



UU Study Abroad Report Form

	Contact info at the IO.
faculty/college	Geosciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Human Geography and Spatial Planning

destination city & country	Toronto, Canada
name university abroad	York University
start date	02 / 09 / 2022
end date	30 / 04 / 2023

PREPARATION

exchange application process

My application process started with comparing all destinations and then making a list of the ones I preferred. I attended some information sessions, which helped a lot with some questions I had and getting more information about regions and universities. From here, I created my top three and applied.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The support from the university has been good throughout the whole process. I could always email the staff from the international office and it was even possible to schedule a meeting on Teams sometimes with certain issues I had with choosing and the pandemic.

academic preparation

I really didn't do a lot of academic preparation. The main thing I had to do was figuring out which courses I wanted to do at York University. They do have quite some tools for that on the website, so this shouldn't be too big of a deal. However, it happened a lot (with other exchange students over there) that courses were already full. Then you just have to email the professor of that course and then there is a big change they will still let you do the course since you are an exchange student.

language preparation

I haven't done any language preparation since I already felt quite confident in writing and speaking English. I don't think this will be necessary because you will get used to English quite quickly when you are living there.

finances

I had a big savings account where I would pay everything from. I also applied for public transport compensation from DUO from the Dutch government, which helped a little with the finances. It has to be said, living abroad is expensive, especially in Canada, so this shouldn't be underestimated. However, if you're living on campus and are having a meal plan, you can already calculate how much that's going to cost you, which makes it easier to estimate how much you can spend on other things, like travelling and such.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I did Political Science at York University. I think the content was very diverse and there are a lot of courses with different subjects you can choose from. There is a timetable creating website which helps you choose courses and create a good schedule. With most courses the way of examining was by different assignments,



like papers, presentations, exams, debates etc. I think this is beneficial for engaging with the information since you get taught the handle the information in different circumstances.

academic quality of education activities

I think the overall academic level is a bit lower than at Utrecht. There might be more assignments throughout the course, but the level is probably not as high. Hence, it was quite easy to get a good grade and pass a course, in my opinion in an easier way than during my studies at Utrecht.

Moreover, the professors are very approachable and engaging and are very willing to help you with questions you might have.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I didn't really use support at York University. However, I did get the idea that you could easily email someone or drop by at an office and they would be very helpful with any question you might have. What did stood out to me is the focus on mental health and that there were a lot of resources to help students mentally. I think this is a very good thing, especially in a stressful environment like university. This is something I have seen less focus on at Utrecht. So, in this case, it can be said that there is more support at York University.

transfer of credits

I have been back for 2 months now and unfortunately I haven't got my credits transferred to Utrecht yet. I do know what grades I got for each course, which you mostly get 1-2 weeks after the last assignment.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

In the first week of university there was an orientation session/afternoon for international and exchange students. This was quite nice to get to know other people and to get to know the campus. So, the university definitely helps with getting to know people and to get comfortable with your new environment.

accommodation

I lived on the Glendon campus, which is not the big campus of the university. I applied for the residence at the Keele campus, but they could only offer me a campus at Glendon and otherwise I would be waitlisted and not sure of even getting a room. So, I chose, before I went to Canada, to go for the room at Glendon, with a possibility in the back of my mind of maybe transferring somewhere in the first weeks if other students didn't show up at Keele. However, a lot of exchange students didn't get in at the Keele campus and were all at Glendon, which was a lot of fun. This way, we travelled together if we were going downtown or to campus.

The travel from campus to campus, if you have courses at Keele, was with a shuttle services by the university, around every hour and free and you get there in around 30 minutes, which was actually quite alright.

So, by living at Glendon I got to make a lot of friends, so in the end it did work out for the best.

The second semester I actually wanted to live downtown. However, because I informed them in the beginning that I would stay till the end of April, its not possible to move out without paying for your room if they haven't found someone to take over your room. So, keep this in mind if would like to live downtown.

One downside about my room at Glendon was that I had to get a meal plan, which is quite expensive and limits some of your freedoms in your food choices. There is a cafeteria at Glendon, but sometimes you can get bored of the food there. What I would do when I went to Keele, is using the money at York Lanes, because there are more food options there.

leisure & culture

Toronto is such a lively city! There is a lot to do! There is the Toronto International Film Festival, Halloween, Thanksgiving, art festivals etc. The people are really nice and friendly and are very interested in learning about you and where you are from. The Canadian culture is quite comparable to the Dutch culture, so there wasn't much of a shock for me there. With other friends being exchange students, you really explore the city



together, which is so much fun. I also think Toronto is the perfect location in Canada to go explore the rest of the country. I travelled to, here it comes haha.....: Montreal (by bus), New York (by bus), Washington DC (bus), Mexico (plane), Ottawa (bus), Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary and Banff. Haha so yeah save a lot of money but then it is definitely worth it! You will definitely not get bored in Toronto and Canada. There are also so many nice restaurants and bars/clubs, shopping centres and neighbourhoods.

suggestions/tips

You should go to sports games!! I do love a game of the Blue Jays now! The Maple Leafs, Ice hockey, is a bit more expensive, but definitely worth it to see! I used the app 'Gametime' which was very useful for lastminute tickets and quite cheap (warning; it is in US dollars, not Canadian dollars 😊).

