



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Geoscience
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Earth Science

destination city & country	San Diego, United States
name university abroad	UC San Diego
start date	03 / 01 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	10 / 6 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

### PREPARATION

#### exchange application process

The application process is quite straight forward. For your visa you do want to start early so you won't have a lot of stress. But if you are late and you can't get an appointment as far in advance as you want I suggest you check if new appointments become available. For both of mine appointments I had to initially pick a date somewhere after I should already be in the US but new dates far before my departure opened up pretty quickly.

#### counselling & support at Utrecht University

It is really easy to get into contact with the University if you have any questions. The information sessions are also very useful especially about the visa part. As my exchange got cancelled twice because of covid we got quite a bit of contact with the international office which tried very hard to help us even if everything was unclear. Fellow students are also usually open to help you.

#### academic preparation

I did not have any specific preparation and I also did not feel like needed it. I followed courses strongly related to my courses back here in Utrecht, so they were good to follow.

#### language preparation

I did not need to do any preparation except that they do require you to have proof of your level of English. This can be done with for example a TOEFL test. They are not hard but you want to schedule on time because you might have to wait for a bit before you can do the actual test and then again for the results. I never considered myself especially good with English but I easily got a very high score for the test. With the level of English we are using in Utrecht you will be easily able to do it so you don't need to stress about it.

#### finances

In my experience San Diego is very expensive. I believe they assume you need around 10.000-12.000 dollars for 2 periods (so half a year). In my experience you definitely want that as minimum but you will probably spent more especially if you want to explore San Diego during your exchange.

### STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

#### study programme (content and organisational issues)

I really liked my courses. They were very engaging and we had a lot of practical exercises and lab excursions. My courses were way more focused on actually bringing us into contact with the research that was being done, especially on campus. What I do advice is to be very early and flexible with registering for courses. Ideally you want to have at least one back-up course per block because some courses fill really fast. The course times are



also not as nicely divided in clear time blocks like here in Utrecht so it can be a real challenge to pick courses that work together. Often two courses you might want to pick overlap just a tiny bit somewhere or don't allow you enough time to travel between them. You will definitely want to take some time to plan this. Also, if your course of choice is full use the waitlist because a lot of people still drop classes, mostly in the first one or two weeks of class.

#### academic quality of education activities

I found the academic level really good. I did not have a lot of stress and I had a lot of free time to explore and visit the beach. But even if I did not had to spent a lot of time on my courses, I feel like I learned a lot. In my experience classes were more interactive as I am used to and students are generally more motivated. This causes a very nice learning environment.

#### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

Everyone in really helpful. I did not have a lot of time where I really needed counselling but ISPO (the organisation that helps all international students) sends our regular emails with some useful information or reminders which is very nice. All professors are also always willing to help. They are very engaged with the students.

#### transfer of credits

I have not gotten my grade back yet.

## STUDENT LIFE

#### welcome & orientation programme

When I arrived the first two weeks of winter quarter were still online and people were advised to not come to campus until closer to the end of January. Therefore the campus was pretty empty and there was not really any orientation or welcome programme. They did organize some digital meet-and-great for the incoming exchange students but unfortunately I could not make that.

#### accommodation

I lived in student housing on the campus. Housing was probably the part that I found most stressful when planning my exchange. I applied to the I-House originally and I got in but after I had to postpone my exchange due to covid I lost my place there and had to reapply. That second time I did not make it but I was advised to register on the waiting list for on campus housing. Luckily I got housing that way pretty quickly which meant I had a place to live before I actually went there. The rent was pretty high, around 1,300 a month for a shared room. Living on campus meant I had very short travel times and that I had housing before I left for the US which were two very big advantages for me. Housing on the campus also includes dining dollars for the dining halls and once a week the common parts of our appartement actually got cleaned. The campus is also a nice place to travel from if you don't have a car. From here you can get multiple busses and they have a trolley station which brings you to downtown San Diego pretty easily.

#### leisure & culture

I spent a lot of my time at the beach. Even if I can't surf the beaches are beautiful and since it is almost always warm the beach is always a nice place to hang out. They have for example seals and sea lions hanging out on the beaches in La Jolla only a short bus ride away. An student organisation called 'The Zone' also organises multiple fun, usually creative, activities every week. They are free and a nice way to meet new people while relaxing after you classes. Something I wish I knew earlier is that the Outback Adventures organises some trips/hikes throughout each semester. They fill really fast so you ideally want to be there when they registration opens but they are a really nice way to see some more of the beautiful nature around San Diego. Finally, sport events are a lot bigger there so you might want to check out one of the sport games.



