in the US and on top of that, Americans make you pay taxes for everything. In summary, the US and an exchange is expensive. Make sure to save as much as possible because it's definitely worth it! Bring a credit card. This is how I paid everything. Next to this, I got a PayPal account because this was the easiest way to transfer money to international friends.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

During my time at UU I was a graduate Pharmacy student. Because I wanted to expand my knowledge in other medical studies, I decided to follow courses about health more in general. At UF I found interesting courses. The Masters program of Pharmacy in Utrecht doesn't accept courses outside of pharmacy as credit, so for me this was like an 'extra' next to my major. The courses I followed were about public health, personal and family health, health professions and I followed a course about general psychology. The first week of the semester is the drop/add week. In this week you are allowed to switch courses. This is really convenient if you end up not liking your courses as much. Be aware that you might need approval of UU again if you switch.

academic quality of education activities

The courses I followed were really interesting. I do have to say that the level of difficulty was below the Dutch level. Especially my course about personal and family health was quite easy and I often felt like the content was common knowledge. The American education is quite different than the education of UU. In America you'll get graded for everything (also on participation in class), and they have a lot of deadlines. The deadlines are for smaller assignments so it's definitely doable. I did have to get used to the amount of deadlines.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

UF also has an international office that helps you throughout the process. They send you loads of e-mails and schedule some informational online meetings before arrival. I didn't reach out to them a lot because I soon noticed they answered quite slowly. Although the answer is slow, they do really help you once you get in contact. In the beginning and at the end of the semester you have a meeting with the contact person of UF. In those meetings she explained a lot about the visa, which was helpful. During the semester I only needed to reach out to them once, and instead of e-mailing them, I just walked in. They were able to help me immediately and they're super nice!

transfer of credits

Once your grades are complete you can order a transcript of your grades. You have to pay 10 USD and you can choose if you want the transcript send to you on paper or online.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

On one of the first days of the semester there was an online introductory meeting. This was not that special. Later we had a tour around campus which was more fun. The campus is so pretty and quite big so it was nice



to get to know campus immediately. The tour around campus is with other internationals, but furthermore you mostly have to organise meetings with the internationals yourself. Furthermore, I had signed up for the Navigators. The Navigators link American students to international students. Every international gets a buddy (called navigator). During the introductory meeting of the Navigators I got to meet my navigator and the association Navigators told about their activities.

accommodation

I lived on campus in the international dorm named Weaver Hall. In my opinion this is definitely the best place to live. The dorm life is exactly as in the movies and I think it's part of the American experience! The location of Weaver hall is perfect. It's on campus so you're quite close to all the faculties. Next to this, it's basically next to the football and basketball stadium, dining hall and pool. Mid-town is a 10 minute walk and also the gym is close by. It's also super nice to live with a lot of internationals. You get to meet so many new people in a short amount of time and you'll end up living with your friends! I stayed in a double room which was okay, but I would have preferred a single room. Therefore, I would recommend applying for a single room. If you end up getting a double room, it's also totally fine. Because there are less single rooms in Weaver Hall, it's even more important to finish your application at UF as soon as possible. The rooms in Weaver Hall have all the necessary furniture, but nothing more! The kitchen has an oven, microwave and stove. Be prepared to buy almost everything else, like bedding, pots and pans, hangers, etc.

leisure & culture

I would definitely recommend to go on trips as much as possible. Even in the beginning of the semester when you don't know everyone that well. Just find a group of people and start exploring, Florida is beautiful! At the end of the semester, you'll regret not going on trips more if you didn't. I really liked St. Petersburg, St. Augustine and Daytona beach. If you have time to travel a little bit further Key West, the Everglades, the Bahamas and New Orleans are definitely worth visiting!

Gainesville has a mall with a lot of clothing stores. Furthermore they have a lot of stores at a certain part of the city. Both places are not walkable, but there are buses. The buses are free for students but they're not that reliable. They sometimes don't show up or are way too late. So, travelling by bus might take you a while but it's free 😊. Good to know: there is a Nike outlet store in Gainesville!

You can enjoy the night life of Gainesville both in midtown as well as downtown. Midtown is right next to campus. It might look a bit rough at first but you'll start appreciating the bars very soon. Social has a really nice rooftop and a lot of bars have certain nights with really cheap drinks. I haven't been to downtown a lot, but whenever I went there it was super fun as well. On Thursdays you can go line dancing in Vivid music hall which is super fun!