Go to the Niagara Falls in the weekends! Then you can get a train ticket for 24 hours or so for around 14 dollars which is quite cheap compared to other ways of transportation.

If you go clubbing, go to the Madison! It's a building with different rooms, so there is a DJ part but also more a pub kind of part and in each room is a different vibe which is really nice. We met a lot of fun and nice people there! It's such a staple in Toronto! Also, 'the Supermarket' which is a bar with bands performing, is really nice and well-known by the locals (don't forget to make a reservation).

It sounds a bit boring and weird, but go on a hop-on/hop-off bus tour! I did it when my family came over and I got a lot of information about the city that I didn't know and saw different parts I hadn't seen yet.

My favourite parts are Kensington Market, Toronto Islands and the Distillery district. Ohh and please go on the CN Tower!! I did it once with the dinner, which was veryyy nice and worth it, even though it is expensive.

CONCLUSIONS

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

100%! I do miss it; the people, the city and just the abroad experience. You just kind of live in a bubble with all other exchange students and you just literally do the most fun stuff. Toronto is the perfect location for this because there is always something to do and people to meet. The university is also really nice and I don't have a bad word to say about the education.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

If you want more recommendations or you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me! I can share my google maps pins with you 😊



UU Study Abroad Report Form

	Contact info at the IO.
faculty/college	York University
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Faculty of health

destination city & country	Toronto, Canada
name university abroad	York University
start date	06 / 01 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	15 / 04 / 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The process was doable but sometimes quite stressful. There are a lot of deadlines for example the enrolment in courses, the application and for the residences. They
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I have to say that I sometimes felt quite alone in my application process. Even though there are some numbers that you can call for help, the people helping you mostly have very general knowledge about the exchange and not specific things for your university. Furthermore, I had a lot of trouble getting into contact with the people from York University and luckily, I did have some help with this from Utrecht University. The person I spoke to for example sent extra reminder e-mails to York University. Unfortunately, they said to me at some point that they could not help me anymore and that I should only ask questions to my host University. This was sometimes quite difficult and gave me stress. But at the end I succeed in fixing everything.
academic preparation	I did not have to do anything for this luckily, because there were no academic requirements.
language preparation	There was not really a language requirement as well. Even though they did want to see some proof that your English was good enough to be able to take the course there, it was very easy to fulfil this requirement. We are university students and therefore the University of Utrecht could give you a form that was stated that you, we're sufficient in your English knowledge. So, you did not have to take any additional tests or something to prove your level of English. I sent them my Cambridge degree just because I thought this maybe gave me more chance to be selected, but this was not necessary.
finances	Toronto is a very expensive city so take this into account. Also, the campus residences are extremely pricey for what you get. So, make sure you save enough money, because you want to do fun stuff there and make some trips and life in Toronto is not cheap. And you really need a credit card for everything so make sure you have this. Which was also very helpful for me was the application Revolut. You can open an account for free and switch your valutas for a relatively low exchange rate. So, I would really recommend downloading this. Also, it makes it easier to transfer money to people from different countries.



STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I took the courses: Introduction to Psychology and Sexuality, Gender, and Society. They were both in a different faculty they were very different. Psychology was quite technical and biological which was interesting, but not what I expected from it. The other course was very social and refreshing, because It gave me new insights about stuff I had never thought about before. I do have to say that they gave the course from only one perspective, so sometimes I didn't feel like I was getting an honest picture of the material. Overall, the courses were doable if you studied for it and attended the lectures and the seminars.

academic quality of education activities

The level of education was good. You had to stay invested to be able to take the exams so you had to follow the seminars and lectures, but if you did you could get high grades easily. It was not very difficult, but it was a lot. With a lot of exams and deadlines so you were quite occupied with study most of the time.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I have to say that I had to manage most of the things myself. There is this one general e-mail address for exchange students where you could ask your questions, but most of the time their responses were pretty vague. So I had to figure most of the things out myself. There were orientation days at the beginning of the semester. I would really recommend to go to these. They are an easy way to meet people and to get some practical information about the University.

transfer of credits

I e-mailed Utrecht University quite early with all the information they needed and the courses I was going to take. So, this was not a difficult thing to arrange. My credits have not been transferred yet, so I still must see whether everything is going to go smoothly.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

What I mentioned above they have orientation days at the beginning of the term. Here they give some practical information, and you get to meet a lot of new people so that was nice. After that I have to say they kind of left you on your own so you do have to be quite independent to get things done.

accommodation

I had a double room in one of the campus residences (Winters residence). I want to give my honest opinion that this was horrible. It was not clean, very primitive and you did not have any privacy. There is no kitchen, so you cannot cook for yourself. You have to get a meal plan which is very expensive and the food they offer is not healthy, and not good. Furthermore, I also did not have the nicest roommate so that did not help as well. If you go to York University, I recommend you to travel more and find a nice room in Toronto downtown instead of on campus. You get way more time to see the city and it is definitely better than a campus dormroom.

leisure & culture

There are some nice sightseeing's and things to do in Toronto. For example, to eat in the CN tower, to go to Kensington Market, to go to basketball games etc. The night life was also alright, but not amazing, because everything closes at 2 AM.

suggestions/tips

Go in the summer term because there is a lot more to do than in the winter when I was there. And make some nice trips to go skiing or to go to New York. This was nice! Also get a presto card for the metro. This is really practical.



