

2022-2023

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| faculty/college | Humanities |
| level | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD |
| name study programme | Liberal Arts and Sciences |

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|---|-----------------------------|
| destination city & country | Barcelona, Spain |
| how did you travel to your destination? | Train |
| name university abroad | Universitat de Barcelona |
| start date | 03 / 02 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy) |
| end date | 14 / 06 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy) |

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

| PREPARATION | |
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| exchange application process | The exchange process is stressful. This is probably something you have been told many times but I am going to repeat it: start early. There is always something you forget to take care of you want to have enough time to take care of it. |
| counselling & support at Utrecht University | The counselling and support at UU is fine. The info sessions were very helpful. You can also email your questions to them if necessary. |
| academic preparation | I am not very sure what exactly is meant by academic preparation but I guess it has something to do with taking subjects in advance to prepare for the subjects you get there. I was advised to take philosophy courses to prepare, which I didn't do because it wouldn't fit in in my programme and that was fine. The level abroad is lower so that is not something to worry about if you ask me. |
| language preparation | I could already speak Spanish, so the only preparation I did was taking the language test. Do not forget about that because the results can come in quite late so it is important that you take care of that early. I didn't prepare much more, since I figured it would be easier to learn the language here in Barcelona than at home. |
| finances | I made a spreadsheet to calculate how much I would spend here and I took care of the forms. About the forms: it takes some time to make sure you take the time for that. I ended up spending way less money than expected, since life here is much cheaper so that is definitely a plus. |

| STUDY ABROAD PERIOD | |
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| study programme (content and organisational issues) | It took me some time to find English courses, but I found them. They were forth year courses but still very nice. It took me some time to figure out the course site, but when I did it wasn't too bad. And when I didn't get something I could just ask my uni so that was okay. |

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| academic quality of education activities |
| I don't know if I was lucky, but my professors were all very good. They came from different countries and were really supportive. I really enjoyed the courses I had. The level is lower than at UU because I could easily join in at forth year courses of a study I didn't do, which was a plus for me. |
| counselling & support at receiving university abroad |
| I was very happily surprised by de UB. If I'm honest I expected it to be a bit messy, but the international office was great and they organised everything really well. My friends that stayed at UAB were less pleased so this is a big plus for UB. |
| transfer of credits |
| I don't know what is meant by this. |

| STUDENT LIFE |
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| welcome & orientation programme |
| There wasn't a big welcome programme from the UB, just a lunch and info session. ESN however organizes a LOT. Think a lot and then double it. It wasn't really my thing, but it is a really easy way to meet a lot of people. |
| accommodation |
| I feel like a lot of people end up with shit accomodation in Bcn. Do not stay in the city centre, it is a terrible place to live with a lot of (drunk) tourists. Gracia, Exiample or Barceloneta are very nice tho. Look at idealista and you'll find something. And watch out for scammers, because they are out there. |
| leisure & culture |
| That was one of my favorite things of Bcn. It has a lot of things to do. Museums, terraces, events, music, etc. The city is very vibrant :) |
| suggestions/tips |
| I would advice you to choose a good place to live. The city is very vibrant, which is really great, but because of that it is really important to find a chill place were you can relax. |

| CONCLUSIONS |
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| would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain |
| Yes! I would definitely recommend the UB. It is a great uni. Barcelona is also a very cool city and very international so I think perfect for an exchange. |
| do you have any additional advice or comments? |
| No. |

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|----------------------|---|
| faculty/college | Universitat de Barcelona |
| level | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD |
| name study programme | Liberal Arts and Sciences |