I really liked walking around campus as well. If you walk to lake Alice you'll spot some small gators and if you go there during sunset the bats will fly out of their bat houses. It is really cool to see that many bats flying over you. If you want to see big gators you have to go to the North entrance of Paynes Priairies Preserve State Park in Gainesville (this is not walkable). On my walks around campus I loved to walk to Wawa's for a big iced latte for only 2 USD!

suggestions/tips

Make sure to buy tickets for all the football games if you're going in the fall semester! Gamedays were my favorite days and the games are so cool. Even if you aren't able to go to the game anymore you can easily sell your ticket to other students. The tickets got sold somewhere during summer holiday. Just pay attention to your e-mails on your UF e-mail. All the other sports are also definitely worth visiting. It's such a great addition to the American college life and a fun activity to do with your friends. All sports are free for students, except for football, so no need the worry about the other sports.

Join a club! UF has so many clubs, I'm pretty sure they have a club for everything. I joined a sports club. In my opinion, this was a really fun way to meet more Americans and stay active!



CONCLUSIONS

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

YES! I feel like UF is the perfect place to go for an exchange in the US. It's the real American college experience since the University is so big. Florida is beautiful and the weather is always great! You will have the best time of your life! GO GATORS!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Before and after the semester you have a 30 day grace period. During these days you can stay in the country with your J1 visa. I travelled through Florida for 30 days after the semester. I really liked exploring the beautiful state of Florida even more!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

	Contact info available at the IO.
faculty/college	Utrecht University - Faculty of Geosciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Global Sustainability Science

destination city & country	Gainesville (FL), United States of America
name university abroad	University of Florida
start date	18 / 08 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	20 / 12 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

Be prepared to be sharp on deadlines and all that has to be done such as VISA, DS-2019 and course enrolments. Try to connect with fellow students going on exchange to UF so you can discuss it with your fellow students going on exchange.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

There is an information session with useful information regarding exchange. Furthermore, you are able to speak to students that have been abroad already. Use these moments to ask all the questions you have.

academic preparation

In general, most Dutch students experience UF as easier. However, there are many assignments and exams so you have to stay on top of your deadlines. Other than that, it is relatively doable with the right amount of work put in.

language preparation

You will talk, make tests, write or present in English almost everyday. If your English is not on a sufficient level, this is okay, as you will improve your English throughout the semester.

finances

Exchange is expensive. Especially the first month could cost much money. Flight tickets, Visa expenses, housing and housing gear will be responsible for most of the costs in the first month. Make sure you have some money saved. The first month cost me around 5,000 dollars. The 'regular' months cost me around 1,600 dollars. In total you will probably end up with 10000+ dollars. It is also possible to work in Gainesville. However, there are strict rules for working abroad. Thus, check with your exchange assistant what the exact rules are for working abroad. This included many trips through Florida, Christmas in New Orleans (Louisiana), Colombia (South America) and The Bahamas.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

Faculty of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Physical geography, cities of the world, intro to entrepreneurship and oceanography.

academic quality of education activities



academic quality differed per course. Make sure to check ratemyprofessor to see if the teacher is rated and read well what topics the course covers at every course will be your course for four full months.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
There is an assigned exchange coordinator from the International Office who you're able to contact throughout your exchange process which has helped me a lot. When arriving on location, you can visit this international office as well.
transfer of credits
Transfer of credits happens through the Board of Examiners by requesting a transcript via your exchange University. This will be self explanatory and not too complicated.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
There have been many introductory events to get to know the campus and people that are also on exchange through the NaviGators programme which I would highly recommend joining! In general, I felt at home quite quickly as you feel part of the UF family.
accommodation
I stayed in Weaver Hall. This building is located on-campus. Weaver Hall has been a major addition to my exchange as it consisted of 50% Internationals and 50% Americans. This way I have been able to get to know many people from around the globe.
leisure & culture
Going out and tailgates at the fraternities have been a lot of fun if you're into partying. There is much wildlife, national parks, fun cities and other stuff to visit around Gainesville as well. Beachdays are also nice as the climate is perfect for it.
suggestions/tips
To get the most out of your student life in Gainesville, I would definitely recommend trying to get to know as many people who could also show you around if they're American. Joining a sports club is nice as well to get to know people.

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend this university as I generally really enjoyed the atmosphere around the campus, the people I met, the weather, the surrounding nature, the cities in Florida and in general the American college experience.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Get in contact with people that will experience the same as you so you're not alone! No matter what exchange destination you'll go, you'll have an amazing time so don't stress and enjoy the time you're on exchange!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Gainesville, United States
name university abroad	The University of Florida
start date	17/ 8 / 2022
end date	21 / 12 / 2022

