



UU Report - Exchange

Faculty/college	University of Florida, law
Level (bachelor's or master's)	Bachelor
Name study programme	Exchange minor

Destination city & country	Gainesville, The United States
How did you travel to your destination?	Plane
Name university abroad	University of Florida
Start date	12 / 08 / 2024
End date	16 / 12 / 2024

PREPARATION

How did you experience the exchange application process at Utrecht University?

I had a good experience. There were several briefings, so it was clear what I had to do.

How did you experience the counselling & support from the International Office?

They always answered clearly, but it often took a long time to get an answer, so I would advise you to start everything in time.

Did you do any language preparation? If so, what did you do?

I think every Dutch person speaks English perfectly well, but honestly, I had to get used to everyone's American accent. I started listening to a lot of podcasts to get used to it.

How did you finance your exchange?

Unfortunately, I wasn't eligible for a grant, so it was very expensive. I had been saving for a while, and my parents supported me.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

How was the organisational process regarding your course registration?

- Was it difficult to find and/or change selected courses?
- Can you say something about the language of instruction for the courses available?
- Which courses did you end up taking?

The University of Florida was very clear about the courses it offered. I had already planned which ones I wanted to take, but once I got there, I chose a few different courses. I took Microeconomics, Democratic Engagement, Introduction to Philosophy, and Psychology.

How was the academic quality of the courses?

The courses were much easier than at Utrecht University, partly because I chose beginner courses to free up more time for other things. As a result, I was in a group with many first-year students, even though I was already a third-year student myself. I would definitely recommend this if you're looking for more freedom.

How did you experience the counselling & support from the host university?

Everything was clear quickly, you could always reach someone, but sometimes it took a while for an email to respond. So prepare well.



STUDENT LIFE

How was the welcome & orientation programme?

There were two introduction days where you got to know the campus. The exchange students mainly connected by living in the same dorms. I wasn't one of them, but it's important to go everywhere to get to know lots of people.

How was the process of finding housing? For example, was it difficult finding housing, how was the rent, was it what you expected?

Because we received a late response about our selection, all the dorms were already occupied. This was a real shame, as all the other exchange students were staying there. I searched online for options and found an apartment that I shared with three other American girls. It was quite expensive, though, so I would recommend staying in a dorm.

What did you do for leisure & culture?

I was already exploring all the leisure options in the Netherlands. I saw there was a field hockey club, went to an introductory meeting, and signed up. It was great fun; we practiced three times a week, and I even played in national hockey matches. I also went out a lot and usually ate with friends. It's also fun to visit Springs a lot. During Thanksgiving break, I took a trip to Puerto Rico.

CONCLUSIONS

Would you recommend this university/destination to others? Please explain.

I would definitely recommend this university because I had a fantastic time. Life in America is so different from the Netherlands, and I really wanted to experience it myself. The University of Florida has tons of committees and fun activities you can join, there are football games every week you can attend, and it's just exactly what you'd expect from the American dream.

Do you have any additional advice or comments for students who would like to go here?

If I could do it all over again, I would have done everything the same. Studying abroad is a fantastic experience, but it can also be quite lonely and different from what you're used to. Surround yourself with lots of people, say yes to everything, and embrace everything. It's scary sometimes, but you learn so much and it's so worth it.



UU Report - Exchange

Faculty/college	University of Utrecht
Level (bachelor's or master's)	Bachelor's
Name study programme	Psychology

Destination city & country	Gainesville, Florida, United States
How did you travel to your destination?	Indirect flight to Gainesville Florida (has it's own airfield)
Name university abroad	University of Florida
Start date	22 / 08 / 2024
End date	20 / 12 / 2024