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| destination city & country | Barcelona, Spain |
| how did you travel to your destination? | Airplane |
| name university abroad | Universitat de Barcelona |
| start date | 12 / 09 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy) |
| end date | 27 / 01 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy) |

| PREPARATION | |
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| exchange application process | |
| The exchange application process was fine. The deadline was pretty early, already in December. I had to pick three places and luckily I got accepted for my first choice | |
| counselling & support at Utrecht University | |
| The counselling at Utrecht University was very good, they were very helpful. Especially because I needed to switch from semester 2 to 1. They helped me to make this possible, so I was very grateful for that. | |
| academic preparation | |
| There was not a lot of academic preparation required. I achieved a B1 level in Spanish a few years ago in Spain, so I just refreshed this knowledge. | |
| language preparation | |
| As I shortly explained, there was a B1 level of Spanish required to enter the university in Spain. I obtained this level, but this was some years ago so I decided to follow some courses in order to refresh this knowledge. | |
| finances | |
| I worked really hard to save up some money because I did not want to work in Spain. | |

| STUDY ABROAD PERIOD | |
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| study programme (content and organisational issues) | |
| The study programme was very diverse. I ended up having a lot of trouble with my Spanish courses because the level of Spanish was really difficult. However, I did really like the two English subjects I took. I did need to adapt to the Spanish way of education, because there are some differences with the Netherlands. | |
| academic quality of education activities | |
| The academic quality of the education activities were allright. | |
| counselling & support at receiving university abroad | |
| I was not very happy about the counselling at the UB. Because when I arrived it it turned out that I chose the complete wrong courses and they did not communicate this earlier. I then had completely change my courses and then it took over a week before these were accepted. Then it took some days before I could enroll and start. Then when I realised the courses were too difficult because of the language barrier, I did not feel support | |

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| at all. I was really sad about this, because I had just moved there and they were the only ones who could help me. |
| transfer of credits |
| I am still waiting for the transfer of credits. |

| STUDENT LIFE |
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| welcome & orientation programme |
| the welcome and orientation programme were nice, however, there was not that much of introduction. |
| accommodation |
| I had a really nice accomodation in Born, a really nice neighbourhood near the beach in the centre of Barcelona. And I had really nice roommates! |
| leisure & culture |
| I loved Barcelona as a city, because of the many activities that the city has to offer but as well because of the Spanish culture and the way they live. They had a lot of nice restaurants and terraces where I could sit in the sun all winter! |
| suggestions/tips |
| Bastaix was my favorite place to eat |

| CONCLUSIONS |
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| would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain |
| Yes I would, but only if you're sure you can handle courses in Spanish. Because otherwise, you are going to have a lot of trouble. |
| do you have any additional advice or comments? |
| no |

2016-2017
Report 1

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

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|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| destination city & country | Barcelona, Spain |
| name university abroad | Universitat de Barcelona |
| start date | 30 / 08 / 2016 (dd/mm/yyyy) |
| end date | 02 / 02 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy) |

| PREPARATION | |
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| exchange application process | |
| <p>It might seem a lot of work to apply, and it is, but it is actually quite straight forward. Make sure to make a list of all documents necessary and their deadlines. Take some time to orient yourself to choose a university. The university in Barcelona was actually quite bad with respect to bureaucracy and administration, they tend to be quite slow and late with everything and might not always reply or keep their websites updated, which leads to a lot of frustration. On the other hand, they are quite laid-back and almost always something can be worked out if you miss a deadline or something.</p> | |
| counselling & support at Utrecht University | |
| <p>The support from the International Office of the UU was enormous: at first I wanted to go to Madrid, but then at the last minute I wanted to switch to Barcelona and they helped me out great even though this probably was quite annoying.</p> <p>I was often confused with what the next step should be in the process or stressed about missing deadlines, but the IO helps you out with everything and send you updates in time.</p> | |
| academic preparation | |
| <p>This was not really necessary for me I think. For the Learning Agreement you have to choose courses, but the UB website was not updated and I couldn't find course guides or something (and they did not respond to my emails), but I knew that I could always change the courses if I did not like them.</p> | |
| language preparation | |
| <p>In my first year of university I did Spanish 1 and Spanish 2, so you end up with a B1 level of Spanish. Before going to Barcelona I started rehearsing my Spanish again, but I didn't take any extra language courses. I would recommend this though.</p> <p>In Barcelona I took a beginners course Catalan from the UB, because I wanted to know the principles of the language a little. I'm glad I did this, but maybe an extra Spanish course would have been better for me. I did not take any courses in Catalan. I took 2 courses in Spanish and 2 in English. The Spanish ones were difficult but I could manage.</p> <p>Because I wasn't as much in contact with the Spanish language as I'd hoped to be (the lectures were very passive: only listening, and I didn't have any friends that preferred speaking Spanish over English), I took an additional Spanish course in Barcelona. It was a private one I found online, so not from a university. It helped me a lot, because I had to speak Spanish at least once a week intensively.</p> | |
| finances | |
| <p>Before going on exchange you have to make a financial plan. Barcelona is not very expensive, except the rent might be quite high. I had a flat in the city center near las Ramblas and paid quite a lot. In Eixample it can also be quite expensive. Of course take into account that you have to pay a deposit when renting a flat, which is usually 2x monthly rent, so it can be quite high.</p> <p>Food and drinks are slightly cheaper in Barcelona than in the Netherlands, especially if you know where to go. There are quite a lot of bars with cheap beers or happy hour cocktails. Clubbing is expensive: you almost always pay at least €15 entrée for the big clubs like Razzmatazz and Apollo, but the other clubs often have a Erasmus deal so you can get in for free if you're on some kind of list.</p> <p>I had the Erasmus grant, saved up a lot, got some support from my parents, took a loan and had the OV compensation.</p> | |