CONCLUSIONS

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

I want everyone to have an amazing experience at their exchange, so I am going to be very honest. I would not recommend this university to others. The university itself looked a bit depressing and there were not a lot of things to do. The campus residences were awful, and the food was really unhealthy or not of good quality. Above that the residence and the food was very expensive. The courses were fine and had a lot of interesting aspects.

Regarding Toronto I would say that it is a nice city, but not very student friendly. Especially in the winter there is not a lot to do and everything is quite expensive. I think other Canadian cities are better for an exchange.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

If you go here, you will probably still have a nice time. Me as well but I think I would have preferred to go somewhere else. Just do what feels good for you and do not let my report scare you too much. I just wanted to be honest so you will not expect something completely different from it. I did have other expectations so that was why some things were quite disappointing for me. And if you choose to go, please go in the summer. There is a lot more to do and negative 20 is not very comfortable.



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Toronto, Canada
name university abroad	York University
start date	26 / 09 / 2022
end date	18 / 12 / 2022

PREPARATION

exchange application process

There is a long list of universities where you can choose from if you want to go on an exchange. I decided I wanted to go to a country which was outside of Europe. I had to fill in a few lists with questions, and I had to write a motivation letter. Then I had to wait for York University to reply.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Utrecht University was very supporting, guiding through every step of the application.

academic preparation

I did not a lot of preparing before going to Toronto. I knew that the level of the courses would be a bit lower and in Utrecht, so I was not worried. For me, it was an addition to the courses that I followed in Utrecht. I chose 4 3-credit courses. I chose not to do 5 courses which would be the full amount, because my priorities were also meeting other people and have an amazing experience and not only focus on school. The courses were second and third year courses.

language preparation

I was used to lectures in English in University of Utrecht, so I did not prepare for anything. After a few weeks you are used to the English language all the time, and I did start dreaming and thinking in English after 3 weeks. So don't worry about the language, also in school you will keep up. You can always ask other students if you don't understand.

finances

I didn't get money from the university, so I had to pay everything myself. But you don't have to pay for school. I decided not to buy any books, only free eBooks. There are also a lot of books you can find in the library, Toronto library. Toronto is a very expensive city, so I did save a lot of money before going there. Rent and food is very expensive. I bought a winter coat at Winners (which is a thrift shop), that was expensive but totally worth it because some days it was very cold. Winners and other thrift shops are definitely worth so visit if you need something. I recommend going on trips with a group so you can share the costs, Airbnb or car rent. Tipping is a big thing in Canada and also the taxes are not included on the menu. So be aware of that. In almost all restaurants you can get a container if you don't finish your food. Alcohol is expensive, for example at a baseball game a beer is 13 CAD.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD



study programme (content and organisational issues)
<p>The academic level of York University was not that high. I did study a lot because in my experience there were a lot of assignments, but it was doable. At first, I chose some courses that were on masters list. So it is important to check if you can apply for courses. I followed 'Young people's media in Canada', 'The rainbowlist: GLBTQ literature and culture for children and youth', 'The sociology of parent/child relationships'.</p> <p>I had a lot of trouble with applying for the courses, so be on time. York Universities administration is not the best so you have to take care of your stuff and email them if you need anything.</p> <p>For me it was the best to email the teachers of the course you want to follow and they can get you in. The people are really kind and helpful!</p>
academic quality of education activities
<p>It really depends on your teacher. I had different experiences here. The classes were very small, around 20 people. You had to read some pages every week and it was clear what the semester was going to bring in terms of assignments. The teachers are really helpful if you are struggling with something.</p> <p>There are far more deadlines at York University than in Utrecht, but it is not difficult.</p>
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
<p>York University has an International Office on campus and you can always get in contact with them if you need help with something. In the first week, I was still struggling with my courses, and they helped me choose and guide me.</p> <p>I also had some questions about my future career. I asked one of the teachers if she could help me. We had a nice talk about this in a coffee place. So people are really helping you if you have questions.</p>
transfer of credits
I have not completed that yet.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
In the first week, there are a lot of orientation activities, I recommend joining because you can make friends. I met a lot of exchange students but also Canadian students.
accommodation
<p>I lived on campus, in a dorm in Founders Residence. A meal plan was mandatory but I did not like that very much, there is a lot to choose though. I had to share the bathroom (2 showers, 2 toilets, and 3 sinks) with 8 other girls. It is not that clean but if you have flip-flops it is fine. You can also rent a fridge which I recommend. It is not expensive and you have it in your own room. I recommend going to IKEA and buy some cozy lights. Be aware of how the meal plan works if you have that! You lose the money that is on the meal plan and you did not finish it.</p> <p>I really liked living on campus, because there are a lot of exchange students also and everything is close. The subway is 5 minute walk and takes you directly downtown (30 minutes). It is far to go downtown but if you have friends that are also living on campus the ride is fine. I had the most interesting conversations while on the subway. People who were not living on campus had to travel back on their own every time something was going on on campus.</p> <p>It is hard to find something in downtown if you want to live there, so I recommend applying for a room on campus anyway, this way you at least have something.</p>
leisure & culture
There is a lot of stuff to do in and around Toronto. I went to Niagara falls, Barrie, Montréal, and to Algonquin Park. There is a lot of beautiful nature. I made a 'Toronto bucketlist' with friends. Few things on the list:



Toronto Islands (the best part of Toronto, beautiful and peaceful), Gooderham building, St Lawrence market (best bagels), Distillery district (Christmas time), CN tower, High park, frat party, Halloween party on Church Street, ice hockey game (on campus and the Maple Leafs), a basketball game (Toronto Raptors, expensive but so worth it), baseball game (Toronto Blue Jays), Queen's park, Little Italy, Eaton Centre.