PREPARATION	
How did you experience the exchange application process at Utrecht University?	The application process at Utrecht was quite comfortable at the start. Once I had to arrange meetings for my visa and had to look for housing, things started to get more complicated. We basically had no way of arranging housing without a University of Florida account, and unfortunately Utrecht University could not help us with any of the steps that we had to take.
How did you experience the counselling & support from the International Office?	Regardless of the statement above, the contact with the International Office was always smooth and swift. They would usually respond within a day or two.
Did you do any language preparation? If so, what did you do?	Not really, I'm quite comfortable with speaking and/or writing English.
How did you finance your exchange?	Saved up the money working full time during Covid.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
How was the organisational process regarding your course registration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was it difficult to find and/or change selected courses? Can you say something about the language of instruction for the courses available? Which courses did you end up taking?
	The UF program and its moderators guide you through the process of taking courses. However, you have to find said program first AND have an account for it to work. The account was made rather late, which means it is important to have done your research on their courses beforehand. All of the courses can be found on their website, make sure to look at the times of the different classes and whether those clash with other courses.
How was the academic quality of the courses?	The quality was okay; the difficulty was rather low. The professors were great, and much can be learned from them.
How did you experience the counselling & support from the host university?	



Host University was the best experience I have had with higher education so far. They would and will do anything for the student.

STUDENT LIFE

How was the welcome & orientation programme?

The orientation programme was rather dull. However, you get to meet people really fast in a short amount of time. I spent most of my time on their huge campus (bigger than a town on its own), which makes meeting people a lot easier. Be sure to contact student groups, there are hundreds of groups and clubs in all kinds of different subjects. A recommendation would be surf club, it's the biggest club that is NOT a fraternity. With over a 1000 members, it's relatively easy to meet people through this club.

How was the process of finding housing? For example, was it difficult finding housing, how was the rent, was it what you expected?

Difficult to say the least. Finding a short-term lease was near impossible, but subleasing is legal in Florida. This means that Facebook groups are the way to go. I eventually found a good sublease apartment through Airbnb.

What did you do for leisure & culture?

There is tons of stuff to do for students in Gainesville. Everything that happens in that city is for students and by students. Going to the pregames at the surfclub, football games in their huge stadium, joining sports clubs in all kinds of different sports, joining the random events every week... there is plenty to do. Join a club, scout around for different events, scout around for parties in downtown and you'll be set. The nature around Gainesville is also very beautiful, a swamp paradise. Visiting the springs, the student beach, going to the Sweetwater wetlands or just for a run... enjoy the sun.

CONCLUSIONS

Would you recommend this university/destination to others? Please explain.

If you're looking for a true student experience, yes. I have studied for over 10 years, and I can easily say that this was my best experience ever as a student. UF does everything on a huge scale (true American scales) and proceeded to exceed my expectations almost every week. Students are kings and queens there, and that's very noticeable. As long as you secure your housing, everything else will fall into place.

Do you have any additional advice or comments for students who would like to go here?

What might be unexpected, is that Gainesville Florida is a relatively safe place to be. It's a student city, and besides petty crime (which happens in every city) not much happens over there.

America is more expensive than most people make it seem. Housing could range from 500 up to 1000+ a month, but groceries are very expensive. They would most likely recommend a total of 9000 dollars, but if you want to travel and or do anything outside Gainesville, I'd recommend to save up more of the likes of 15000 dollars. 9000 would be enough for Gainesville itself, but would only cover a small weekend away (if you find a cheap place to stay). Also, make the best of the time you have in the States. Domestic flights are much cheaper during off-season, and renting cars as a resident of Florida (which you will be) is also a lot cheaper. The parks like Disney and Universal also offer discounts for residents of Florida! Last but not least, **try and acquire a seasonal ticket for the UF Football team!** If you do NOT want to go to the game, just sell your ticket. For most games the student tickets will be sold out, and regular tickets are very expensive in comparison. One example; a season pass is around 200 dollars, and a ticket for the Miami-UF game can sell for 150-200 dollars. Win-win!