| STUDY ABROAD PERIOD | |
|---|--|
| study programme (content and organisational issues) | |

Because the contract between the UU and UB concerned the faculty of geography and history, I had to take at least 50% of my courses at this faculty. I chose a history subject and an art history subject in Spanish here. The method of teaching is very different than at the UU. First of all, these are half year courses and advance slowly, but I liked this very much. Secondly, there are no seminars or anything: you come in, you sit down, and you listen. Very passive, and none of the lectures are obligatory. I chose 2 English subjects from the study of English at another faculty. The request for taking courses at another faculty was very devious: first I had to go to the IO of 'my' faculty to pick up a form, sign it, take it to the IO of the other faculty I wanted to take courses, they had to sign it, pick it up again some days later and drop it off at the IO of my faculty... This is quite typical for Spain, nothing is electronically done, be prepared for this. Once everything is in order, all went well for me.

The majority of the courses were taught in Catalan, so if you don't speak this or want to learn this, there are not that many options left. You might end up having to take courses that are not in your study area, simply because they are the only ones you'll understand. If you have 'free space' in your Bachelor where you can put whatever you want, this is not a big problem.

There was a welcoming session, but this was very difficult because they were talking rapidly in Spanish about important registering procedures and I didn't understand all of it.

The IO at my faculty was quite helpful, they were very kind and wanted to help with everything. The only downside is that it is just one office with 2 office hours a day and a lot of Erasmus students, so I would recommend to always go at the earliest hour possible to avoid waiting for a long time or not having any time for a meeting.

academic quality of education activities

The first week of the start of the semester, you can attend all classes that are interesting, to see whether you like it, whether you like the teacher, whether you can handle the level of Spanish. Afterwards you'll register for the ones you like. This was very helpful, because I ended up taking very different courses than I first thought I would.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

As mentioned before, the IO was very helpful, yet always a crowded place. Unfortunately, I felt other institutions often did not return emails or offered a lot of support.

transfer of credits

I don't exactly know what to write here. At the UB you passed with a 5 or higher, I don't know how this transfers to the Dutch system.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There was a welcome session which was quite confusing, because they were talking rapidly in Spanish. However, they did explain some things about the university and also about living in the city, for example how to get around (metro ticket deals and biking) and some history about the city. We also did a tour around the faculty and received a UB-linen bag with an agenda, binder and notebook (although this might not be for every faculty).

ESN (Erasmus Student Network) organized a lot of activities, also consistent ones that return every week. I did not like these very much, I went a few times but it wasn't really working for me. Sometimes there is a party with free food, but the food is really bad, or with free sangría and then you only get 1 sangría haha. But these are nice activities to get to know people.

In Barcelona there was also something called CityLife Barcelona. They also organized activities comparable to the ESN ones. I subscribed to their newsletter which also featured nice information about restaurants, traditions or study spots.