suggestions/tips

You will get a free pass for free traveling with the busses and trolleys in San Diego which is really nice. Most popular places in the city are easily accessible with busses or the trolley. So if you don't have a car or you don't have to struggle with parking you can take a lot of advantage of this. Also, in America they use discord a lot. A lot of classes or majors/minors have their own discord servers where people meet and help each other. It is a very easy way to get into contact with you fellow classmates for any questions you might have from course planning to homework or even finding people to hang out with.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, it is a really nice university. I feel like I learned a lot even though my time there felt also like a vacation. The location is really beautiful with it taking only around 15-30 minutes to get to the beach depending from where you travel. I really liked the atmosphere, how enthusiastic my fellow students were and how helpful the teachers were. They are very engaged in your study process.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Have a lot of fun on your exchange and make sure you start visiting all the places you want to see on time and don't wait until the end of your stay 😊



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Kunstmatige Intelligentie

destination city & country	San Diego, United States
name university abroad	University of California, San Diego
start date	01/ 01/ 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	01/ 07/ 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
The application process has a lot of steps, but if you follow them strictly it's very doable. Deadlines are just highly important and postponing your work is not the best idea.	
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
I really liked the help of Cathelijne and she always answered questions in the best way even though all the UC's have different policies.	
academic preparation	
Not applicable.	
language preparation	
I took the Duolingo English test, which was new, and it was super easy and fast. Also, much cheaper than the other certificates.	
finances	
I knew this exchange was going to be expensive, but I still underestimated it. I made a budget expectation overview, but also the exchange rate went totally crazy so in the end it costed more than expected. Also, travelling plays a big part of the experience, so I spent a lot on that. Saving money in advance, is necessary.	

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
I definitely underestimated the first quarter enrolment of courses because I was so busy trying to get the visa etc. In my second quarter, I did a bit more investigation and took some decent courses. The level of education is a bit different, and they make it very hard for you to fail a course.	
academic quality of education activities	
UCSD has a lot of schoolwork during the week and the period. This is a little bit stressful sometimes, but on the other hand, the exams only count 20% on average (in my courses). Keeping up with the work is the best strategy and you will for sure pass the course. Also, all my lectures are both in-person and recorded which makes traveling a lot easier.	
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	



I emailed a couple of times with the university, and they are always super helpful. Also, ISPO is a useful way to get to know the campus and other international students.

transfer of credits

My grades have not been transferred yet at the moment of writing, but it should happen automatically.

## STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

ISPO hosts a lot of welcoming activities which are great for meeting other international students 😊

accommodation

When arriving, I did not have a room yet. I didn't get into the campus dorms and just decided to rent a room in a hostel until I found something. Honestly, this was not even expensive as the room rental prices are extremely high. I joined several Student Housing Facebook groups and found a place within a few days. I even liked this way because I visited the place before committing and there are many scams. Prices nevertheless are not funny, so prepare to pay a lot; even for room sharing.

leisure & culture

San Diego is huge, but I rented a car which made my life much easier. The weather is all year perfectly sunny and there is a lot to do! A lot of people buy a surfboard because the ocean is so close and easy to reach. Taco Tuesday is definitely something San Diego and my favourite taco place is by far the Taco Stand. I also took (free!) yoga lessons in Sunset Cliffs (just look on Eventbrite) and the food market in the harbour every weekend + farmers markets during the week are recommendable.

suggestions/tips

Talk to a lot of people, and even though you are not having the best time, in the beginning, everything will be in the end. It took me some time as well to feel at home in such a big city and meet the right people but go to events! The students host a lot of bonfires, and you can easily go by yourself; everyone is more than happy to welcome you. Also, don't study too hard and take advantage of everything around SD like LA, SF, Hawaii, Las Vegas and the national parks. Lectures may seem difficult, but exams are doable so don't stress too much.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, for sure. I had a great experience and no bad experiences (I felt very safe, even alone being in the city). San Diego has everything and even Mexico is around the corner. The city is big enough to explore, the campus is beautiful, and the people are super chill. Get ready to get broke, but I can assure you it's worth every penny.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Start on time with the visa application. I did it last minute and it gave me an unnecessary big amount of stress



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	San Diego, United States of America
name university abroad	University of California, San Diego (UCSD)
start date	03 / 01 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	10 / 06 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

### PREPARATION

#### exchange application process

The overall application process is quite extensive. At first, you write a motivation letter for Utrecht University to get into the whole California program. Then you need to give your preferences for the campuses. You need to pick three. For all three you need to make a study plan with all the courses you want to follow. Furthermore, you write another motivation letter and upload your resumé. I have heard that it's hardest to get into UCLA and UC Berkeley.

#### counselling & support at Utrecht University

I was very disappointed by Utrecht University when they cancelled my exchange 5 days before my departure, in September 2021. The communication was very poor and it was a very stressful time, as I had already spent a lot of money on flights, rent, and visa. Apparently Utrecht University is allowed to cancel the exchange until the very last moment. I did not feel supported by the university at all, which was very disappointing. Luckily, I applied again 6 months later, and this time my exchange did not get cancelled. Hopefully Utrecht University will not cancel more exchanges at the last moment, as the covid situation has gotten a lot better.