For me the sports games were impressive, I think it is really part of the culture.

You can travel as much as you want.

There are also a lot of activities on campus, such as puppy breaks, coffee breaks where you can meet people, painting activities. The gym has a lot of opportunities, swimming, dancing, everything you want. And it is not expensive.

A typical dish is poutine, I loved it! You definitely have to try that. Also the Beaver tail is delicious.

suggestions/tips

If you want to go out, go to Madison Avenue Pub and the Dance Cave. These are really fun places with nice music and a lot of students. In Madison you can also eat something. Thai food at Nana and the Warehouse were amazing places!

On campus, there is a bar, and every Thursday there are a lot of students and music. There are also karaoke evenings 😊.

Before you go, I would recommend making a to-do list. Make a list of the things you have to fix, such as passport, flight, accommodation, maybe visa, stuff like that. The flights are expensive so the earlier you book the better.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes! If you are ready for adventure, let's go! Toronto is a beautiful city and I'm very happy that I chose York University. You learn a lot about yourself and who you are. For me, the beginning was sometimes difficult, but after 3 weeks you are landed and let go of the stress.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Enjoy!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	REBO
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/>
name study programme	Law

destination city & country	Toronto, Canada
name university abroad	York University
start date	01/09/2022
end date	18/12/2022

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was easy. You just had to follow the steps by the UU and after you were picked, you just had to wait for York to reply and accept.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

If I had questions, I could easily contact my region 'manager'. Support was great.

academic preparation

I did not prepare anything. If your English level is sufficient, the courses will not be too difficult.

language preparation

I did not prepare that either. After high school and university in the Netherlands, your English level will be sufficient.

finances

I saved money for a big trip after the exchange. If I were you, I would also save some money for the exchange. Toronto is quite expensive and if you like to party, make a lot of trips and have dinners, you will need some extra money.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I had 4 3-credit courses: Global Issues in Foreign Policy, Political Economy of Industrial Democracies, Monetary Economics I: Financial Markets and Institutions & International Trade. I dropped the latter. I was quite late with choosing my courses, that's why I could not choose all the courses I wanted initially. Be on time with selecting your courses!

academic quality of education activities

The academic quality was decent. Some courses were interesting, some were quite boring. I was used to having a midterm and an endterm at UU. At York I had 2 courses like this. The other 2 courses had a lot of deadlines and participation grades. The exam period was from 8-24 December. If you choose courses with a lot of deadlines and papers, your semester will be finished on 6 December, so choose wisely!

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The people at York University were really friendly and helpful. I attended a meeting at the beginning of the term, where you could speak with people from the exchange office, which was really useful.



transfer of credits
I don't know yet

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
Every faculty had different orientation days and there was one general exchange orientation day. You can meet people there, but in my opinion those orientation days were quite boring.
accommodation
IMPORTANT: Try to get an accommodation downtown. All my friends had a dorm at campus, but they did not like it. Most rooms did not have a kitchen and the campus of York is quite dead. I was put on the waiting list for campus, so I got an apartment in Distillery District, which was really nice. Travelling to campus took me an hour so that was the only disadvantage. Try to get a room near Spadina, Queens Street West, Trinity or Kensington. Those neighbourhoods are really lively and not too far from campus.
leisure & culture
Canadians are really friendly! Toronto is a great city with a lot of things to do. Try to go downtown as much as possible! To be fair, partying life in Toronto is not that good. Bars are nice, but everything closes at 2 am. Most clubs are only opened at Friday and Saturday. So try to enjoy other things in Toronto. The Maple Leafs and Raptors were amazing. The Blue Jays were not that fun. All-day breakfast diners, burgers and chicken wings are amazing in Canada/America. In Toronto you have a lot of different cultures, which means a lot of different restaurants. There are a lot of amazing restaurants in Toronto.
Travelling: You are in Toronto, take your chance to explore North America. I went to New York, Banff, Montreal, Quebec and Mexico. The flight tickets are not that expensive, and the cities/places were amazing. You will have a reading week; you have to travel in that week! I went to Banff, West Canada, and it was one of the most beautiful places that I've ever seen. Travel with other people, this makes the trip more fun and housing and renting a car will be way cheaper
suggestions/tips
As mentioned above: explore other cities/countries. Toronto has a lot to do as well so try to explore Toronto as much as possible.