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| accommodation |
| <p>I rented a flat in the neighbourhood Raval, which is not the best neighbourhood at night, but since I lived very close to the Ramblas I never felt unsafe. I found it through RESA Housing, a company recommended by the UB, which is nice because you'll end up with other students as roommates. The location was great, because it was just a 10min walk to either of the faculties where I had classes and it was in the city center. The rent was higher than what I paid in Utrecht, but I had already taken that into account and since it was just for half a year, I didn't mind.</p> <p>Neighbourhoods I liked a lot in Barcelona and where I would recommend you looking for a flat: El Born and Gracia, and also Eixample.</p> |
| leisure & culture |
| <p>There is always something to do in Barcelona, everytime you go outside it's an adventure. Of course there is a lot of architecture (Gaudí, Domenech i Montaner, Puig i Cadafalch) and other places of interest. Definitely buy a guide before you leave and then take some afternoons to walk around and go where the guide takes you. There are also free walking tours which are great. Nightlife is great, I preferred bars over more expensive clubs. The weather is amazing of course, never have I ever seen this much sun in my life.</p> <p>Unfortunately I did not have a lot of contact with the locals. All my friends were other Erasmus students, because of course they are looking for friends as well, like you. Sometimes as an Erasmus student you can feel quite secluded with respect to integrating in the world around you. Catalan people are a little reserved but very nice if you talk to them, and they will always help you out. Not as flamboyant as for example in Andalucia, where they'll invite you for dinner if you blink in their direction.</p> |
| suggestions/tips |
| <p>Okay just some cultural tips: on Sunday afternoons, a lot of museums are free. On the first Sunday of the month some places of interest are also free, such as Palau Guëll or Hospital de Sant Pau, but go early because it is of course super crowded. Go see a performance in the Liceu Theatre (there are discounts for students or on the day of the performance 3hours before it starts). The Sagrada Familia is cheaper on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays for people under 30yrs after 16pm.</p> <p>Barcelona might not be the very best place to learn Castilian Spanish, because a lot is in Catalan. See other places around Barcelona as well (Girona, Figueras, Valencia, Zaragoza, Sitges).</p> <p>Go here for the city and culture.</p> |

| CONCLUSIONS |
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| would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain |
| <p>Definitely, but I have to admit more for the city and its awesomeness than the university. The UB was fine, but the level of education is not as high as in the Netherlands. I'm sure you will have a wonderful time here, because there is something for everyone. Of course it's nice in the second semester because the weather gets better and better, but the first semester is also amazing (also great weather, a mild winter: great contrast to the Netherlands).</p> |
| do you have any additional advice or comments? |
| <p>It is okay to spend money in these months of your life to enjoy it to the fullest. Make sure you keep doing stuff and push yourself to do so, 6 months go by very quickly. Eat crema catalana.</p> |

2015-2016
Report 1

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| faculty/college | History |
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| level | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD |
| name study programme | History |

| PREPARATION | |
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| exchange application process | When you see everything that you have to do, you really think it's a lot of paperwork. Even though that's true, still the international office helps you a lot. They keep you updated about deadlines, so in the end it is not as worse as you might think. Southern European universities tend to be more 'tranquilo' with the process, so you should be patient. Try to find the right contact person and his email adress. Don't call, which I did, because it's useless and expensive. |
| counselling & support at Utrecht University | The UU prepares you really well. They say to you all the things that you need, for example a credit card, which is very useful abroad. Also they respond very quickly to your emails. |
| academic preparation | I did not really do some academic preparation. I choose some subjects but I was sure that I had to change them there anyway, so I did not spend a lot attention to that. |
| language preparation | I did two courses in Spanish at the UU (Spaans taalverwerving 1 en 2) and this was very useful. First I wanted to do some self study at home to learn Spanish, but that requires loads of discipline. You should have B1 to enter the Universitat de Barcelona (although I don't think that they will deny you access when you don't have it). After the two courses at the UU I should have had B1, but when I did the Erasmus language course I had A2 and in some areas A1. The people of the UB told me that Catalan (which is one of the official languages of the university) was easy to catch up if you know Spanish and French. Well my French is quite good and my Spanish also, but Catalan is way different. I did not understand anything of my courses in Catalan. Also a girl from France who speaks both French and Spanish could not understand it well. To read it is more easy, but when people speak it, it is extremely difficult to understand. Also in my history courses, they talk a lot and don't use so many powerpoints, so that makes it even worse. If you have clear powerpoints it might be easier because you can translate them at home. In the end I got rid of all of my courses in Catalan and choose only English and one in Spanish. Even the Spanish one was already really difficult to follow (the teacher talks for 1,5 hours without powerpoints), but Catalan was for me impossible. On the other hand, if you make an effort you will surely succeed, but you then have to study more. I choose the easy way and had more time for partying. |
| finances | I worked and saved money. Moreover I had my Erasmus grant and my parents supported me financially. Barcelona is not that expensive. There are a lot of bars with beer for €1,50. In clubs it's way more expensive (€7 for a beer). In general the living costs are cheaper. It is just very expensive because you do all kind of things you don't do in Holland, like trips to Ibiza, going out 4 times a week, going out for dinner, etc. There are also a lot of good sushi places for cheap. |

