

2021-2022

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

destination city & country	Madrid, Spain
how did you travel to your destination?	By plane
name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III
start date	03 / 09 / 2021
end date	19 / 01 / 2022

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	Since I already experienced the application process the year before (my exchange was cancelled because of covid), the process was easy, I already knew what to do. I reconsidered the destinations, just to see if I was still convinced of my initial choice, and I re-wrote my motivation letter.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I did not need help, but I know for sure that if I had needed it, the International Office would have helped, like they did the year before. Back then I was not sure if I wanted to focus more on the spoken language of the country or more on the courses taught at the university, Gerdien Rademaker talked to me explaining the pros and cons of both decisions.
academic preparation	As my first exchange was cancelled, I started the bachelor Spanish to fill in the gap in my study program. As my "keuzepakket" originally was composed of a Spanish minor, I made the choice to bring the courses of my stay abroad in into my study program as "keuzepakket", so I chose for courses at the UC3M that were in some way connected to the same theme and asked approval of my "hoofdrichtingsadviseur".
language preparation	In my first year of TCS I was enrolled in the Spanish language courses and in my second and third year I did some courses in which Spanish was the used language of communication. Due to covid and the online classes, I felt that it was harder to really speak and practice the language, but at the end my understanding of Spanish was good enough for the exchange.
finances	I saved money, every month since I decided I wanted to go on Erasmus I put a bit of money aside, at least 150 euros since I estimated 50 euros for groceries every week, and I got the Erasmus Grant. The Grant was not enough to pay the rent, which I hoped for, but luckily I saved enough, and I didn't need to loan money.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	I could choose quite a lot of courses to enroll in, (almost) all the humanity courses. The enrollment was a bit stressful, but I was informed well in advance, so I knew what was coming. I recommend create some backup plans, since some courses are really popular, and check out in advance the overlap/which workgroup is the best for you.
academic quality of education activities	The quality of education was good, the teachers really knew what they were talking about. It was interesting that some courses approached a more practical way of education, I did a lot of stuff I never did at UU, it was a

nice way of dealing differently with the teaching materials. I was enrolled in 5 courses at the same time, during 5 months, so I felt I was less engaged with every course, compared to UU, also the final test seemed a bit less in depth as I'm used to at the UU, but since I needed to study for more courses, that was actually a relief.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

Because I heard one week in advance that my exchange could continue, after being cancelled (again), I needed to fix a lot of stuff in a short time, but everything I needed was provided, so that was nice. Also, the UC3M has a website for exchange students explaining basically everything you require, so you're not really depending on the international office there, you basically only need them for signatures.

transfer of credits

The grades work the same as in Utrecht (0 till 10), so that is easy. I don't have my transcript of records yet, but it will come at the end of February/begin of March.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There was an online welcome event organized by the university, you could choose between different "rooms", based on what you were interested in. The UC3M has their own ESN, a student organisation for international students, they organize activities, it is a nice way of meeting other international students and see/learn something of/about the city.

accommodation

The first 5 nights I stayed in a hostel, searching for a room. After 3 visits, I found a room in a cool neighborhood. My initial idea was finding a room via internet, but because of the short time period in which I needed to prepare a lot of stuff, this didn't work out. In the end, I'm really happy I didn't already rent a room via internet, because in that way you can't experience the atmosphere of the room and the neighborhood, which for me is really important. Also, there are a lot of rooms without windows, which you don't necessarily notice on the internet. I had a room in the center of Madrid, in the main street of Lavapiés, one of Europe's most multicultural neighborhoods, it was not really a touristy part, which I liked, it felt authentic, in 12 minutes I was in the heart of the touristic center. UC3M has some campus rooms, but they are in my opinion quite expensive, because they are in Getafe (probably also on their other campus, but I only studied in Getafe), which is 20 minutes by train from the center, but for people that really want to focus on their studies, living in Getafe can be a good option.

leisure & culture

I really fell in love with the city, everywhere you look there is something interesting to see. The architecture is beautiful, there are a lot of churches, museums, stores and cosy places to have a drink and the atmosphere and weather are amazing. Every week, I discovered a new place in the city. Also, there are a lot of parks, where you can forget you're in the big city (El Capricho for example). I would also recommend a visit to Toledo, a beautiful city in the mountains, you can go for free with your student travel card. I also visited Segovia, Alcalá de Henares and Aranjuez, all close to Madrid. Furthermore, there are a lot of possibilities to visit cities further away, and even Lisbon for example, the Renfe (train) is well organised.