UU Report - Exchange

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

Faculty/college	liberal arts and sciences
Level (bachelor's or master's)	bachelor
Name study programme	liberal arts and sciences

Destination city & country	Gainesville, United states of America
How did you travel to your destination?	plane
Name university abroad	University of Florida
Start date	10 / 01 / 2025 (dd/mm/yyyy)
End date	02 / 05 / 2025 (dd/mm/yyyy)

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

PREPARATION	
How did you experience the exchange application process at Utrecht University?	I found it to be an extensive and much demanding process, in that you had to arrange things like a visa, which takes a lot of time and stress
How did you experience the counselling & support from the International Office?	This was very nice since you could also call teams which often makes things clearer. There were also meetings about, for example, the visa procedure.
Did you do any language preparation? If so, what did you do?	no
How did you finance your exchange?	I got a scholarship and I saved my own money



STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
How was the organisational process regarding your course registration? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Was it difficult to find and/or change selected courses?• Can you say something about the language of instruction for the courses available?• Which courses did you end up taking?
I found this difficult since the courses for my semester came online late so you had to base your choices primarily on previous semesters. However, there was a brief explanation in english for each course about what is being done in the course. I had Sensory processes, US history since 1877, persona growth and public health
How was the academic quality of the courses?
I thought the professors were very good only the courses were generally not super complicated.
How did you experience the counselling & support from the host university?
This one was very nice, you were helped well and if something hadn't gone right it wasn't a problem.

STUDENT LIFE
How was the welcome & orientation programme?
this was very nice since there was a chance to meet other students and also a lot of information was given.
How was the process of finding housing? For example, was it difficult finding housing, how was the rent, was it what you expected?
I personally did not find this process difficult since there was a lot of student housing, but the rent for this housing was very expensive for what you got. I myself arranged something else through a student who already had a room and wanted to sublease
What did you do for leisure & culture?
I have taken many trips to other cities in america since domestic flights are not expensive. We also visited many places around the university like the springs and lake Wauburg.

CONCLUSIONS
Would you recommend this university/destination to others? Please explain.
I would definitely recommend this university to other people. There is plenty to do in gainesville, but again it is not too big which makes it very manageable. Furthermore, a lot of attention is paid to exchange students and the weather is really perfect.
Do you have any additional advice or comments for students who would like to go here?
Start all the procedures around your visas on time and get help. This process can be very overwhelming, but there are many people who are willing and able to help you.



Faculty/college	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Level (bachelor's or master's)	Bachelor
Name study programme	Media and Culture

Destination city & country	Gainesville, Florida, USA
How did you travel to your destination?	airplane
Name university abroad	Univeristy of Florida, (UF)
Start date	20/08/2024
End date	14/12/2024

PREPARATION	
How did you experience the exchange application process at Utrecht University?	
Its quite easy, look carefully at the list of universities and dont be scared to go anywhere. Application is straight forward, just write what you feel and what you are looking for.	
How did you experience the counselling & support from the International Office?	
amazing	
Did you do any language preparation? If so, what did you do?	
nope	
How did you finance your exchange?	
I applied and recived NL scholarship but mainly with money I earned working in Utrecht.	

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
How was the organisational process regarding your course registration?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was it difficult to find and/or change selected courses? • Can you say something about the language of instruction for the courses available? • Which courses did you end up taking? 	
<p>If you are on time you will have a very wide choice of courses at UF. Anyways as you arrive the first week of classes you can decide to drop or add new classes if u dont like the first lectures. Look carefully into every college, there are loads of courses.</p> <p>For me evertihng was in English.</p> <p>I took film courses which are part of the English department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - History of Film pt.1 - Cinema of the Global South - Advanced Long Fom Filmmaking 	
How was the academic quality of the courses?	
All the courses that I followed were way better than the ones at Utrecht and also more deeply focused on films.	
How did you experience the counselling & support from the host university?	
Quite good but sometimes very slow.	



STUDENT LIFE

How was the welcome & orientation programme?

Very good, it is your first chance to meet your friends and exchange buddies.

How was the process of finding housing? For example, was it difficult finding housing, how was the rent, was it what you expected?

Finding housing was very hard. I suggest to be as quick as possible to apply for Weaver Hall (best dorm ever). I ended up staying off campus and my rent was one of the cheapest in town (University Commons), there were loads of other international students. The apartments are okay.

What did you do for leisure & culture?