| STUDY ABROAD PERIOD | |
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| study programme (content and organisational issues) | I did not choose Barcelona for the study programme, so I was already prepared for some uninteresting subjects. In general the courses were not very interesting, but that was also because I could choose only from a limited amount of subjects in English and Spanish. For example, there were interesting courses about Franco or Dutch |

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| art, but those were in Catalan, and for that I did not want to do them. I think only 30% is in Spanish and 5% in English. So I had to choose courses like Medieval Spain, which was quite boring. But in the end I did not care, because the city is way more important than the course offer. You can by the way always write your exams in Spanish, even though the course is in Catalan. Also, you often can write your exam in English or French. The teachers are very very kind and open. Though the lessons are often like a lecture in which the student only listens, the atmosphere is informal and nice. I really liked the teachers and also the people from the international office were very very kind. |
| academic quality of education activities |
| I don't like to complain about the quality, because the UB has taken so much effort for me. In general it is easier than at the UU. But this is very nice because then you have more time to enjoy the city. |
| counselling & support at receiving university abroad |
| The support from the UB was great. The people were very nice and they are helping you in an informal way. The staff of the UB really made me so positive about the university. The support from the UU was also good. They help you a lot and they respond quick to emails. |
| transfer of credits |
| I did not yet receive my credits. |

| STUDENT LIFE |
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| welcome & orientation programme |
| The welcoming programme of the UB itself is nice, but just about the university. It was already immediately in Spanish so I really had to adapt to that. Also my improvement of my Spanish went way slower than I thought it would be, also because I spend a lot of time with English and French speaking students. You should definitely go to the ESN opening week. Make sure you don't miss it. You will also make friends when you are not joining it, but it is just so much easier. I really loved ESN. It is so easy to meet new people and everybody wants to have a good time. When you know more and more people, the events are like parties and school trips with all of your friends. As I know some people see it as a touristic way of getting to know the city and you don't get in contact with the real local people. BUT: it is very difficult to get into the local community. And moreover, they are just people from Barcelona and they don't have such an urge to do everything in the five months. I would really recommend to go into an international students house and join all those things, because I really liked it and I made a lot of friends. But of course that is different for everybody. By the way, it does not mean that you always have to speak English and you won't learn Spanish. There are a lot of possibilities to learn Spanish. There are language exchanges (a lot of Spanish students want to learn English). Moreover, there are also students from Latin America, and often the Italian and French students talk Spanish with foreigners because their English is not good enough. You can just choose the community which you want to be part of. I did not feel an urge to learn Spanish, but more French, so I spent a lot of time with French people. Really, people say that you cant learn Spanish in Catalunya, but that is not true. If you want to practise it, you will definitely find the people you need. Also in the city, when you speak Spanish people always answer in Spanish too. Just learn some basic Catalan words and sentences (they will appreciate that) but nobody made a problem of it when I spoke Spanish. Really, you can learn Spanish in Barcelona for sure. |
| accommodation |
| I already fixed a room in Barcelona when I was in Holland. I did not want to stay in a hostel the first week. This meant that I payed a bit more than average (€445). I think a normal price is around €300, it has not to be that expensive. I got my room from rentroombarcelona.com. I had Spanish, British, French and German flatmates, so I could practise all my languages. A lot of people live in Gotico but that is really touristic in the summer |