suggestions/tips

I would definitely recommend to search for a room while being in Madrid! Also, I would suggest not renting a room via an agency, since they want (quite a lot of) money for their services and are not always reliable. A good website for rooms in Spain is www.idealista.com, you can find a lot of landlords there. Also, a lot of payments are made by credit card (for example also the ESN payments), if you don't have one, maybe it is a good idea to get one, or discuss in advance if you can use one of your parents for example.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, for sure! Madrid is an amazing city that has a lot to offer, also there are nice surrounding cities and

activities to do. Also, UC3M is a good university with a lot of courses to offer and a refreshing teaching method.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Madrid is a really international city, I think a lot of Spanish students don't rent rooms in the center, but for example in Getafe, since it is (for them) quite expensive, so if you really want to surround yourself with Spanish people, Madrid may be not the best place to go. This was also part of my dilemma, on the one hand I really wanted to go to a university with interesting courses and a city rich of culture, on the other hand I wanted to improve my Spanish, I chose for the first one.

2019-2020

Report 1

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

destination city & country	Madrid, Spain
how did you travel to your destination?	Plane
name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
start date	02 / 09 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	14 / 01 / 2020 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process
The application process was not necessarily difficult, it is solely a matter of time to fill in all the paperwork. Use the timeline to get all the necessary signatures in time so the application process goes well.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I did not use counselling and support, but whenever I emailed the international office I always got a quick reply.
academic preparation
In the semester before going abroad I took a course academic writing in English. That was really helpful for me since it upgraded my writing skills significantly. I would recommend doing an extra writing or speaking course or cursus to improve your English, it will really pay off. I was not sure if the level of receiving university was higher than at the UU, so i did not do any extra academic preparation.
language preparation
Before going abroad, I spoke Spanish at an A2 level. I spent a little bit of time refreshing my Spanish knowledge, but I did not take any extra courses to improve Spanish skills. You will notice that your vocabulary will quickly expand while living abroad.
finances
Madrid is a little bit cheaper than the Netherlands. My parents helped me financially during my stay and I had saved up. I think it is possible to get a job while being abroad, you will probably have enough time, but on the other hand requires a job time and planning ahead, which might be difficult while studying abroad.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

When I started at UC3M, you could enroll in courses on Tuesday and classes would start on Wednesday. There was also a limited amount of spots available for international students. That made the enrolling process quite stressful, but everyone was facing the same issues which made it less worse. UC3M offers a lot of courses, I enrolled in humanities courses. The course descriptions are quite good. It was also nice that you did not need to buy any books; all the literature was digital. UC3M uses Aula Global, which is pretty much an easier version of Blackboard. Aula Global is also available as an app, but that did not work for the first two months so I ended up never using it and did not miss a thing. The numbers of the buildings on the campus can be confusing at the beginning, since the buildings are not numbered chronologically. The map of the campus is on their website and you can ask other people if you cannot find a building. The dates of all the exams are published after approximately one month of the start of the semester. However, I had a course that had a different date especially for international students, and the professor gave the date two weeks in advance. The teachers were all very different, one would not even respond to emails and another one gave us cookies and chocolate during our Friday 9 AM seminar because breakfast was very important according to him. At UC3M they really stick to their course program which was very nice. That makes it possible to keep an overview of all the course material and assignments. There were no changes of literature, deadlines or other mandatory things, which I could appreciate.

academic quality of education activities

I felt like the academic quality was a bit lower than at Utrecht University. This has to do with the fact that courses were more focused on just studying theories and/or facts and did not require a lot of academic and critical thinking. I would not say this is something negative; I have had very interesting courses that were quite practical but which I very much enjoyed and taught me skills and knowledge I would not have learned at Utrecht University. For example, I followed the course Fundamentals of Film and Television directing. During the lecture we would learn the theoretical parts about it and during the seminars we had to work on our project as a group. Now I know how to edit and what considerations a director makes. UC3M also makes you work together with classmates more than the UU I would say. I was enrolled in five courses and for four courses I had to give one or multiple presentations.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I did not use counselling and support at UC3M, but this international office as well replied very quickly to emails.

transfer of credits

UC3M says that they automatically send the final grades to my home university at the end of February.