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, I had a lot of fun and Toronto is an amazing city. It is really important to find an accommodation downtown, the campus is boring and a little depressing place to live.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
no



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Toronto, Canada
name university abroad	York University
start date	03 / 09 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	21 / 12 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

Application was quite easy. You just had to upload some forms and write a motivation letter. After that, it was mostly waiting for YU to reply and accept.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I e-mailed a lot with the exchange office and they helped me quickly and nicely.

academic preparation

I did not prepare at all for the courses at YU. I read that the level is somewhat lower and because I already finished my mandatory law courses, I was able to choose fun and interesting courses at YU which made it easier for me to stay concentrated as well. I chose 5 3-credit courses, one of which would not give me credits for my Dutch bachelor. Five courses is a lot though, so if you can, be sure to choose less. I ended up dropping the fifth course in the last weeks. Three of my courses were first-year level and one was second year, so I had it quite easy in comparison to my friends. Doing five third-year courses is near to impossible – you won't be able to enjoy Toronto!

language preparation

I did not prepare. I got my Cambridge certificate in 2015 and included that one but it wasn't even necessary. It was really easy for me, but if you struggle with English, I would advise you to practice a bit before you go!

finances

I saved money in advance big time, because (as you probably know) life is expensive in Toronto. I didn't had the mealplan which meant I could cook on my own and I saved a lot of money doing that. I bought a coat and other necessities at a thrift shop, thrift shops and vintage clothes are really big there. When going on trips, try to go with many people so you can split AirBNBs, car rent and everything else. I downloaded all my books on my e-reader, so I saved a lot of money that way too. You can buy cheap souvenirs in Chinatown, and most of the times when you eat out, the portions are so big you can ask for a container and bring it with you and eat it the next day. Also, tipping is a big thing there too and taxes are not included in the price, so those come on top of your purchase as well.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I took three courses of Natural Science, one course of Anthropology and one Theatre course. The Natural Science courses were quite a mess because it's part of the general education which is reserved for the first-year students. I had a lot of contact with the YU exchange office, and they said they would try to get me in some of them but I



would probably only get one. I managed to get three and it was totally worth it, but it was a hassle. The other courses were highly interesting as well. I didn't get credits for the Acting course because of its practical element, but I did it for my own interest. I withdrew in the last few weeks however. Just be sure to check the prerequisites and you should be good to go. If you have questions, just e-mail someone, they answer really fast and are happy to help.

academic quality of education activities

There are far more deadlines than at Utrecht University, you have a deadline every week for multiple courses. It's high-speed but the level itself is a bit lower than UU I think. I took courses which I can't really compare to my Law courses but I heard it from my friends as well; it's a lot but it's not that difficult... It's just a lot. My GPA for all the courses was around 90%. It's really easy to get a good grade if you're genuinely interested in your course.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The people at YU were really helpful. The exchange office, the International Students office, the professors, everyone wants to help you. You can literally just walk up to someone you don't know and ask for help and they will help you or direct you to the right person.

transfer of credits

I don't know yet.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

I had an welcoming exchange meeting, a welcome reception with fireworks and stuff for all the first-years/new students (that's probably only for fall semester) and I signed up for a welcome meeting for international students but of course it's mostly international students. You have to meet people yourself mostly. Exchange office really tries though and I think they will improve a lot coming semesters.

accommodation

I lived on campus, in an apartment I had for myself in one of the Assiniboine flats. If you're above 21 you can apply for those and under 21 you have to live in dorms with mealplan. I really wanted to live on campus because of the campus-experience. Everything is walking distance, your friends are so close – everything is close. The apartment was really big too, I invited a lot of people into my house, gave parties and everything. I would really recommend on-campus housing – the only downside is that it's really far from downtown. However, you mostly go downtown with your campus friends anyway though, so you can travel together and then it's quite fun. I heard from the people who didn't live on campus that they really regretted it, because everyone meets up on campus all the time.

Applying for housing is really tricky though, they 'lose' your signed agreements and stuff easily and then it's your fault. I applied as one of the first for housing and got one really fast. I sent my signed tenancy agreement, bought a plane ticket to Toronto and went on holiday afterwards, and then they sent me an e-mail saying they didn't receive the agreement and if I didn't reply to that mail before a certain time that same day, they would give my house to the next person on the waiting list. I was on holiday so I couldn't access my e-mail, which resulted in me losing my apartment. After a lot of spamming and stalking I got back on the list and managed to get an apartment, but it was a lot of effort and I could only move in mid-september so I went to New York before school started and lived in an AirBNB close to the University when school started. So check your e-mail, keep proof, and spam them!

leisure & culture

On days everyone had class and stuff, I just met my friends for eating, studying and 'tea parties' and stuff. I only had classes on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, so the rest of the days I could go clubbing and stuff too. You always hear Canadian people are so nice, and it really is true. I met so many people and made so many friends, it



was really easy and so much fun. Everyone's so interesting and nice. As I said, tipping is a big part of their culture too. Canadians really respect and admire the indigenous peoples as well and it's beautiful. There are a lot of clubs which you can join too! The gym is also really cheap, I think it was around 15 dollars for a whole year (like 10 euros) and you can go to the gym and drop-in classes unlimited. That's not even the free basic membership with which you can swim and stuff. YU organizes tons of events on campus as well. There were so many days I came out of my lecture and they were giving food or stuff away or something. There are many helpful workshops as well, they help you with writing and other skills for example.