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| especially. I really liked my neighborhood (Eixample). Also Gracia and el Born are really nice. |
| leisure & culture |
| Barcelona is an amazing city. It is truly beautiful and so lively. The nightlife is great, there is always a party somewhere. Moreover, Barcelona is not too big (I was in doubt between Barcelona and Paris) so you can really feel at home. For example I often meet somebody spontaneously in the street, which would not happen that often in Paris or London I think. There is a lot of culture. Moreover, you have the football club, the beach, the mountains, the beautiful architecture. I was there for example when FC Barcelona won the Primera Division, which was really cool. The people are also really kind, although it is said that they are more closed than other parts of Spain. I really think that Barcelona is one of the best cities when it comes to living quality. A bad thing is that it is in the summer very touristy. Places like the Rambla you really have to avoid, and because of all the tourists you sometimes might not feel like you are actually in a Spanish city. But on the other hand, you can go to areas like Gracia, which are less touristy. One other thing is that the people of Barcelona can be (annoyingly) proud about Cataluña and Barcelona, and they sometimes really hate tourists. Because of the overload of tourists, they can be very hostile to foreigners. But on the other hand it is not really pointed at Erasmus students because they are more real citizens than the tourists. |
| suggestions/tips |
| Go and drink beer on Placa del Sol in Gracia, where in the summer are a lot of students. Moreover, I would go in the second semester, because the weather is really good and you can enjoy the outside life in Barcelona. And I would recommend to go a bit out of the city center and enjoy some suburbs. That is the more real Catalan life. Also go to beaches outside Barcelona, by taking the train. Sometimes by taking the train only for 30 minutes, the beaches are way more quiet and beautiful. The beach of Barcelona is crowded and not that beautiful. |

| CONCLUSIONS |
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| would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain |
| I would in everything recommend Barcelona. It is the best city in Europe to do your Erasmus I think: it is a cosmopolitan city but not too big, it has the football, food, beach, great nightlife, friendly people, surrounded by beautiful nature, a lot of culture, the amazing summer life on the streets, close to Ibiza and Morocco, you can for sure learn Spanish here and the international student community is really big and well organized here. |
| do you have any additional advice or comments? |
| You should really consider to go in the second semester, because you have beautiful weather. |

Report 2

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

| PREPARATION |
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| exchange application process |
| This started quite early; the deadlines for application were in January, before leaving in September. You needed to make a top-3-list of universities you wanted to go to. I chose 3 universities in Spain, with the one in Barcelona as my favorite. Fortunately, I could go here. Then, you needed to write an application letter in which you substantiated why you wanted to go abroad. |

Spain – Universitat de Barcelona

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| counselling & support at Utrecht University |
| Although there are a lot of deadlines and steps you need to follow in preparation, the support from the Utrecht University was very helpful. They sent e-mails to you, in advance, so you had enough time to think and prepare for the upcoming deadlines. Also, there were meetings held, in which the university informed all of the upcoming Erasmus students and after which you were free to ask questions. Moreover, I had a lot of contact with the International Office in Utrecht, and they always helped accurately and quickly. |
| academic preparation |
| I had to think about my level in Spanish, because 'B1' was the minimum level you needed to obtain before going to Spain. In the last block of the semester, before leaving to Spain, I obtained this minimum level by having followed a course at the Utrecht University. Moreover, you need to find out if a semester away, will fit in your Bachelor program. I needed to change one of my mandatory courses, because I was not able to follow it the same year. With the Exam Commission I could change this course for another mandatory course, in a later block. |
| language preparation |
| As I said above, I needed to obtain a minimum level of B1 (These are European guidelines). This, I obtained by following a course - Taalverwerving Spaans 2. I also let my teacher Spanish write a recommendation for me, which I sent to the University in Barcelona. |
| finances |
| You are obliged to make a financial plan before applying. Which helped me get insight in how much it would all cost. When you are living on your own, you need to think about if it is financial possible to rent a room abroad and keep your room here. |