STUDENT LIFE**welcome & orientation programme**

The welcome and orientation programme was worthless. It was at a different campus than that my classes were and there was a lot of waiting time. During the presentations they did not give any useful information, it remained very general and broad. I signed up for the Buddy Programme, but unfortunately my Buddy group was pretty lame and inactive. However, during the waiting most people would start a conversation since everybody had to wait. So it was unstructured but you still got to meet a lot of people.

accommodation

Living in the centre of Madrid is really expensive, if you want a cheaper accommodation you would have to look in the outskirts of Madrid, but that makes going out more difficult because you have to rely on buses. I got my room via Helpmadrid, but I do not recommend them because the administration fee is unproportionately high and the service not that good. Nonetheless, the location was very good. I lived in an apartment in Lavapiés with 8 other international students. When I stepped out of the door I was surrounded by lively bars and trendy coffeeplaces. I walked everyday to Atocha to go to class with the cercanías.

leisure & culture

Madrid is absolutely an amazing city that is very lively. On Facebook you can find many organizations that organize free trips to palaces and museums. Retiro park is a good place to hang out and enjoy the sun. If you

want to eat, you will have to take into account that in Spain they eat later than in the Netherlands. There are a lot of fun places to go out, but there are quite some clubs that are very very promoted but totally not worth your money because in those places only the tackiest international students gather (Fucking Monday and Icon in my opinion). I strongly recommend that you try to become friends with the Spanish people from your courses, because they can show you the places where the Spanish come and not just the Erasmus students.

suggestions/tips

Make trips during the weekend to other cities in Spain. Sometimes you can rent a car quit cheap if you book it some time in advance. On top of that, try to pay a visit to the National Park. It is not even an one hour busride to Manzanares el Real and the park is really wonderful. There are easier and more difficult trails you can take. Try to visit during fall or spring. Also, there are a lot of coffeeplaces that serve good and original coffee, like Cafelito and Pumpum café. If you want to study at a library, you can just walk in and find a spot. However, libraries are very popular in Madrid so make sure you go as soon as they open. My personal favorite was Biblioteca Pública Municipal Ana María Matute because it has tons of daylight and your room probably will not have a lot of light. Malasaña and Lavapies are great neighbourhoods if you want to go to a bar. The most clubs that international students go to are situated around Sol, but also try to go to a party at Independece Club at Calle de Atocha, the atmosphere is great and there are more Spanish people. At Lidl you do not have to weigh your fruits and vegetables, but at Carrefour you do have to do it yourself. If you need stuff for your interior, try to go to a Chinese store. If you walk around the city you will see many of them and the sell everything! If you want to go shopping I recommend Salamanca instead of Gran Vía since there are way less tourists in Salamanca and the neighbourhood is lovely.

When your are in Madrid you need to have a personal public transportation card for your student discount. I highly recommend that when you arrive at the airport and walk towards the metro, you stop at the public transportations information desk and ask if they can make an appointment for you asap to get your personal card. I had an appointment the same day, but I know many other students had to wait days or weeks for their card, which means they had to buy the more expensive single-ride tickets everytime.

I would also recommend going really early to your first class so you have enough time to find the right building and room number and have some time to chat with other people.

Printing on campus at UC3M was quite expensive compared to regular copyshops in the city. I went to Fotocopias Morales in Lavapies, the staff-member who helped spoke English and it was 0,01 cent for a black and white page.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, i recommend Madrid as a destination. It is an amazing city with so many great things to do and see, both on a cultural and a not so cultural level. I think Spain in general is amazing, but since Madrid is the biggest city there is always something do to. The climate is great, they have sun during the winter. The public transportation network is very good and overzichtelijk. The people are in general very kind and willing to help. It is possible to make cheap trips to other cities in Spain. The university is also nice. The teachers are all very different; some are personal, other not at all.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Ignore men that start talking to you on the street, they usually have no good intentions. Be aware of pickpockers, also if you are in a store. Enjoy the sun as much as you can. I also recommend Parque del Oeste. It is less known so there are less people than in Retiro Park, but it is probaly just as big, it just does not have a lake.

At the beginning of the exchange I had some difficulties adjusting to the life in Madrid. You have to make all new friends and get adjusted to a bit of a different way of living. Just keep in mind that that process takes a bit of time and it is oké not be thrilled all the time. I ended up having a great time, despite being not so excited at the beginning. Time is key, and enjoy time as long as you have it.