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process for UF is pretty straight forward. I had to submit a lot of forms and UF kept me updated about my application process by email. However, I had a lot of problems with getting my VISA. Because UF had a lot of applications, it took them a really long time to send the DS-2019 form to Universiteit Utrecht, which is necessary to be able to make a VISA appointment. The waiting times for the VISA appointments are also really long, but luckily I was able to reschedule to an earlier date. The VISA application process can be really stressful, so be prepared and start as early as possible.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I think the support at Utrecht University was good. I reached out to Cathelijne van de Weelden a few times and she always responded pretty quickly.

academic preparation

I did not follow law courses at UF, because I thought it would be nice to take this opportunity to follow psychology and sociology courses. I didn't do any academic preparation.

language preparation

Dutch students are not required to make an English language test to be admitted to UF. I did not do any language preparation, other than listening to a lot of English podcasts in the weeks before my exchange. My English level was sufficient, but I still had to get used to having to speak English all the time. All of the other exchange students from other countries spoke English quite well.

finances

Studying abroad, especially in the USA, is really expensive. Grocery shopping is way more expensive than in Netherlands, and the additional taxes make everything a lot more expensive than you might expect it to be. I would recommend saving as much money as possible for the exchange. However, keep in mind that this is a once in a lifetime experience, and try to not think too much about the amount of money you're spending during the exchange.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)



I chose to follow psychology and sociology courses at UF. It was really nice to learn about subjects that were really different from the ones I learn about at Utrecht University. Studying in the USA is really different from studying in the Netherlands. For example, there were a lot more deadlines; on average I had about ten (small) deadlines every week. I really had to get used to this in the beginning, and that caused some stress. However, I got used to it and just made sure I made a good planning for all my deadlines. I really liked the sociology courses I followed, and I learned a lot of new things (Social Problems, Principles of Sociology, Marriage and Families).

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality of the courses is lower than what I was used to in the Netherlands, which caused me to be a bit unmotivated sometimes. Because of the big amount of deadlines, it is easier to get a good grade even when you don't score really well on all of them.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The counselling at UF was good, but because they were really busy most of the times it took quite a long time for them to respond to my emails.

transfer of credits

My grades are not yet transferred.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There not really is a introduction program at UF. I would really recommend becoming a member of the UF Navigators program. That student organization will pair you with a UF student, who can show you around on campus and who you can do fun things with. My Navigator was really nice and we did a lot of things together.

accommodation

I chose to live in Weaver Hall, so on campus. I would really recommend this as it is the perfect way to get to know a lot of new people. The people you live with will really start to feel like one big friend group, and you'll never have to feel alone. The bathrooms and kitchens are fine, although you share them with a lot of people. Weaver Hall is on walking distance of the football stadium, the dining hall, and most of the classrooms. I lived in a double room, so I had an American roommate. My roommate was really nice, but I had to get used to being with someone else in the same bedroom most of the time. In general, the people that lived off campus were less involved in the campus life. Also, finding housing off campus is really hard and most of the times it is only possible to rent an apartment for a year, so you would need to sublease it if you're only staying for one semester.

leisure & culture

I did not really have a culture-shock.

suggestions/tips

Make a plan of some trips you would like to make during you're exchange. Some really cool trips I made include the Bahama's, Miami, and Key West. I also went swimming with manatees in Clear Water, which is really close to Gainesville. This was a really cool experience and I can totally recommend it!

CONCLUSIONS

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



YES YES YES!! The University of Florida offers the 'true college experience.' The football games are really cool, and you'll feel part of the 'gatornation' really quick. I've met so many new people, and I've learned a lot from my exchange. GO GATORS!!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Go on an exchange!!!!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Gainesville, United States of America
name university abroad	University of Florida
start date	05 / 01 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	29 / 04 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

During the Study Abroad week at Utrecht University, I went to a lot of online sessions in which the application process was explained. First, I had to apply at Utrecht University on Osiris and mention my top three destinations. For this I also needed to submit a letter of motivation for my number one choice and a study plan with all the courses I wanted to follow on that particular university. The study plan needed to be signed by a study advisor from my faculty. After this deadline it was waiting for the international office UU to place me for a certain university. After a few months I heard that I was selected for the University of Florida (UF). Another few months later the application process at UF started. I had to submit a copy of my passport and fill in a few questionnaires. They also send me all the information I needed to start my Visa application.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The Study Abroad was very helpful in figuring out if I actually wanted to go abroad. During this week there were also information sessions for every continent. The most important things about each continent were mentioned there and it was very helpful in finding the place I wanted to go to.

The international office itself was throughout the process always helpful in answering questions. Once I was selected to go to UF, the international office organized a meeting with all the students going there for the spring semester and an exchange student who was already there at the time. In that way we could get to know one another already and we could ask questions to the student already there so we knew what we could expect.

academic preparation

I can't really think of any academic preparation I did.

language preparation

I didn't do any language preparation, since my English was already on the right level.

finances

I had some money saved up and I loaned the maximum amount from DUO. The main things I needed to pay for were the plane tickets, accommodation from UF, trips and important things for my room. Other costs were also food and cooking equipment.