| STUDY ABROAD PERIOD |
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| study programme (content and organisational issues) |
| <p>Because I was able to fill in the 'free space'-part of my Bachelor, I chose quite different courses, all in the same faculty (History, Geography and Philosophy), but from different study programs. In the end, this was the only choice, since most of the courses were taught in Catalan. And Catalan is a whole other thing than Spanish, in which I was not able to speak or to follow any of these courses. Which left me with a rather small amount of options of courses taught in Spanish. The International Office abroad, helped me very well. They answered my e-mails quickly, and spoke different languages. The only thing was that, there were some 200 Erasmus students, and just 1 person at the International Office. This resulted in long afternoons, waiting for your turn.</p> <p>There was not a proper welcoming day, only an afternoon in October, during class, in which they welcomed you and spoke to you in Catalan.</p> <p>Furthermore, the courses were all at the same faculty, which was located in the middle of the center (near La Rambla). This was a nice experience, since they also have many buildings located throughout the city, and you could travel from building to building, if you were to study at different faculties.</p> <p>Thereby, if you want to obtain 30 ECTS, you need to follow 5 courses during 1 semester. This meant for me that I was doing 5 different topics at the same time, for half a year. That was quite a lot, since in Utrecht I just followed 2 courses per block.</p> |
| academic quality of education activities |
| This differed very much between the different courses I followed. For me, and for other Dutch students, I could say that the academic level was lower than in Utrecht. At times, it was more comparable to high school teaching. The teacher spoke, you were to listen and recuperate what was taught you in the final exam. There was little room for discussion or interpretation, as I was used to at the University of Utrecht. |

Spain – Universitat de Barcelona**counselling & support at receiving university abroad**

The woman who helped at the International Office, Aurora, was super helpful and was able to answer my questions immediately. The International Office was also located in the faculty, so it was always nearby. The teachers, on the other hand, most of the time were quite distant to Erasmus students, as I experienced it. E-mails stayed unanswered, and questions in class were replied with the recommendation to talk with my fellow Erasmus students. I felt quite left out at one point. Your classmates, on the other hand, are really helpful. The ones I met, were always nice and helped with taking notes and understanding what was taught in class.

transfer of credits

As I am typing this (mid February) I am still waiting for 2 more final grades. With most of my courses, I did some mid-term assignments such as writing essays or giving presentations, but I did not receive my grade right away, or in the following weeks. After my final exams, I got 1 grade for a course, in which these mid-term grades were implemented. In some cases I got those mid-term grades earlier, but still at the last moment, before the final exams would take place.

STUDENT LIFE**welcome & orientation programme**

The orientation programme consisted of two weeks, in which you could follow some courses to find out which ones you liked and which you did not like. In order to make an elaborate decision on your final chosen courses. It was enough time for me, to make an elaborate decision. I was waiting a few weeks for a welcome programme, but it was not held until the courses were started, and I could not assist, since I needed to be in class. Moreover, I heard it was in Catalan, which I find quite weird, since they were welcoming international students.

accommodation

I found a room myself, independent from what the University was offering. So, I am not sure if they even offered accommodation. I was located in the city centre, which took me 15 minutes to walk to the faculty. This was perfect.

leisure & culture

Barcelona is one of my favorite cities in Europe, so I am not sure if I can give an objective view on this. The city has so much to offer! From the beach you walk to the gothic city centre in which you can wander around for days and still not get bored by it. There are a lot of shops open until late at night (9 or 10pm). Moreover, Barcelona has a rich art culture, with Picasso, Gaudi and the writer George Orwell who has lived here. All in all, I now have lived twice in Barcelona (both times a period of half a year) and I keep finding new places to go to.

suggestions/tips

There is a great metro system in Barcelona, so if you do not live that close to your faculty you can make use of the public transport. There are several season tickets you can buy, to make your traveling relatively cheap.