faculty/college	Geesteswetenschappen
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's <input type="checkbox"/> PhD
name study programme	Spaanse Taal & Cultuur

destination city & country	Madrid, Spain
how did you travel to your destination?	By airplane
name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
start date	02 / 09 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	17 / 12 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	<p>Since I study Spanish Language & Culture I had the choice to go to Spain or South America. Once I had made the choice to go to Spain I had to start thinking about a top 3 cities where I might want to study. For me learning the Spanish language without a dialect or accent was very important and that's why I put the city of Madrid at number 1. My second choice Valencia and my third choice Salamanca were choices based on the courses offered at these universities. After this choice of my top 3 destinations I started to write my motivation letter. In this letter I wrote why the University of Utrecht had to send me to Madrid and why I was a suitable candidate for the university in Madrid.</p>
counselling & support at Utrecht University	<p>The guidance from Utrecht University was very good. There were workshops you could follow if you didn't know how to write a motivation letter or if you had trouble planning your finances for your time abroad. In addition, you could always contact the International Office with all your questions about forms of your application or your erasmus scholarship.</p>
academic preparation	<p>In terms of academic preparation, I looked at the academic subjects that you might be able to take during your time abroad. I thought it was very important to offer subjects that I found interesting and which of course were also taught in Spanish. For me this was a requirement of the University of Utrecht and for me one of the most important goals was to learn the Spanish language better.</p>
language preparation	<p>Because I study Spanish Language & Culture I already mastered the Spanish language quite well. That is why I did not do a lot of preparation for the Spanish language.</p>
finances	<p>In order to plan my finances well, I have drawn up an excel file with a budget for the estimated expenses per month. This has helped me in Madrid to stick to my monthly budget.</p>

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	<p>In advance, you put together your courses that you want to take at your foreign university. At my university it turned out later that some of the courses I had chosen were not even taught while I was studying there. That's why the majority of my curriculum changed during my period there. Despite the fact that I had to choose other subjects, everything was taken care of at my university and there were no problems with changing the subjects.</p>
academic quality of education activities	<p>The quality of the lessons at my university was very high. The work pressure was therefore also very high and the amount of homework and learning was considerably higher than with my fellow students from Utrecht who</p>

Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

were at other universities in other cities. On the one hand I was happy with this because I learned a lot from it but on the other hand this is also the reason that I did not pass all my subjects.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The help from the university in Madrid was very good. The international office was always ready for questions by mail or at their office. In addition, your teachers could always mail you with questions and my fellow students were also there for me since i was an Erasmus student.

transfer of credits

I haven't received my transcript of records from my University in Madrid yet but I have had mail contact with the international office in Madrid about this and it will be sent to both myself and the Utrecht University in mid-February by mail.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The first day at the University of Madrid was a welcome day for all Erasmus students. This allows you to meet many fellow students who are all involved in this same adventure. You will be shown around the campus and get all the necessary information for your upcoming period at the university.

accommodation

I didn't find my student room with the help of the University of Madrid. I knew a few people from the Netherlands who also studied in Madrid for some time and asked them for advice. I finally got my room through the organization "HelpHousing". The rent for student rooms in Madrid is relatively high compared to student rooms in other cities in Spain.

leisure & culture

As a student you can register with the organisation ESN. This organization organizes many trips for Erasmus students. Especially in the beginning these activities are very useful to meet new people. Besides that, the Spanish culture is different than here in the Netherlands and I have experienced myself that you have to let yourself get involved in this. Eventually you have to get used to the Dutch culture again and you feel homesick for Spain.

suggestions/tips

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CONCLUSIONS

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

I would recommend the city of Madrid to anyone. It's a metropolis and there's always something going on. In addition, this capital is incredibly beautiful and you will feel at home very quickly.

My university (UC3M) is definitely recommended if you go for a challenge. Compared to the work pressure at other universities in Spain the work pressure at this university is very high.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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2017-2018

Report 1

e-mail address	<i>optional; only if you don't mind students preparing for study abroad contacting you directly</i> i.m.vanolphen@students.uu.nl
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

destination city & country	Madrid, Spain
name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
start date	19 / 01 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	11 / 06 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

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

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The exchange application process already started really early (about 1,5 years before I actually left), and that was nice because it gave me time to prepare well for the exchange and get used to the idea of leaving for so long.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I thought it was nice that we had the meeting about studying abroad at the UU. Although I do think that a little more information around the start of the exchange would've been nice.
academic preparation	As a Humanities student I could only pick courses from the Humanidades section at UC3M, which was okay, because they had several really interesting courses. Some of my courses even overlapped with courses I've already taken at UU, although most of them were about really different subjects. I think that as a student from the UU you're well prepared for a semester at UC3M, because the level is doable.
language preparation	I took all of my courses in Spanish. The way I prepared for this was by the 10 Spanish courses that are part of my Bachelor Liberal Arts & Sciences at UU. Although I hadn't practiced my Spanish in over a year when I went on the exchange, I tried to keep my level somewhat up by watching Spanish series now and then.
finances	Madrid can be quite expensive, not per se more expensive than the Netherlands, but it is a fact that you do so much outdoors (especially in the beginning when you're just getting to know people) like going to restaurants, going out, sightseeing and travelling, that things can easily add up. So I advice you to save up before you leave.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	My study programme was really diverse: I took classes about classics culture, logic and argumentation, art and heritage and geografy. The content was really interesting in the courses and the pace of the courses was quite high. However I do not think that it was too high. Luckily, there weren't any organisational issues in my case, my teachers were super nice, always on time and the classes always started on time, so no complaints about that.
academic quality of education activities	The academic quality of education activities was alright, for example we've been on two very interesting excursions for the Geografy course. For the Art and Heritage class we had to make our own turistic route (and

