



Case Western Reserve University - School of Law

2019-2020

PREPARATION
exchange application process
Filling in the forms was easy
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I had no counselling regarding my exchange
academic preparation
I had no preparation
language preparation
I did not do any extra preparation regarding language as I already could read, write and communicate in English since I was two.
finances
My parents sponsored my exchange.

(interrupted) STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
welcome & orientation programme
I was welcomed by the dean and other exchange students, we got a campus tour and all the information we needed.
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I could only choose from a few classes on master level, which were lucky enough in my area of law (business law), but I would have liked it if I had more options, for example in intellectual property law
academic quality of education activities
The quality of the education was very high
transfer of credits
Don't know yet as I did not receive my official transcript yet (I did have to pay to receive one)

CORONAVIRUS CONSEQUENCES
support guidance of host university
My host university was very supportive and protecting. Immediately when it happened, they let me know if I wanted to go home I can go and I can take my classes and exams online.
support guidance of home university
My home university told me to come home and offered to pay for my extra flight costs.



online offer and quality of digital courses

CWRU was very quick with setting up online classes and everything went very well.

suggestions/tips on digital exchange

Make sure you act like its normal classes and exams, so prepare and do the work.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

I was welcomed by the dean and other exchange students, we got a campus tour and all the information we needed.

accommodation

I rented an apartment with three American girls who studied Medicine at CWRU. Accommodation was not provided as I was not a freshman.

leisure & culture

I had the option to explore a lot of the campus and CWRU provided free access to museums etc. the campus is really nice, has a lot of restaurants and nice places to hang out.

suggestions/tips

Explore as much as you can.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes I do. I am really sad I had to leave early since the winters are pretty rough in Cleveland and when I had to leave the nice weather was coming around. The campus is very pretty, everyone is super nice and education is great.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

No.



2017-2018

preparation
exchange/placement application process
I already knew about the study abroad program of Utrecht University. I definitely wanted to do this. So in my second year I attended the information meetings of the international office of REBO and followed the application process as the international office requested. For my first choices I got declined, but for my second choice I got accepted.
counselling/support at home university
The information meetings of the international office were very useful. They provided a lot of information and guided us all the way through the process. Also, there was a workshop teaching us how to write a good motivation letter of the JSVU (study association of Utrecht University School of Law).
academic preparation
For my academic preparation I made sure I had a good GPA (now just your normal average grade). I really put great effort in writing my motivation letter and making sure I followed all the requests of the university. When you do this, it is very likely to study abroad. The university of Utrecht will also recommend you which makes it easier to apply at the host university.
language preparation
My host university required foreign students to take a TOEFL test or a IELTS test. I took the TOEFL test, just because I knew someone else who also took that one. This test exists of 4 parts: reading, listening, writing and speaking. Each part consists of a maximum of 30 points. So in total one could obtain 120 points. My host university required us to obtain at least 90 points in total. The preparation for this test can be stressful. It is very useful to buy some example tests from the TOEFL website. This is already a great preparation as it is very similar as the real test. Furthermore, I listened to English spoken radio a lot (like BBC). Also, I read every day some articles of American newspapers (like New York times and Washington Post).
finances
I already saved a lot of money beforehand, because I already knew I wanted to study abroad. Moreover, my parents funded me a bit as well. I already lived by myself in Utrecht, so, for example, instead of paying rent in Utrecht I now paid it in Cleveland. Everything else is arranged by Utrecht University and the host university. They just want us to show them that we own a certain amount of money.
study/placement abroad period
study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)
The study program in Cleveland is very good. Students have a very wide range of courses to choose from. They



will send it in advance, so that you can already think about it and let Utrecht University know. The content of the courses is in every direction one could think of: health law, family law, corporate law, international law, criminal law, intellectual property law, and so on. The organization of the host university is well arranged. They prepare the students very well and they are clear in their explanation of how to plan your study program. They will guide the students very well with everything, so there is nothing to worry about.

academic quality of education/placement activities

The professors are excellent! They are very experienced and they know a lot of their field of law. The professors write a lot of articles in law journals and host/attend conferences as well. Their teaching skills are great and they really take the time to learn the students something. Besides, they organize extracurricular activities to give a sense of the real (law) world. They are well-known in Cleveland and the U.S. and they invite speakers who really enrich the experience you have at the Law School (like CEOs, famous Judges, experienced lawyers).

counselling/support at host institution/organisation

We could always reach our contact person. She was there for us if we had any questions regarding the university or Cleveland/ the U.S. We could reach them by phone, email or just step by in their office. Also the professors respond relatively fast to their email in case of questions. The support was great and they host university gave us a great study abroad experience.

transfer of credits

Each course is worth a certain amount of credits, based on its work load. I took 12 credits (4 courses), which they highly recommend (to only take a maximum of 11/12 credits). If you pass everything, they will send your transcript to you stating that you obtained that certain amount of credits. Utrecht University will then convert this into ECTS. Normally 1 credit is 2 ECTS.

student life

welcome/orientation programme

We had one week of orientation. In this week the host university familiarized us with the U.S. way of studying (Socratic method). There were also some nice activities, like a picnic and a baseball game. Maybe one week was a bit too long, but it was also nice to just have a relaxed start.

accommodation

Our contact person gave us a list of websites to arrange accommodation. It is pretty hard to find something, but I found a house through a person a lot of previous students also arranged accommodation. Our contact person recommend this person.

