



ERASMUS+ STUDIES

UU Report 2015-2016

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

destination city & country	Paris, France
name university abroad	Université Pierre et Marie Curie
start date	01 / 09 / 2015 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	01 / 07 / 2016 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process has been pretty easy. Take care of sending all the asked documents in time to the university, but if you do so, everything is very easy.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The support at the Utrecht University was very good. I got a lot of help from the responsible person in Utrecht who also gave me the email adress of a french exchange student from Paris who at that time studied as an exchange student in Utrecht and who gave me more information on the university in Paris. All in all, the supprt was really good.

academic preparation

The academic preparation at Utrecht University is very good. Don't be afraid of the courses in Paris, in my opinion, they are easier than our courses are and the french students have less knowledge in their 3rd year of the study than we have.

language preparation

To prepare your language skills, I would recommend to have at least a level of A2 in French. Everything at the UPMC will be in french and in the bachelor there are no courses given in english (maybe there are some in the master, but as far as I know, not a lot). If you do not have a lot french language skills, prepare yourself with a language course in french for 1/2-1 year before the begin of your Erasmus, like that you are familiar with the grammar and the most important vocabulary. Then you can improve your language skills with the French language courses given at the university which take place once a week.

finances

Of course you need to reckon enough money for the accommodation. This could be between 350 - 700 Euro, it depends on the area in Paris and the type of accommodation (CROUS (equivalent to ssh in Utrecht) or private rooms). For the living costs in Paris, I needed more than I did in Utrecht. This is also caused by the high prices for food as well as the really high prices for drinks and food in restaurants and bars.



STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
The studies at UPMC are different at Utrecht University. Course are divided up in "hoorcolleges" (=cours) and "werkcolleges" (= TD), but in the TDs you have a tutor who works out the given exercises. You do not have to work on yourself and you also do not have to hand in exercises. The year is divided up into two semesters and in January and May you have final exams and during the semester there will be Midterms.
academic quality of education activities
I would consider the academic quality to be a little lower than the one at Utrecht University. Classes are not as well structured as at Utrecht University, but if you attend the TDs and the classes and you worked on the given exercises, the exams at the end of the semester are feasible.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The support at the receiving university in Paris is different than at the Utrecht University. In Paris, you need some more time to organize stuff than in Utrecht as it is sometimes more difficult to find the responsible person. When you do not want to change a lot of things in your learning agreement, you will be fine with the women (Elas Yvon) who is responsible for the 2 nd and 3 rd years students. I would recommend to take enough time to complete your Erasmus documents and try to complete everything when you are still in Paris. Personal contact is much easier than mail contact.
transfer of credits
I did not yet organized the transfer of credits as the final results of the exams are not yet published.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
In the very first week of university, there was an introduction event for the incoming students at the UPMC where you could also finish your enrolment at the university and where they tell you important things to know. Furthermore there was a language test to evaluate your language skills in french and to organize the study groups for the french language courses. Take care that you register in time to participate in the free language courses at the uni which are helpful for your language skills as well as for your introduction to other Erasmus students. There have not been many introduction events organized by the university itself, but there exist an organization called "EIAP" which organizes events for international students all around Paris and where you get to know easily other students. They organize trips to a lot of places in and around Paris, so for the first months a perfect way to build up your social life in Paris.
accommodation
Accommodation in Paris is very hard, as you maybe already know. But in fact, if you know where to look, you are able to find affordable rooms. First of all try to have a look at the facebook groups for rooms in Paris, if you are in time you may be lucky to find a nice room in an apartment with other students or you even find an apartment on your own - this is how I found my 2-room-apartment just next to the Eiffle tower which I shared with one other international student. Furthermore, have a look at the website from CROUS which is the organization for the residence halls for students. They offer very affordable rooms in a very good location. Last but not least, there were many students living at the "Cit� universitaire" which is a campus with houses sorted by nationalities. You have to apply for theses houses and you have to do this in time!
leisure & culture
Paris offers you a wide range of culture and great places. It will take you some time to visit most of the important monuments and museums in Paris, but it pays out to do so. Bear it in mind to visit Versailles in



September when the weather still is good, then it is amazing.
 Besides, you have millions of bars and discos in Paris, most of them near Bastille, Republique or in the Marais or in Montmartre, one place really known in Paris is Oberkampf, where you find really nice bars full of students.

suggestions/tips

Try the bar "L'escale" near Sacré Coeur, it is a really good and cheap cocktail bar where you can also buy cocktails to go to sit in front of the Sacré Coeur. It is pretty known under students in Paris and really crowded, but it is a great place to start your evening. And take care, it is not a very chic bar but definitely my favourite!

CONCLUSIONS

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

I think that the University is due to the quality and the organization in the 3rd year worse than the universities in Netherlands, but nevertheless you will have enough courses to complete your studies at this university as it is very big and you will learn how to deal with the french educational system, which is very particular. But this is part of the french culture and if you want to make new experiences in France, I would highly recommend you to participate in the Erasmus Program with Paris where you will meet so many interesting students from really all over the world! It is a great opportunity to get to know Paris, which is in my opinion definitely one of the most beautiful cities in the world and which will give you an insight in the wonderfully french way of living in France. Even if I had some struggle with the french study system I would always choose this destination again.

do you have any additional advice or comments?



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e-mail address	<i>optional; only if you don't mind students preparing for study abroad contacting you directly</i> jfparie@me.com
faculty/college	Faculty of Sciences
level	bachelor's
name study programme	Mathematics

destination city & country	Paris, France
name university abroad	Université Pierre et Marie Curie (UPMC)
start date	01/09/2015
end date	31/01/2016

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
	Just follow the schedule and talk with people who went abroad earlier.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
	Excellent
academic preparation	
	I completed all my bachelor's courses before I went to Paris. In Paris I have written my BSc. thesis.
language preparation	
	None. I assumed that my six years of french classes at secondary education were somehow sufficient but this was not really the case since I forget almost all of it the last three years.
finances	
	None. The Erasmus+ grant and the regular amount of money you receive each month was enough for me. Partially, because the rent for my housing was comparable with Utrecht standard's.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)



Regular mathematic courses, language courses (french and english), supervisor BSc. thesis
academic quality of education activities
Excellent
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
Excellent
transfer of credits
/

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
Very pleasant!
accommodation
Excellent! Nice housemates, good price and good accommodation. UPMC arranged a studio for me in a CROUS résidence, which is like a national Studentenhuisvesting SSH in the whole of France.
leisure & culture
Come on, it is Paris! Every Wednesday there is a drink for all Erasmus students in the pub very near to the UPMC campus.
suggestions/tips
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CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
If you are somehow a serious student looking for a good university in a great city, Paris is definitely a good choice. It is a student city, but a very big one.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Since a lot of UU-students are applying for an Erasmus exchange, I understand that the UU fixes the subscription deadline far before the exchange period. However, this year the deadline have been advanced to 1 december instead of 4 january. In my opinion this is really far fetched. You can not expect a student, in it's most energetic and dynamic period of his/her life, to complete all the administration i.e. 10/15 months on forehand of the exchange. This will have a counter effect on the (increasing) amount of students applying for an exchange and therefore the internationalization of the UU.