report about it), which took a lot of time but was kind of nice. Although, I think that this was more of a high school like activity.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Luckily, I never needed counseling or support, but I think that the University's organisation was good.
transfer of credits
I am currently still in the process of waiting for this to be completed, so I don't know yet.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
The welcome day was okay, although I entirely missed out on the fact that there was a introductory powerpoint presentation and a buddy programme. I was not well informed about that. For the courses, there wasn't an orientatio programme at all. Neither was there one for public transport. However there was a housing organisation asking people if they could help them find a place (but I only heard back from them after wees, so too late).
accommodation
People had recommended me to look for a room while I was in Madrid, instead of already finding one while I was still at home, because there turns out to be a lot of room scamming here. So this was what I did and I found a room within a week ad stayed in hostels at first. I would recommend looking for a room while you are already here, because you can actually visit the room and see if you like it. But a sidenote is that I learned that it's smart to already send out some emails and set some visiting dates BEFORE you leave, because I only started looking while I was already here and in most of the cases people took about a week to respond to my messages (if ever).
leisure & culture
There are a lot of cultural activities in the city and also plenty of organisations that offer them for good prices. You can think of city trips, bus tours, (salsa) dancing, Flamenco shows etcetera.
suggestions/tips
Find a room in the city centre, it's so much nicer to be able to do everything by foot.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend this university and destination to others. First of all, from what I've heard Carlos III is the best University of Madrid and I really liked the atmosphere there (although the Getafe campus is quite far from the city centre). Second of all, there's nothing that I dislike about Madrid. The atmosphere is great, there aren't many tourists, it's such a fun and big city and there's lots to do.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
I do not.

Report 2

e-mail address	<i>optional; only if you don't mind students preparing for study abroad contacting you directly</i> igordegroot@live.nl		
faculty/college	humanities		
level	bachelor's	master's	PhD
name study programme	History		
destination city & country	Madrid, Spain		



name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
start date	15 / 1 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	29 / 5 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

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

PREPARATION
exchange application process
Like anyone else I had to manoeuvre through the maze of the exchange programmes that were offered. I applied for UC3M. This university was quite late with confirming
counselling & support at Utrecht University
Utrecht University has been very clear about the requirements of the programme. The different people involved with the exchange always responded quickly.
academic preparation
I did not need any specific academic preparation for the courses I have followed. As an exchange student I could apply for all courses in the faculty of humanities and the faculty of social sciences. Some courses may require some prior knowledge.
language preparation
One of the reasons I chose for this university was the fact that they offered a broad range of English courses. The English courses were offered by the faculty of social sciences and law. I was enrolled at the faculty of humanities. They do not offer a lot of English courses. But as a history student I was allowed to do courses of the faculty of social sciences.



finances

Spain is cheaper than the Netherlands in general. But Madrid is the most expensive place in Spain. This means that life is about the same price as life in the Netherlands. You do get an Erasmus grant that is aimed for a cheaper country though.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

In UC3M you choose five courses per semester. Choosing these courses is a bit complicated. You have to check yourself whether the times of the classes overlap. After two weeks it is possible to change courses. Courses that are not interesting can be dropped then, to be replaced by more interesting courses.

academic quality of education activities

Spanish people in general speak worse English than Dutch people. In most classes the level of English was good though. I did mainly first year classes. These were more easy than the classes I had taken in Utrecht. Higher level classes are also offered though.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

At the university the European Student Network (ESN) offered help with various problems you might run into. The International Office might sometimes take a while to complete your documents but I did not run into any problems.

transfer of credits

Since this university has a contract with Utrecht University, I assume all credits are transferable.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

During the first two weeks a lot of activities were organised for international students. This way you can easily get to know new people. During the rest of the semester different activities were organised as well.

accommodation

The faculties of humanities and social sciences and law are located in Getafe. Most students live either in the city centre of Madrid or in Getafe. Getafe is well connected to the city centre. The southern neighbourhoods of Usera and Villaverde would be good places to live as well. Apparently the university offers some accommodations as well. I do not know how to get them though. Madrid is not an easy city to find a cheap accommodation. But I was able to find a place in three days.

leisure & culture

Madrid is a bustling city with millions of inhabitants. There are plenty of options for enjoying yourself. On the campus in Getafe there is not very many activities organised. But there is a sports centre. Here it is possible to do a wide range of sports. There are plenty of very good museums. Bars are located in the neighbourhoods of Malasana, Chueca, Latina and Lavapies.

suggestions/tips

Speaking Spanish really adds to the experience in my opinion. It is perfectly possible to live in Madrid without speaking Spanish as well though. The university offers courses in the Spanish language. ESN offers a buddy programme to learn the language. There are also other very cheap places that offer Spanish language courses to Dutch people.