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

For the city I would definitely recommend this destination. You will think 5 months is definitely not enough to have seen it all. Concerning the faculty I went to, I am not so positive. If you really want to learn the Spanish language, you could better go to Madrid, for example, since there are not many courses taught in Spanish. The academic level was not as high as in Utrecht, but the understanding of the lessons in Spanish (with my B1-level it was quite difficult at times) made up for this seeming advantage. Moreover, you need to be lucky with your teachers: some of them

were great and understanding of your situation, others were ignorant and quite harsh on you. In these cases I depended a lot on my fellow (Erasmus) students, with whom I could deliberate over certain things.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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2013-2014

Report 1

| preparation |
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| exchange/placement application process |
| I got selected for my first choice, Barcelona! So this was very good. Furthermore, I thought it was a bit unclear what I all needed to take care of before leaving. I really missed some checklist, because there were so many papers that I had to hand in on time and I didn't have a good overview from the deadlines etc. |
| counselling/support at home university |
| I think the support from the home univeristy is good, when you have a specific question and write an e-mail to your Erasmus coordinator. However, I missed a kind of overview which outlined what you all have to do before you leave and after you come back. Just a simple checklist would be enough and would clear a lot of things. |
| academic preparation |
| I did some courses in English Studies, which were different from my mayor back home, but even though very interesting. Therefore, sometimes I missed a bit of knowledge that other students did have, but I had no problems to take my courses. |
| language preparation |
| Even though I studied in Spain, I did courses in English, so I did not need any language preparation. However, I was really intersted in learning more Spanish, so I did a language course anyway. |
| finances |
| I really spend a lot of money on my Erasmus period. I work a lot before I went here, but I also really needed it. This was also because I did everything fun I could, so you could make it with less money. I went on holiday 3 times to explore Spain and spend a lot of money on partying, but you could spend less on these things. |
| study/placement abroad period |
| study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues) |
| The Erasmus coordinator in Barcelona was very helpful and the study programme was actually really clear, once I found out how everything worked. Also the content of the programme was really intersting and the level of English at the univeristy was really good. |
| academic quality of education/placement activities |
| I thought all the professors in Spain were really really really nice. The lessons have the same sort of structure as in the Netherlands, but I felt like the relation between teacher and student is a bit different. The teachers knew always all students, even when we were with a lot of people in a classroom and they really made an effort to get to know the students. Also I felt like the lessons also were general-life lessons and not always only focused on the topic we were discussing. I learned a lot about acadamics in general. However, the level of the courses were all a bit lower than in the Netherlands. I didn't have less work, just the work I had to do was a bit easier. |
| counselling/support at host institution/organisation |

Spain – Universitat de Barcelona

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| The Erasmus officer was really nice and helpful, he always emailed me back within a few hours and he knew all the Erasmus students by name and he knew what we were studying. He could always clarify everything for me and he made me feel really comfortable at my new University. |
| transfer of credits |
| The university of Barcelona works with the same grading system as the UU and also the transfer of credits will be the same (I think?) |
| student life |
| welcome/orientation programme |
| There was a welcome programme for Erasmus students after the courses had already started for 3 weeks. Also, the complete welcoming programme was in Catalan/Spanish and was only about the history of the university. Completely not fun and not helpful, because almost no one spoke Catalan. |
| accommodation |
| My accommodation here was perfect; I stayed in the middle of the city centre in a house with 5 other students and it was always really fun. It was a typical old Spanish house, so the condition of the house was not perfect, but it was good enough for me. The organization I got it from was rentroombarcelona.com |
| leisure/culture |
| I love the Spanish culture and everything there is to do in Barcelona. The food, the people and the way of living here is so relaxt and easy going, I will be sorry to go back to my hectic life in the Netherlands. Also the weather had a very positive influence on my mood. |
| suggestions/tips |
| If you are going here to learn Spanish, then go somewhere else; everything is in Catalan. |
| conclusions |
| would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? please explain |
| I would definitely recommend Barcelona to other students. I really loved the culture, the climat, the university and the people here. I had so much fun and since the Spanish univeristy is a bit easier than my home university, I still had time to do a lot of fun stuff. However, if you want to learn really good Spanish then you should go somewhere else, because everything here is in Catalan. Therefore, I didn't really have a lot of contact with my (Catalan) class mates, because even though they studied English, they prefered to speak in Catalan with the rest of the Catalan people. There were no Erasmus students in my classes, so I didn't make that many friends at the University. But I met so many nice Erasmus people that this was not a problem for me. |
| do you have any additional advice or comments? |
| Take a lot of money and explore a bit more of Spain, this were very great experiences for me. Also, make as much fun as you can, before you know it your 5 months are up. |