You can do literally whatever you want. I went on trips to beaches and different towns in Florida and Georgia. Went to basketball games and concerts. But Florida offers everything.

CONCLUSIONS

Would you recommend this university/destination to others? Please explain.

YES. Go to UF. The campus is amazing. If I could I would have stayed the entire year. I met wonderful people and the usual day as a student is great. University offers you a vast choice of things to do both academically and not. It is a perfect example of a typical American university. You will find people from all over the world. The city is small but at the same time what you need to have fun. I completely fell in love with UF and Florida. You can easily go to Miami or other beautiful spots. If you like nature it is also amazing; amazing forests and natural parks, lakes and wildlife.

For me it is hard to explain in words, just go.

Do you have any additional advice or comments for students who would like to go here?

Go to football games in the Swamp, join the student associations of everything you are interested to. Spend time on campus, in the dining halls and libraries. Hang out with American people and try to be as open as possible. People will help you, stay away from Fraternities and Sororities.

GO GATORS!

faculty/college	Geesteswetenschappen
level	bachelor's / master's
name study programme	Liberal Arts and Sciences

destination city & country	Gainesville, Florida, United States
name university abroad	University of Florida
start date	06 / 01 / 2024
end date	03 / 05 / 2024

PREPARATION

exchange application process

UF was my first choice, I applied for the Fall semester. I used the study abroad website of UU, which has been very useful. The application process is quite straightforward, if you just follow the instructions on the website.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Whenever I had questions, the study abroad coordinator was able to answer them. A lot of people have a lot of questions about the visa application process, but I was lucky enough to be exempt for many of the steps in this process.

academic preparation

I did not undertake any specific preparations, since I was not taking any courses related to my own program.

language preparation

None. That's not necessary for Dutch students.

finances

It is very expensive to study in the US, so I would highly recommend not having any financial worries before going there. I would try to work a bit more or perhaps ask if you can borrow money from your parents or get a higher loan at DUO.

Depending on where you live, you will pay 700-1100 dollars a month, groceries in the city centre are at least 50% more expensive than in the Netherlands. Obviously, you will also want to make some trips, so please make sure you have enough money when you start.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I took random courses, since I already had all the credits I needed to graduate. It can be challenging to be allowed to take all the courses you want, since the teachers and coordinators in the US can be quite strict and don't really want to look at individual cases (if you think you have a good reason to take the course, for instance). I would recommend taking your time to see what courses they teach, since the number of courses is immense. It's also an option to do research together with one of the professors, which is what I did.

academic quality of education activities

Studying in the US is very easy, even at a university like UF, which is considered one of the best (if not the best) public schools in the country. You will most likely only need to spend about half of the time on studying

of what you're used to in Utrecht, and you will still be able to get extremely high grades. In the end, I averaged a 9.0 out of 10. The nice thing is that UF is quite a prestigious university, so getting high grades (which should be easy if you come from UU) will be very helpful if you ever wanted to work in North America.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

In general, I have always been able to get answers to my questions, but the support was a bit slower than was the case in Utrecht.

transfer of credits

1 credit at UF will be transferred to 2 ECTS, it shouldn't be a problem to get your credits transferred.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There are some orientation activities organized by the university and by the Navigators, which is the student organisation for exchange students. I didn't do much with Navigators but would still recommend taking part in their activities. The most important thing is to get in as many WhatsApp groups as you can and try to meet as many exchange students as possible in the first weeks.

accommodation

I would say about half of the exchange people stayed at Weaver Hall, where the dorms for international students are. I got offered a spot there but declined the offer, since there is a 90% chance that you will be sharing your room (with an American freshman) and I did not want to share my room. My friend had a single room, but he was the only person I knew who had this. As I wanted a single room, I got a room off-campus, at The Hub on University. I think that was a good choice and would recommend people going there. From what I've seen and heard, The Standard (though quite expensive), Social 28 and The Griffin were good as well. A lot of people liked Weaver, but I am happy with the choice I made. Also consider that you will need to get a meal plan when you live on-campus. That is okay, but you'll be eating quite unhealthy for the entire semester if you have one.

leisure & culture

There is so much fun stuff to do, and I absolutely loved campus culture! You will be on-campus all day it is so nice to use all the amazing facilities with your new friends. The sports facilities are insane – I played a lot of beach volleyball, used the gym and played soccer. The fact that you're with your friends all day was one of the best parts of the exchange for me, campus life is amazing :). The sports culture itself is incredible, as there are always sports games you can go to for free.