Spain – Universidad Carlos III de Madrid**CONCLUSIONS**

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

Yes, I would recommend this university. Madrid is a very interesting city. The university offers a wide range of English speaking courses. In my opinion the university was very well organised.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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2016 – 2017**Report 1**

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

destination city & country	Madrid, Spain
name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III
start date	02 / 09 / 2016 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	24 / 01 / 2017 (dd/mm/yyyy)

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

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was a bit slow because it takes some time for the International Office to respond sometimes, although this is understandable due to the number of students wishing to study abroad. Read the instructions on the UU site carefully and start filling and sending the files early, so you will have everything done before the deadline for certain.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

You can always contact the International Office, although keep in mind they might not know what applies to your bachelor. Because I have a doublemajor I only need 22,5 ECTS, which is the minimum requirement to keep the Erasmusgrant. Ask your study advisor so you know for certain if the requirements are met or not.

academic preparation

I didn't need much academic preparation. I was going to study in English, so language-wise there was nothing I could have done to prepare. I was planning to study journalism abroad (ended up studying film instead), but since this field is available to all the studies of Humanites I didn't require preparation.

language preparation

My courses were all in English, so I didn't need preparation. I did learn some Spanish beforehand since I knew many Spanish people don't speak English that well.

finances

It is hard to find a decent place for a decent price in Madrid. Many people will try to take advantage of the

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shortage of available housing to Erasmus students and overcharge you for a room in a very old house. Eating out however is quite cheap compared to the Netherlands, so at least that helps.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

My courses were more practical than I expected, but still enticing. Normally I write about 8 essays per semester at Utrecht University, but at Carlos III I only wrote one because most of my film courses required me to either hand in videos or scripts. All in all I found this to be the creative change I needed.

academic quality of education activities

As I said the courses were more practical. I liked it, but it was not entirely devoid of theory either. I feel the academic quality really depends on the courses you choose. What I found a bit disappointing is how syllabi are hard to come by. I only had one professor who made one. This feels a bit weird when you're used to how organized the average professor is at Utrecht University.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I usually got replies from the host university very quickly. The one thing that bothered me is that it took me over a month to get my university student card, and in the process I was sent around to people who didn't know how to get me a card. Sometimes I feel the organization is a bit messy.

transfer of credits

Carlos III didn't send over the Transcript of Records until the end of February. It is still within the deadline of March 1, but it can be troublesome. It took me a while before the Language Center could send over the certificate of the language course (worth 4 ECTS). I send multiple emails which all received no reply. Luckily, one phone call was enough to receive the certificate on the same day. Whether the credits of the language courses will be accepted is still uncertain, but other than that I am quite satisfied with the way the transfer went.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

ESN tries to make you feel welcome by organising trips, tapas dinner and more. It is relatively cheap and accessible. It's a great way to meet international students, but don't forget about meeting Spanish students!

accommodation

It is hard to find a cheap place with other international students. However, since public transport is cheap (€20 a month for those who are 25 years and younger) you could live a bit further away from campus if you don't mind travelling a bit longer. Keep in mind that the public transport in Madrid is quite reliable, and this comes from a person who really hates Dutch public transport. In my case, my campus is in Getafe, but I really wanted to live in the center. Getafe is a nice small city, but there is not much to do. If you really want to experience Madrid I would suggest you live in Madrid instead of Getafe. I spoke with students living in Getafe and they always complain about the lack of fun things to do. Also, at midnight the train (Cercanias) start their last route, so late night shenanigans will be hard if you want to travel back to Getafe from Madrid.

leisure & culture

Madrid is the city where going out at 11PM is considered very early. You could go out at 3 AM and you can still enter many places. During daytime you can visit museums. Some offer discount or even free entrance for students (like Reina Sofia) while others grant free access during specific times (Museo del Prado: 6 pm - 8 pm on weekdays, 5 pm - 7pm during the weekend). You can sign up to Citylife Madrid, Be Madrid, or Smart Insiders. These organisations have reoccurring events for students in English you can join, either for a fee or for free.