suggestions/tips

We went to Crocodile's Rock almost every Wednesday, drinks there are only 3 dollars. Go to the movies on Tuesday, then it's really cheap too (I think only Cineplex though). We ate a lot out, there's sooooo much good food. Make a list before you go or in the beginning, because I didn't and I still wanted to try so much stuff when I left. At the end of the semester, you'll be so busy! There are so many things to in Toronto – you'll never be bored. We found this arcade bar where you pay 5 dollars entrance and you can play games the whole evening (Google it!). You should really eat dumplings at Juicy Dumplings, you get 6 soup dumplings for only 3 dollars! I really loved poutine, so I ate that a lot too, Osmow's chicken shawarma poutine was my favourite (there's one on campus 😊). I would really recommend travelling as well. I went to the Niagara Falls, New York, Ottawa, Montréal, Québec, Washington, Miami and in the reading week I went on a crazy roadtrip through West Canada with ten people, visiting the Rocky Mountains, all the famous lakes, Banff, Jasper, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, and a lot more. Don't be scared to travel, it's really easy and safe – you'll be fine! I went to New York for two weeks completely on my own, booked a trip on my own with ISX (student travels, really cheap and really good) for Ottawa, Montréal and Québec (so there were other people as well but I did things mostly on my own) and I went to Washington on my own as well. During December a lot of people travel though, so one of my friends was there too and we came back to Toronto together. Value Village is a really cheap and good second-hand clothing store, I didn't bring my coat for the winter because of luggage space and bought a great one there. Multiple people tried to buy the coat off my body when I went out so apparently it's really stylish too. I brought clothes which I didn't wear that much anymore and donated almost all of it to a mosque there, so I had a lot of space for souvenirs and stuff when I came back. I gave my food to homeless people, complete with cutlery and stuff because you have to buy almost everything for your apartment. I had to buy pans, bed linen, cutlery, toilet paper, pillows, everything. Buy at Walmart though, it's really cheap. Liquor is only sold at LCBO's, which you don't find on campus so if you want to drink, buy liquor in advance or in the club (that's really expensive though). The best part of the exchange were my friend though, so go to a lot of meetings and stuff and just talk to people: everyone really wants to make friends because nobody knows anyone. I saw my two best friends at the welcome meeting on the third of September and just walked up to them and asked if they wanted to go to the welcome reception. Now, I'm closer to them than most of my Dutch friends and we already have plans to meet up again this year. I did hear from my friends that it was a bit more difficult to make Canadian friends, because you don't meet them that fast. You mostly do things with exchange people. I made some Canadian friends in my classes, in my flat, and at the clubs I joined though, so I wouldn't agree.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes! The university really cares for you and will help you with literally anything. The destination.... Ten out of ten. This was my first choice, and it was everything I hoped for. It's so close/easy to other cities such as Chicago, New York, Washington, Miami, Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec and Boston – even West-Canada. Toronto itself is such a vibrant amazing city as well. Always something to do. During December/Christmas it's so pretty too. I heard people at U of T really didn't like it because it's so intense and hard work so I'm glad I chose York.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



Universiteit Utrecht

Best time of my life!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Geosciences
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Science & Innovationmanagement

destination city & country	Toronto, Canada
name university abroad	York University
start date	05 / 09 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	21 / 12 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I followed the procedure as presented by the UU. It was easy to understand and clear. To apply to York I had to give some motivation, but UU chooses who is picked. If you're picked, the application to York is just formal and not of great importance.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

If I had questions about the exchange I just emailed the exchange board. You can also call (at the right time). I did not need extensive support or counselling, as things were clearly stated on the site of the UU.

academic preparation

I think if you can manage the level in Utrecht, you should be able to easily manage the level at York. The academic level is in my opinion lower at York. However, it depends on which courses you want to follow. In general, with a normal level of English, it is easily doable.

language preparation

As mentioned above, with a VWO English level, everything is understandable perfectly.
(Plus the lectures are obviously in perfect English! I found that very pleasing)

finances

Canada in general is expensive. You should keep in mind that housing is going to cost you a lot. Also the food in the supermarket is a bit more expensive than in The Netherlands. If you like to go out, like I do, you should know that alcohol is expensive as well. However, if you find the good places and buy your alcohol beforehand you can save money. I think in total I spend around 5000 euros for the whole exchange, to give an indication. Make sure you make up your financial plan before you go.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

You have to apply to courses immediately when you can. The earlier the better. Some courses won't admit you in the first place, but if you mail the professor they'll likely let you in. The York Exchange team will help you with this as well. Of course your courses need to be approved by the UU first.

academic quality of education activities

My courses were on a decent level. A lot of lectures, where you discuss readings or other exercises.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

You have to attend a meeting at the beginning of the exchange. It is very helpful to understand the way of York University and to meet fellow exchange students. The people are friendly and ready to answer all your



questions.

transfer of credits

The credits at York U are a bit different per course than in Utrecht. I did 1 course of 6 points and 2 courses of 3 points. In general, most people do 15 points worth of courses every semester.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The welcome and orientation programme differs between faculties. So it's different for everybody. There is a week called Frosh, for first year students. I did not attend this as I was told there would only be 18 year olds. As I mentioned before, the exchange board at York organizes meetings and possibilities to meet other people.

accommodation

Important! Make sure you apply to accommodation on campus as soon as you can! I was placed on a waiting list because I was too late. Eventually I had to stay in an Airbnb the first three weeks. Also keep in mind that it is expensive; around 900 CAD per month. If you want to live downtown it will probably cost you even more. Also downtown is extremely difficult to find a place. I stayed on campus as did my friends.