In terms of going out, you simply have to go to Social (though they changed owners and it's an Irish Pub now). In my opinion, Social has been the nicest place I've ever been to on nights out. For some reason, every single exchange student goes here every Thursday, so I usually knew about 30-40 people there. Also, they do 10 dollar all-you-can-drink and the rooftop bar is beautiful. Downtown is also nice (Barcade is fun), but I preferred midtown.

You will have more leisure time than you usually have back home, so you'll find yourself making a lot of nice trips. I went to the Bahama's, New Orleans (Mardi Gras), Puerto Rico, Miami, Fort Lauderdale, the Everglades, Tampa and Orlando (about 8x) during the semester. Of these I think Puerto Rico was the best one. I would also highly recommend Lake Wauburg, which is owned by UF, and you can rent everything you could wish while being at the lake for free there. The Silver Springs are also very much worth visiting.

suggestions/tips

I could give a million tips, but I will just list a couple.

-The most important tip I could give is to go and meet as many people as you can in the first couple of days/weeks. Go to every single event and just try to make new friends. Most likely you will find some very nice people in the first 2/3 weeks if you do this. Once you have your friends, the exchange is going to be one of the best experiences of your life.

-Very Dutch to say but get a bike! It's super cheap and it has saved me so much time. Best decision I made.

-My second-best decision was to start an intramurals team. The intramurals are the internal league of the university. I asked in the big exchange-WhatsApp group if there were people interested in playing soccer. I got a lot of response, created the team and made so many friends.

-There is this little supermarket on campus called Field & Fork, where you can do free (!!) groceries once a week. It has saved me a lot of money.

-Go to Social, or whatever it's called now, every Thursday. It's amazing.

-The game room is very nice and cheap – it even has 2-dollar pool and bowling on Tuesdays I believe.

-If you like sports, gather people and use the amazing facilities as often as you want.

-Once a year the university gives away free tickets for something cool. We went to an NBA game in Orlando and in the first semester the people went to Disney. I think the organisation was called 'Gator Days'.

CONCLUSIONS

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

100%! The months in Gainesville has been the best time of my life and I have made amazing long-term friendships and experienced an insane number of incredible things. The weather is always good, there is a lot to do on campus (if you know where to look) and in Florida. I'm even looking at the possibility of pursuing a master's degree at UF and I'll be visiting friends at the start of next academic year. I will be missing it a lot.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Just enjoy, don't stress too much about school, and do as much as you can. The exchange mindset is to think that every day will be your last in Gainesville, so that you make the most out of it. I've had the time of my life and hope you will as well :)



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Humanities
level	X bachelor's – master's
name study programme	English Language and Culture

destination city & country	Victoria, Canada
name university abroad	University of Victoria (UVIC)
start date	06 / 09 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	16 / 12 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	I followed the steps as mentioned by the UU for studying abroad. I also emailed the international office of UU and UVIC with any questions I had concerning housing, VISA/ETA, etc. I went to all the information sessions offer by the UU (e.g. information provided by the international office and a UU student who had recently returned from UVIC).
counselling & support at Utrecht University	Honestly, I felt like I had to look up a lot myself... when it came to needing help to figure out what was needed for a VISA (so I could also work while I was in Canada), UU did not offer much guidance, so I just had to do all that with information on the internet and the website of the Canadian government, which was very chaotic and overwhelming needing to do that for the first time. It would have been nice to get some help/guidance from the international office, which is/should be more familiar with all the rules and regulations that are necessary to apply for a VISA.
academic preparation	I made sure to have a list of courses that seemed interesting (more than the 5 courses I had to take to earn the 30 EC) and had my favourite ones approved. I also emailed my teachers at UVIC, asking if they could already share the necessary course materials and syllabus with me.
language preparation	As a English major going to an English speaking country, I did not prepare anything.
finances	I made sure I got myself a credit card that would be accepted in Canada (Visa) and made sure I had the finances to pay for rent, groceries, etc. I also did an online search into the average living costs in that area.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	UVIC puts all exchange students in social sciences but you are free to take courses from any department (as long as you meet the requirements or get permission from their board – they provided clear emails explaining the procedure for this). I took 4 courses that aligned with my major in Utrecht (English/literature/linguistics) and 1 “random” course for fun.
academic quality of education activities	