Also, it's very important that you get yourself a credit card. It's the easiest way to pay in the USA.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD



study programme (content and organisational issues)
<p>At UF you can follow a lot of different courses. Since I wanted to take a break from my bachelor, I took a lot of different kinds of classes. I followed Spanish, math, statistics and a natural hazards course. For certain classes you needed some prerequisites. From what I heard from others, you can show the department that you have the right requirements from your home university.</p> <p>We were allowed one online class, because otherwise our Visa wouldn't be valid. Because of Covid, a lot of courses were still online. Which meant a lot of the courses I initially wanted to follow, weren't an option for me anymore. So it was still a lot of searching for the right courses for me.</p> <p>In the first week of UF, they had drop/ad week. So if you didn't like a course, you'd still be able to change it during that week.</p>
academic quality of education activities
<p>I would say that the academic quality is a little lower compared to Utrecht university. A big difference for me with Utrecht was the amount of homework we had to make. Instead of one big paper or one big exam, I had a lot of separate homework assignments I had submit during the week. I needed to get used to this, but eventually it all turned out okay.</p>
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
<p>During the application process, I was able to ask a lot of questions to the contact person of the international office at UF. In the first week at UF we also had a meeting with her, in which she explained some important things about our Visa and other details about the university. We also had a meeting with her at the end of the semester. She always mentioned that if we had any questions or struggles, we could always come to her during the semester. For me this wasn't necessary, but what I've heard from others she wasn't really helpful most of the time.</p>
transfer of credits
<p>15 credits are worth 30 studypoints at UU. UF sends the transcript directly to UU. I received a digital and a physical copy of my transcript.</p>

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
<p>Except from a orientation meeting from the contact person of the international office, there wasn't much of a welcome or orientation programme. I knew some people who followed courses with the business faculty. They did have a nice welcome and orientation programme. They had multiple activities during the first week. And throughout the semester they got together multiple times. The other faculties didn't organise a nice welcome, which I thought was a bit of a shame. But other than that, life at UF pretty much sorted itself out.</p>
accommodation
<p>I had the option to stay off- or on-campus. I made the decision to stay on campus. All the exchange students who wanted to stay on campus, stayed in the same dorm (weaver hall). I would 100% recommend this to everybody. You would immediately get to know people and it gave me the real American college experience. The dorm wasn't as bad as I expected it to be. The rooms had a bed, desk, closet and most importantly air conditioner. On each floor there were two bathrooms, which were cleaned every single day (except for the weekend). There was also one kitchen, which the whole floor used. Couple of downsides: the stove sometimes didn't work good enough, the outlets were broke sometimes and it would be very busy because there wasn't enough space for everybody to prepare their food. Still I would recommend cooking over getting a meal-plan, since this is very expensive and the food is not super amazing.</p> <p>When you have a double room, most of the times you get paired with an American student.</p>
leisure & culture



Everybody at UF was very involved in university life. People would go to class wearing the UF sweaters and shirts. Also, most of the students would go to class wearing a chill outfit (sweater, sport leggings etc.), which makes all the internationals really stand out.

Of course you also have the big sport games. Unfortunately when I came to UF, the American Football season was already over. What I heard from other students, this is of course very big and celebrated with big parties (tailgates) organized by the fraternities.

In the spring semester, you can watch some other American sports like basketball, baseball and softball.

You can go out in midtown and downtown. Midtown is very close to campus. Downtown is a half hour walk from weaver. Most of the time its 5 dollar entr  e fee, but drinks could be a bit more expensive. I recommend going to the social on Thursday evenings. They serve 2 drinks for 1 dollar, which is perfect for the occasional broke student. After going out, wawa's was always the place to go to get some food.

Florida is also the perfect place for some sightseeing. Besides the occasional highlights in Florida, I also recommend going to Puerto Rico, Mexico for spring break, cruise to the Bahamas, Los Angeles, San Francisco and New Orleans.

suggestions/tips

Get a room on campus. It makes getting to know people so much easier, since most of the international students live there. I also met some of the best people there and there was never a moment I was bored, since we would always go do stuff together.

Get Krishna lunch at Plaza. The food is amazing and it costs only 5 dollars. If you take some Tupperware they even give you another portion for the same prize.

CONCLUSIONS

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

100% YES! I had such an amazing time at UF. I met so many nice people and I've been to some of the most beautiful places I've ever seen. The whole experience at UF was so different than back in the Netherlands. I really loved the vibe of the campus life. I wish I could have stayed there longer

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Go for a full year.