leisure/culture

There was plenty of time for leisure, activities, culture and travelling. Some cultural events are organized by the



international office of the university/law school, like sports games or American games/holidays. Also, you have the whole weekend and Fridays to plan leisure activities. Sometimes you will have a long weekend to plan trips to, for example, Toronto or Chicago. Furthermore, there is a lot to do during the weekends in Cleveland. So one will never be bored!

suggestions/tips

Be open for fun stuff and join a lot of the activities. In this way, you get to know a lot of people and you get a good taste of the American way of living and studying. There is a lot to do, for leisure, but also concerning studies, so make use of your free time and enjoy the time you have for yourself and for leisure activities.

conclusions

would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? please explain

Yes, most definitely! Cleveland and Case Western Reserve University School of Law are amazing! Cleveland is an upcoming city with a lot of restaurants, pubs, clubs, (social) events, great sports teams, and very beautiful as well! The Law School is very helpful with everything, gives great support and you will get to know a lot of very nice people! I had a great time in Cleveland and at the University, an experience I will never forget!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Just enjoy your stay in Cleveland and at the University! Time will fly for sure! Studying in Cleveland has been one of the best things I have ever done!



2016-2017

preparation
exchange/placement application process
Cleveland wasn't my first choice, but looking back I feel I was very lucky to have been placed at CWRU. The application process wasn't very difficult, apart from the fact the CWRU asked for an English proficiency. I therefore took the TOEFL-test, which wasn't hard but it did require some time. The VISA-process was a bit more difficult, but as long as you follow all the steps you shouldn't have too much trouble.
counselling/support at home university
It was quite easy to get in touch with the International Office, but most questions had to be answered by the university in Cleveland. It's definitely worth it to go to all the presentations and meetings, but at the end you still have to work most things out yourself.
academic preparation
I didn't do any preparation apart from looking at the list of subjects. I figured it was best to arrive open-minded and see what the university has to offer.
language preparation
I didn't do any preparation in regard to my level of English. I did have to take the TOEFL-test, but it was quite an easy test. If you're not used to reading/writing in English, it might help to prepare/practise at home. Once arrived, the language is something you get used to very quickly.
finances
I've known I wanted to go on exchange for quite some time. I therefore made sure I had some savings and I maximized my student loans for a year (6 months in advance and 6 months during my exchange). Going on exchange is very expensive, but totally worth it.
study/placement abroad period
study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)
I received a list of courses before I arrived, so I made sure I had some interesting subjects in mind. Once arrived, I found out some of the courses intervened with others, but I still ended up with the courses I wanted most. The courses last the entire semester (something completely different from what I was used to). It definitely takes some time getting used to the language, level and length of the courses, but it goes quicker than you think.
academic quality of education/placement activities
I can't say whether the courses are more or less difficult than the courses at home, simply because I can't really compare the two. The courses are much longer, which means more materials to read. Depending on the course



and the professor, the courses require more discipline. The fact that the US is a common-law country, also means the way of learning is different (no law books with simple rules, but cases you have to remember).

counselling/support at host institution/organisation

Depending on the department you need help of, there are different people you can talk to. Most of the staff has an “open-door-policy” which means you can walk in whenever you want. Some require appointments. Especially the professors are very willing to help whenever you’re struggling with the course, especially when they know you’re an exchange student.

transfer of credits

I received my credit fairly quick after I left the university (about a month or so). Since I wasn’t graduating right after arriving home, I wasn’t in a hurry to transfer credits. As soon as I received the official documents, I send them to my home university which transferred the credits immediately.

student life

welcome/orientation programme

There are about 2 weeks of orientation, which could’ve easily been one. They absolutely take the time to show you around and make sure you have an understanding of the different departments. I arrived in Cleveland a little over 3 weeks before the actual courses started. I’ve found out that was the best decision I could’ve made, especially since it took me some time to adjust to the different time-zone and different culture. It also gave me some time to discover the neighbourhood, walk around university and already make some friends. So, my best tip: take some time to adjust to this new life-style. It’s all new anyway, so you’d better take it slow.

accommodation

I really took the time to arrange my housing. I searched all the websites given by the university for different options, but ended up taking another path: Airbnb. Two of my fellow exchange students (both foreign) contacted me and after a couple of days we decided to look for housing together. We ended up renting an entire apartment on Airbnb, which we stayed in our whole semester (5 months). It was definitely a risk, but one we were willing to take. I ended up being the best experience; we met some amazing people, could integrate into the community without any problems and ended up saving money in the process (landlords around CWRU are simply not that cheap).

leisure/culture

I’ve fallen in love with the American culture. Cleveland has some wonderful communities, all of which are very welcoming. During my semester I decided to buy a car, which I took all around the country after I finished CWRU. I travelled for 4 weeks, in which I covered more than 11.000 km and 20 States. The US is an absolutely great country, which needs to be discovered. If you have the time and courage: go explore!



suggestions/tips

Take your time, enjoy every minute.

conclusions

would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? please explain

Absolutely! Cleveland is a wonderful city, warm, welcoming and very up-and-coming! Cleveland is known for its sports, so don't miss out on those.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Don't miss out on the opportunity to go on an exchange. Whether it is in Cleveland, another place in the US or another country entirely. It's the experience of a life time.