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suggestions/tips

Learn Spanish! Most Spanish people don't really speak English, so a little bit of Spanish will get you a long way. Also, don't forget to visit El Tigre; it's a place where you get a plate full of tapas for ordering one beer and they will keep on giving as long as you keep buying beer. All in all Madrid is a good place to have some fun.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I can recommend Madrid and Carlos III wholeheartedly. Cheap food (seriously, a three-course meal for €10-€15 is normal), friendly people and a nice change from Utrecht University if you need it.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

The online environment at Carlos III is not the best (I missed an exam because I couldn't find the exam data), so don't be afraid to ask the Spanish students for help! Also, keep track of your stuff since Madrid is notorious for its pickpockets.

Report 2

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/>
name study programme	Erasmus exchange

destination city & country	Madrid , Spain
name university abroad	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
start date	05/09/2016
end date	16/01/2017

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

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The exchange application process wasn't too hard or difficult, as things are normally quite well organized in Utrecht. I don't really remember which forms I had to fill in exactly, but I don't remember it to be the most stressful.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I didn't need any counselling, but whenever I had a question I could just send an e-mail and then I got my answer. Even when I didn't know exactly what was my next step in the exchange process with regard to documentation, they would answer my question and even send the correct form with it. I very much appreciated that.

academic preparation

I didn't need any academic preparation. I could just enroll after year 2, in the first semester of year 3.

language preparation

I also didn't need any language preparation, as I study Spanish Language and Culture, so I already spoke Spanish and had classes in that language.

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finances

I'm really lucky my parents could support me financially during my stay in Madrid, because the accommodations are really expensive. You can compare it with the rooms in Utrecht. The Erasmus grant is definitely not enough to pay for that.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I had to adjust my study programme a week before school started at UC3M, but not too drastically and eventually I was happy with the subjects I chose.

academic quality of education activities

I was really happy that my classes were in Spanish, so I could learn to understand the language better, while learning new things. I was happily surprised that the academic quality was quite high, because I'd heard from other students the quality wouldn't be too good. It turned out UC3M is known for their academic quality, and I could definitely notice that.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I didn't receive that much support at the receiving university. The teachers were very nice and helpful, but I didn't speak anyone from the international office, except for when I e-mailed them, and I didn't have a problem with that.

transfer of credits

I didn't receive my actual ECTS yet, but the grading in Spain is a little bit different than it is here. To pass you only have to get a 5 (out of 10) and the grading really depends on the teacher. For the most subjects I got higher grades than I normally got in Utrecht, but that can also be because I really focused on my school work in Madrid.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

On the first day at the university there was a Welcome Day which was really nice. It can be a bit awkward at first because you don't know anyone, but most of the other exchange students are there alone and need some social contact. It was a great way to meet some people.

accommodation

I had a room in a old fancy home that belonged to an old lady, who seemed very nice at first, but turned out a bit crazy. We (the other tenants and I) couldn't bring any guests over, so I wouldn't recommend renting a room in the house of the owner.

leisure & culture

Madrid is a city that never seems to sleep. Even walking home alone at night didn't feel scary, because there's people everywhere all the time. If you like art, music and good food, Madrid is the place to be.

suggestions/tips

I really liked to go running in the Retiro Park. It's a very big park and there are always people running or skating there. Also, it's so much nicer to walk everywhere in Madrid instead of always taking the Metro (which is very easy and fast). The center isn't too big and you see interesting people and architecture everywhere.

CONCLUSIONS

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would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I would definitely recommend Madrid as a destination for your study abroad. Getafe, where the university was, is a 20-30 minute (depends on where you live in Madrid) Metro ride, but a lot of exchange students go there and they have a nice library to spend an afternoon studying in.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Don't choose the subject Prehistoria y historia antigua at UC3M. It was horrible and even the Spanish students think it's too boring and too hard.