leisure & culture

The people really are very friendly. Professors are nice and you can ask them anything. Also the whole city is very multi-cultural, more than you might think. It actually surprised me.

suggestions/tips

If you can go out to see things! Niagara Falls is very close. In the Fall term there is one week of 'holiday'; I went to visit Montreal in that week. You can also make trips to parks nearby to witness the amazing colours of Fall. Also cities in the USA such as New York and Detroit are nearby.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, I had tons of fun with the people I met in Toronto and the city is very nice.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

no



UU Study Abroad Report Form

Family name:	xxx
First name:	xxx
Student number:	xxx
Faculty/college:	Humanities
Level:	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
Name degree programme:	Language and Culture studies

Destination city & country	Toronto, Canada
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	York University
Purpose of exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> study/courses <input type="checkbox"/> work placement <input type="checkbox"/> field work <input type="checkbox"/> other
Departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	24/08/17
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	28/12/17

Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

The application process was very clear to me. There are several meetings at which the university provides information about applications. Communication throughout the process was clear as well. I was kept up to date in regards to deadlines and also received emails about the progress of my application. You can also check the status of your application in Osiris.

Counselling/support at home university:

Academic preparation:

Since the courses I planned to follow were more or less in line with my program in Utrecht I felt confident I didn't need any specific academic preparation.

Language preparation:

None, my English was proficient already. There are language requirements I think but if you've followed some courses in English at UU you can definitely also follow the courses at York

Finances:

I had support from my family and was still eligible for StuFi. This in combination with the money you get from the OV was enough for me to get by. The exchange rate for Canadian Dollars is in our advantage, but prizes are a bit higher than in the Netherlands. In the end I think living costs were a



bit higher, especially groceries (and in particular fresh produce such as cheese/yoghurt/vegetables) can be expensive. And, rents in Toronto are crazy.

Study/placement abroad period

Study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues):

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

I would say the level at Yorku is more or less the same as at UU. Students are maybe a bit more motivated and more focussed on getting high grades. I did courses in history and political sciences for which I usually got assigned a couple of readings per seminar and had to write an essay and make a final exam.

Placement in Yorku is different than at UU. There is much more freedom in choosing your courses, it's a bit like a marketplace. You can just enrol for courses, go to lectures for a couple of weeks and then decide whether you want to continue with the course or not. So do not hold back and enrol for all the courses you're interested in, as long as you pay attention to final deadline for disenrollment. You will find that quite some have courses entry requirements, don't let this take you from trying to sign up! If you send teachers an email explaining you're an exchange student (always mention you're an exchange student, this works miracles really) and explain why you want to follow the course there's a big chance they will let you enrol. In general I found teachers and university staff are extremely helpful and they really try their best to make things work for you.

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

As I just said, people are very helpful. Sometimes it takes some effort to find out who's the right person to contact though. There are different offices you're probably gonna encounter. The International Offices is probably the one you will be in contact with most. Aside from that there's the Housing Office, which is responsible for your housing and meal plan.

Transfer of credits:

Still in procedure

Student life

Welcome/orientation programme:

If you've applied for a room on campus there will be a move-in day with a program to meet your roommates/flatmates. All the exchange students are in the same apartment building together with mostly Canadian first years students. I found this a pity; the orientation programme for exchange students is the same programme first years students follow. I think many of the exchange students didn't feel a connection with the Canadian students, simply because of the age difference and because the programme is really designed as an introduction to university. However they also give you a tour around the campus and there is an introduction ceremony with fireworks and Canadian high school mascots. Very over the top – it's fun.

Accommodation:

Yorku offers campus housing. The rooms are standard but comfortable, you get a bed, a desk and a wardrobe for your clothing. There's a shared bathroom but no kitchen, unless you chose for the apartment option in which you live together with three other people (this is a bit outside of the



campus though). Rules for the apartment building are pretty strict, you're only allowed a certain amount of guests and there's security at the door checking your id when you come in. I stayed at campus for two months and then decided to move to a room more downtown. The campus is pretty far from the city (although with the new subway that opened last December it only takes 30 minutes or so to go downtown) and there's not much to do. Living on campus is good way to make friends, but you will have less of a feeling of living in Toronto.

Leisure/culture:

Toronto is a lively city with a lot of fun bars, good museums, great parks, interesting architecture (at the times extremely ugly, but there's a good variety of it...) and good food. There are many different communities in the city and diversity is really celebrated differently than in the Netherlands – you will see very specific stores or restaurants specializing in one particular kind of pastry or dish. If you find a room downtown it's definitely worth it to buy a bike for the time you're there. Toronto is known for its groves and big parks and there are more and more bike lanes. Also make sure you visit one of the natural parks up north! Algonquin park or Kawartha Highlands are beautiful and you can easily drive there for the weekend. And, Torontonians are incredibly kind and open, I found it was very easy to meet new people!

Suggestions/tips:

If you want to experience the city and have the feeling of living in a metropole try to find a room off campus. It will take some effort but it's definitely worth it.

Would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? Please explain:

Yorku is a friendly university with motivated students and very helpful staff. Aside from that Toronto is big but still relaxed city with lots to explore, friendly people and always something going on. I can definitely recommend going here on exchange!