The teachers I had seemed very knowledgeable in their field and I found them good at their job in teaching and creating a nice learning environment in the classes. The study load, formatting, and exams/papers are similar to what I have experienced in Utrecht.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

UVIC offers a LOT of services for academic and personal support. The university and many teachers also actively address these services in class and encourage students to use them. All the employees are very friendly and ready to help if you need anything. All of the services are addressed during the introduction weeks for international students, with clear explanations on how to reach out/where to find them, so I highly recommend going to as many activities as you can (also a great opportunity to meet new people).

transfer of credits

Currently in the midst of this process – just make sure to send an email to the international office (or whoever you specifically need to contact) to ask whether they have received your transcript, they will let you know in a response email what you need to do to get it approved.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The introduction/orientation week is very fun and you really get to know the campus, what kind of services they offer and where to find/how to contact them, and you meet a lot of fun people who are also international students (short-term, long-term, and for a full degree) and students from UVIC's Global Community who volunteer for these events!

accommodation

I know most of the UU students that also went to UVIC for the same semester, got off-campus residence. Just as in the Netherlands, they also have a housing problem so expect to pay at least 900-1200 CAD a month when living with other students, on campus residence is similar in pricing but, as an exchange student, you are not guaranteed on-campus housing. From my experience, off-campus is nice as you spend more time off campus, rather than in that bubble. However, I did make many friends that did stay on-campus, which made it difficult to meet up with them till late because I had to catch the last bus. Whatever your preference, I am sure you will have a great time either on- or off-campus!

leisure & culture

There is a lot of nature to explore and plenty of fun things to do in and around Victoria – Vancouver is only a \$20 ferry trip away...!
There are a couple of bars downtown (and one on-campus, which I highly recommend, plus it has low prices) and many restaurants, just keep in mind that Victoria can be a bit pricy sometimes...
Victoria (and UVIC) is also pretty involved with the Indigenous communities on the island, so be sure to enjoy their art and presence in the culture as well, and maybe even get more familiar with the history of Native Americans while you are there!

suggestions/tips

Do be aware that the only public transportation in and around Victoria is the bus. Although the buses can take you to beautiful places outside of Victoria (Langford, Sooke, Sidney, etc.), if you intend on traveling up-island this will be difficult if you do not have a drivers license...

CONCLUSIONS

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



I definitely recommend UVIC, the campus is really beautiful with lots of wildlife (deers, squirrels, raccoons, George the Campus Peacock), the people are very friendly, UVIC offers a lot of activities that anyone can join (clubs, meet-up events, guest lectures, game nights, and sport events), the services the university offers are accessible and easy to get in touch with, and the teachers are very accommodating and student-involved.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Make sure to spend enough time exploring the Island, spend time in nature, or make a trip to Vancouver, Whistler, or a short ferry to Seattle/Port Angeles. Besides passing your courses, also spend a good amount of time with friends and ensuring you use this experience to explore!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