2014-2015**Report 1**

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

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The process of application was quite extensive, which I consider is positive given the fact that it is easy to forget what you have to arrange before leaving. The extensive process makes sure you don't forget about things that seem obvious, but you are quite easy to overlook in the bigger picture of going to study abroad. Besides, the procedure and all the documents were very clear, so it didn't complicate the process.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The meetings arranged by the international office were very helpful, not only informative but it also makes you more excited about going, and you know a little bit more what you might expect, not only about the study process, but also your personal change and emotions involved in the whole experience. Furthermore, you could always go to the office hours if you had any questions, and they are sure very helpful, and happy to help you with everything you doubt about.
academic preparation	Being a third year student, and only going in the fourth year, I think I had enough academic experience to go and see how it all goes abroad. My advantage was that a lot of former students told about their experiences with Spanish universities so that I kind of knew what to expect. I really don't know what else I did as academic preparation, but just talking to other students, and knowing how the educational system of your destination country is.
language preparation	Given the fact that my major already is studying a language, I had already the required level to follow classes in Spanish. Therefore I didn't do much more to prepare, but I learnt a lot during my stay. Nonetheless I took a Spanish intensive course at the end of my stay, and noticed that I learnt a lot by being there.
finances	The fact that you had to hand in a financial plan for your application, made me aware of what my adventure probably would cost. I decided to save a lot, so I could do everything I wanted, instead of holding back because of money. You can prepare yourself, but knowing what your financial situation is going to be is still uncertain.

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STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
	The website of my receiving university was very clear and organised, which made it easy to look up courses, and what their content would be. The only thing was that the time schedules were only known two days before subscribing, which could lead to problems, but luckily for me I only had to change one course.
academic quality of education activities	
	The quality of the classes were higher than expected, based on the experience of other students who went to Spain. I was happily pleased that the level on this particular university was really high, and the expectation of the professors as well. You needed to attend all classes, because it was part of your grade, and also participate, when asked, in discussions. Also, the grading system was divided in two options, a continuous evaluation with weekly writing assignments, presentations or comments on a text, or the extraordinary evaluation in which you only had to make the final exam, but pass it with a mark higher than 8.3. I have to note that this was my experience and opinion, because other exchange students of other faculties had more problems, especially with the organisation and grading method. For the faculty humanities, everything was perfectly arranged, and the grading method for me was the same as at Utrecht University, because at my bachelor we also have a continuous evaluation system.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	
	The same as in Utrecht, the international office was always available to help you, although the help given is of course culturally marked, and might be different than you expect. For me, I didn't need anything, but I know that there were different possibilities to get counselling and support at the campus.
transfer of credits	
	The credits given were from the same system as in Utrecht, so there were no difficulties or things to mention about the transfer of credits.

STUDENT LIFE	
welcome & orientation programme	
	The first day we were all expected to attend a welcome meeting from the university, where they held different presentations and everything was told what you should know in general about the university. Then we had a guided tour around campus, which was helpful. In addition, the Erasmus Students Network was quite big and active in Madrid, so there were two weeks of welcome activities with the rest of the exchange students, which gives you the opportunity to meet people, and exchange your experience in the first weeks. They also help you to get around the academic system, so they were not just to provide fun activities, they also could help solve a lot of doubts concerning the first classes and getting around campus.
accommodation	
	There were various ways to get your accommodation. The university has multiple student residences with different options of service and therefore different prices. I didn't live in one of the residences, but I met a couple of students who lived there, and really enjoyed their stay. The university was not in the centre of Madrid, but had campuses in the suburbs, mainly in Getafe and Leganés. A lot of exchange students chose to live in the centre, but the accommodations are terrible, prices are high and you live with too many people in one house. The centre is fine, depending on what you want of course, and travelling to the suburbs was easy and didn't take much time. I chose to live in the suburb Getafe, because my faculty was at that campus, and I really enjoyed living there, in a perfect accommodation. So different possibilities, and for everyone what they would possibly want is to find near the university, and gives no problems for exchange students.

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leisure & culture

In Madrid, you can do every day something different, and still find out new places and streets you hadn't seen before. The cultural life is really good accessible for students, because a lot of musea are for free, and theatres and monuments give a big discount when you show your studentcard. Besides, Madrid is in the centre of Spain, so you can easily go on daytrips to surroundig cities such as Toledo, Segovia and Alcalá de Henares, and also on trips a little bit further because the busses and trains have a really good connection, so basically you can go on weekends throughout the country without being on the road for to long.

suggestions/tips

If you go on trips in Spain, and you can speak spanish, i strongly suggest that you take a look at blablacar, wich is quiet big in Spain. You can book a seat in someone elses car, and ride with them to a destination, and savily because on the website you can see the profile of the driver and other passengers. A fun way to meet knew people, see the beauty of spain, practise youre spanish and travel really cheap.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recoment this university, not only if you speak spanish, but also just for english speakers. A lot of course are offerd in english, so you won't have any language problems, and the clases are really good. If you are looking to serious studying, this university is probably the best in Spain to go to, and if you just want to have fun, all the other universities will do just fine.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Really enjoy every moment you are there, make sure you know what to expect and you will have a wonderfull semester abroad. It is a change you only get ones, so make sure you really want it, and make the most out of it, whatever that means for you.