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:

If you want to move away from university life a bit and escape the exchange students bubble, try to find an organization where you can volunteer! I helped the local Food not Bombs with cooking meals for homeless people and made some cool friends there 😊



UU Study Abroad Report Form

Faculty/college:	Humanities
Level:	Bachelor
Name degree programme:	Postcolonial & Gender Studies

Destination city & country	Toronto, Canada
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	York University
Purpose of exchange	study/courses
Departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	01-09-2016
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	16-01-2017

You are requested to write on the following topics.

Text boxes will expand automatically while typing.

Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

York University has a very easy online application. You need to write a short motivation of about 500 words. The process was pretty quick.

Counselling/support at home university:

I went to one meeting to prepare for the exchange after being placed which was useful. It was nice to hear the two student who already went to Canada speak about their experiences. Next to this I did not have any other counselling from my home university, but this was not necessary either.

Academic preparation:

If you are in your third or fourth year no preparation is needed, the academic level is similar or even a bit easier at York University, so you will be alright.

Language preparation:

If your studies are in English this should not be a problem. If not, I think it is pretty easy to catch up on your English while you are at York.

Finances:

Housing and the meal plan are pretty expensive, but if you saved some money it is affordable. Make sure you have some extra spending money because the exchange students are always going on trips to New York, National Parks and French Canada, which is pretty expensive, but you don't want to miss out on that!

Study/placement abroad period

Study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues):

If it is feasible with the ECTS that you need for your program, I would recommend taking 4 instead of 5 courses per semester. While the academic quality of the courses are lower than in Utrecht, you



still have to read a lot per course (I would say as much as in a 7,5 ECTS course at Utrecht University, so basically you are taking 4, easy 7,5 ECTS courses at the same time in a time span of 4 months) next to this all the mid-terms and final exams/papers were due in the same week, which means that you have two very stressful moments if you take 5 courses.

York U has a lot of interesting courses, I would recommend not settling for the first course that you find in your own field of studies, but to search a bit more under unexpected programs. I found a very interesting course on South-Asian Female Literary Activism under Asian studies for example.

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

It was not hard to get good grades, although there was a lot of reading. The academic skills of York University student were not as good as in Utrecht and therefore the class discussions and group work projects were a bit boring and sometimes frustrating. But the professors were very nice and inspiring.

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

There was one meeting at the beginning of the semester that was useful. The exchange student counsellors encourage you to visit them and come to them with ideas and questions. But I did not make use of that. Except when I needed help with getting money back from the university, they were very willing to help me.

Transfer of credits:

Make sure you ask for a transcript that has number-grades on it and not just the letter-grades, because it will be hard for yourself to deduct what grade you got, as for example an A goes from 8.3 till 10. And on the UU website it says that one course is just 3 ECTS but the course load is way higher than that. I would say it is 7.5 ECTS, just as normal course at UU. As there are as much reading and as much test-moments/assignments/papers as in a UU course.

Student life

Welcome/orientation programme:

DON'T SIGN UP FOR FROSH WEEK! It is very expensive and all the exchange students did not go to any of the events. It is a nice week for first year students that will from that week on be part of a certain college, but as an exchange student this is not interesting. Make sure you go to the first international student meeting and to make contact with other exchange students there and plan your own activities and parties together with them.

The exchange student counsellors are very sweet and if you come to them with ideas to organise events for the exchange students they will be very enthusiastic to help you, but they don't organize any events on themselves.

The buddy program started when the semester was almost over so if you want to participate in that make sure that you e-mail them that you want to be in a group that starts early because you will be leaving in December.

Accommodation:

I had a room on campus. The campus is nice because you are close to your classrooms and the library and because you can easily meet up with other exchange students to eat, party or hang out together. The campus was nice in the summer, but when it became colder it became pretty depressive, very grey, no nature. I did not have a kitchen which was awful, because I was forced to



take a meal plan and all the food on campus was very unhealthy and there were not that many options especially when you are a vegetarian or have any other diet. So I would recommend getting an apartment in Toronto, because Toronto is really beautiful and interesting, the only disadvantage is that YorkU is more than an hour away with public transport and you might get a bit lonely then.

Leisure/culture:

Canadians do confirm their stereotype, they are very sweet and open but only to a certain point. The Canadian students are at YorkU to study not to make new friends. They are very easy to talk to, they will talk to you and always help you if you have any questions, but if you want to really become friends with them it will take a lot of effort from you.

Another culture difference is the food, there is not that much healthy food, it is very American-like, fast-food-like in that sense.

Suggestions/tips:

Make sure you go on a lot of trips and get to see a lot of the nature in Canada, it is so beautiful!! Don't take any first or second level courses, they are way too easy and have a lot of small assignments.

Pack or buy really warm clothes, especially if you are staying till January/February, it gets really really cold!

Conclusions

Would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? Please explain:

I would not necessarily recommend York University to anyone. The campus is slightly depressing; it is very far away from downtown Toronto. Toronto is very beautiful and interesting but I would recommend trying to apply to Toronto University then, they are located really central and it has beautiful buildings. The academic skills at York University were very low and it was pretty easy to get high grades, which was nice because there was a lot of time to get to know people and go on trips etc. I met some really nice exchange students, I still have a lot of contact with them and I have some nice addresses in and outside of Europe to visit now. So I would recommend going abroad and going outside of Europe to everyone. But not specifically to York University. Even though I did have a really nice time and do not regret going.

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:

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