	Contact info at the IO.
faculty/college	Geowetenschappen
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Sociale Geografie en Planologie

destination city & country	Gainesville, United States of America
name university abroad	University of Florida
start date	24 / 08 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	16 / 12 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	<p>A reason I chose to study at Utrecht University was because you can do an exchange abroad. I looked into the options and knew that if I had the opportunity I would love to do an exchange at the University of Florida!! The application process was not complicated. It might feel stressful or like a lot to do. If you take it step by step however it is not difficult. After you apply at Utrecht University you will hear whether you are placed. You can then start your application at University of Florida and the J1 visa application. There is a preliminary meeting at Utrecht University with fellow students that are going after you are placed. It can be helpful to stay in contact so you can help each other out during the rest of the process. You might need to schedule appointments such as for your visa whilst there are no dates available early enough. You can schedule one at a later date and then check regularly to reschedule earlier. Do not stress too much and give everything time because it will work out.</p>
counselling & support at Utrecht University	<p>The preliminary meeting was very helpful and they will provide information. You can contact the exchange coordinator at Utrecht University if you have any questions or problems before or during/after the exchange. They will be there to help you!</p>
academic preparation	<p>Academic preparation is not a requirement. I did the exchange at the end of my bachelors. So, for that reason I did not feel like I had to do any preparation for myself. It also depends on what courses you want to take and their difficulty. Some higher level courses have a prerequisites so you might not be able to do them.</p>
language preparation	<p>English is my native language so I did not have to do any preparation. For the application University of Florida will ask for proof of English language proficiency. You will get this as a student. Utrecht University will provide you with a document. If English is not your native language it can be helpful to practise, read or watch videos. It will help with your schoolwork and communicating with others. I would not worry too much. The professors are very helpful and the American students are also friendly. Besides, there are many other international students at the university. A lot of people in Florida also speak Spanish so if you know some that is a plus!</p>
finances	<p>It is important to be aware of the costs you expect to make. I would definitely recommend putting aside extra. You will probably spend more than you think. Visa, flights and accommodation are some of these costs. If you apply for a room on campus it is around \$3000 for the whole semester. Groceries are generally more expensive than in the Netherlands. Taxes are added after purchases and tipping for service is the norm. It also depends</p>



on your lifestyle and the way you want to spend your time. Trips can add to costs but are definitely worth it. I worked at a café for two years and saved a lot before I went on exchange. You are required to show proof of funds for the application at the University of Florida for your visa. This is a solvency statement indicating for one semester you have \$6000 on your own/parent's/sponser's bank account. You can do it for less but I would say try and have €10.000 available. I did not receive a grant but you can apply for the Holland Scholarship. You can also apply for the uitwonenden beurs and ov-vergoeding which helped me. Make sure you get a (student) credit card so you can use it abroad. If you are able to I would not let finances hold you back. This is something you will probaby not be able to experience later in your life!!

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The study programme was very well organised. A reason I chose this university was because of how many programs they have and the courses they offer. It is one of the largest universities in the United States! You are required to do a minimum of four courses for your student visa. It depends on your study at Utrecht University what exactly is expected. I was able to choose courses of my interest. The first week is drop/add week in which you can still change courses. If there is any issue with registering for your courses you can contact the exchange coordinator at the university.

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality was very good. In my experience the courses were easier at the University of Florida. The professors are very friendly and approachable. The structure is a little different to how it is in the Netherlands. In general you will have one or two larger tests for a course. This is often during midterm and at the end of the semester. You might instead have one or two larger (group)projects. It depends on the course what exactly is expected. You will often have weekly small assignments or quizzes. In my experience it was not difficult however and you will not have to do too much. A lot is also done online. In class there is more space for participation. The focus in general is more on learning and revising than difficulty.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The exchange coordinator at the University of Florida was very helpful and kind. In my experience the communication was very good. I know from other students it may sometimes take a while to receive a reply. The international center at the university is quite busy but they will make sure to get back to you. Do not hesitate to reach out if you have any problems or questions at all. If something is urgent you can follow up or go to the international center on campus or meet with the coordinator. The university has other resources too. The professors are also friendly and you can reach out to them if you have any issues with the course you are following.

transfer of credits

I am currently still busy with the transfer of credits. You will have to request a transcript at the University of Florida. The Board of Examiners at Utrecht University will transfer this to ECTS.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

I arrived just before classes started so I did not experience all of the welcome/orientation programme. I recommend getting a flight directly to Gainesville (usually with one layover). It costs a little more but it is a lot easier and safer than going from Orlando when you have just arrived in the country. The university has a compulsory meeting with all incoming international students (which were a lot!). This was very helpful. There is also an afternoon which they will show you around campus. The campus is really beautiful!! The exchange coordinator and international center will communicate other events. Do make sure you join the WhatsApp



group the exchange coordinator shares in an email before you leave. I was not aware until well in my exchange which made me miss out on meeting other students at the start. Overall the university made me feel very welcome!

accommodation

I would recommend to arrange accommodation well before you leave. You can apply for housing at the end of your application process at the University of Florida. It can take long to hear back but they will get back to you. You can reach out through their email if you have questions. Last year they switched their system which led to delays. I only got offered accommodation a couple days before I left for my exchange which was a little stressful. This was a one-time thing and it does not usually happen like this. I had a flex-ticket to make sure I could change my flight and come later if I could not find accommodation on time. If you want to live off campus there are options too it might only cost more if you leave it until late. I liked living on campus because I felt I really had the dorm experience. Weaver Hall is nice place to be as many other international students live there. I got placed at Simpson Hall which was also nice as I got to meet a lot more American students. Every hall is located in a general area and each floor has a resident assistant who can help you out. I had a double room but was the only occupant. Most probably you will have to share a room with one other roommate. The hall had a communal kitchen and bathroom on each floor. It gets cleaned every day. There was a small store at the hall that is open every day till 1am. A couple minutes walk the dining hall is located. The dining hall has a variety of food and provides breakfast/lunch/dinner if you have a meal plan or for \$11.50 a meal. I did not have a meal plan which worked better for me. I still went to the dining hall if I did not have time to cook which was useful. The environment is beautiful and I enjoyed living on campus. Perhaps one of the best perks was the pool! Do not stress too much with arranging accommodation because it will work out in the end!

leisure & culture

American culture in general is very open and friendly. Surprisingly it was a lot like what you might see in movies which I did not expect. The university is very diverse and there are many people with different backgrounds. This makes it interesting to get to know people. I made a lot of friends I still stay in contact with. UF Navigators International is an organisation that does events and where you can meet other internationals. UF RecSports does sports and outdoor trips. There are so many different student organisations for which you can join their events. College sports is a big part of the culture especially American football. The entire campus and stadium changes atmosphere during game days! I bought last-minute tickets through the app and went to a couple games which were very fun. Especially the last game together with everyone! I went to a basketball game as well. Gainesville is a smaller town and more spread out but I liked that. A lot of the United States is designed car-centred. There is a bus which is free to ride with a student card. I would recommend using that on campus during the day. Trips are something I will definitely remember. I did trips with student organisations to Lake Wauburg, Ginnie Springs, Cedar Key and St. Augustine. I went kayaking, tubing, surfing and more! This is a nice way to meet new people too. I also visited Miami with my family for which I took the bus. RedCoach busses leave from campus and depending on your destination it can be an efficient and safer option for further trips. I also did a road trip to Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina with a couple others! We rented a car for which we split the costs. I visited New York and Hoboken, New Jersey with another group of friends before heading home. If you want you can arrive before classes start or stay after the semester to travel. I got a flex-ticket for my flight which I highly recommend. It saved me trouble before I had to leave and I was able to stay longer after my exchange and visit New York!

suggestions/tips

Make the most of your time!! It will go fast! Make sure to join trips or ask others to join a trip you would like to do. There are always people that are interested in travelling. Don't let language or other hesitations stop you from connecting with people and making friends. Be open but stay true to yourself. There are so many things to do there is something for everyone. You can truly make it what you want.



CONCLUSIONS

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

I would absolutely recommend doing an exchange at UF!!!!!!! It gives you a very different experience from studying in the Netherlands. The weather is always warm and I was outside a lot more. There are so many things to do on campus and trips you can go on. I would describe it as a typical American college but you can make it what you want. I am very thankful I got the opportunity to do this. It is an experience I will never forget and I find myself still looking back on!!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Go for it :)