#### academic preparation

You need to enroll in the courses at UCSD through 'webreg'. You get an assigned time in which you can start enrolling for courses. Be in time, because some fill up super quickly. Before you can enroll you need to check the prerequisites. If there are any, you can upload your transcript of grades in an online platform called 'Easy'. If you don't manage to enroll in time, you can always just go to the first class and ask if you can still follow this course.

#### language preparation

-

#### finances

The only downside about an exchange in San Diego are the high living costs. Rent is around \$1000 a month, and groceries are more expensive than in the Netherlands. Make sure you have enough money so that you won't have to hold back in taking fun trips. I would say, make sure you can spend \$10,000 for a 6 months exchange.

### STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

#### study programme (content and organisational issues)



I took all my courses at the Scripps institute of oceanography, which I would highly recommend. The courses were very interesting and not too hard to follow. If you follow the upper division courses, the level can be quite high, so take that into account. The lecture halls are all next to the ocean so the whole vibe and the views are amazing.

#### academic quality of education activities

Generally, the courses are easier than in the Netherlands, but it highly depends on which courses you choose. There are many more homework assignments, deadlines, and attendance requirements. If you do the assignments it's pretty hard to fail a course.

#### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

All my professors were very kind and eager to help. There is more of a personal touch since classes are smaller. Furthermore, there are TA's with office hours to ask all your questions. For counselling outside the courses you can go to the international office. I heard that they are very friendly and helpful.

#### transfer of credits

I am still working on this but you can request an official document from the student portal and send this to Utrecht University.

## STUDENT LIFE

#### welcome & orientation programme

I would highly recommend the Solana beach host family program. You get a host family assigned for the first few days until you have housing. The family picks you up from the airport and gives you a warm welcome in a new country. I was staying with another girl so immediately made a friend, which was very helpful.

I arrived in January and there were many other new people as well. It was super easy to make new friends so I wouldn't worry about this too much. You can join orientation programs from the international office or go to clubs in the university (like the surf club).

#### accommodation

I stayed in International house (I-house) on campus. I would definitely recommend this because it makes it so much easier to meet people. I met all my friends here, and it was so fun that we lived close together. It's also really nice to get the whole typical American on campus experience. Make sure to check the application deadline so you sign up in time. Also, don't worry if you don't get in. I also heard from student who lived in Pacific Beach and had a great time.

#### leisure & culture

San Diego is an amazing city as there is so much to explore. Every neighbourhood has a completely different atmosphere, so we went to a different one every weekend. The weather is amazing so you can also do many beach days with a bbq at the end of the day.

San Diego airport is in the middle of the city so it's very easy to take amazing trips. Western America has amazing travel destinations. It has great cities (San Francisco, LA, Santa Barbara, Las Vegas), and beautiful nature (Hawaii, Yosemite, Grand Canyon, Arches np, Joshua tree, etc.).

#### suggestions/tips

Make sure you don't stay on campus too much. Go out and explore, it's amazing! Also, San Diego is amazing, but it is one of the only campuses which doesn't allow house parties. This makes it harder for underaged students to go to parties. This is easier in Santa Barbara and LA. There are ways to still go to the clubs, but it might be more stressful.

## CONCLUSIONS



would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes I would highly recommend UCSD as an exchange destination. San Diego is an amazing city, and much more clean and safe than LA and SF. It really has got the full package: beaches, big city, terraces, good weather, easy to take trips, great university rankings, and beautiful nature. My exchange truly was everything I hoped for.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Make sure to be there on the first day, and say yes to everything. The first days are crucial in making friend groups. But don't worry too much, it will be amazing for sure! If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.





## UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Geosciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Science and Innovation Management
destination city & country	San Diego, USA
name university abroad	University of California San Diego
start date	20 / 09 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	15 / 12 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION
exchange application process
I think UC is the one destination with the most difficult application process, as you first have to apply for UC and then for individual campuses. However, once you are there you will forget about this!
counselling & support at Utrecht University
Support from UU was amazing! Ingrid was always ready to help me out and remind me of all deadlines.
academic preparation
For me, no academic preparation was needed.
language preparation
I had to do an English proficiency test, which I easily passed without any preparations.
finances
Living in California is very expensive, especially if you want to go out and explore the area and do some traveling. I had been saving for my adventure abroad for years in advance, and I would strongly advise others to save up before going here!

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I did my elective courses at UCSD, so I could choose basically any course that the UU Board of examiners would approve on. Enrolment was pretty easy online. The UCs have a different system, in which you can attend courses that were initially full in the first 2 weeks, then if someone else drops it, you will still be able to enrol. I did not make use of this because I was very happy with the courses I chose. Other students told me it was quite stressful to have this uncertainty about their courses, so I would advise to be early with online enrolment so you can avoid this!
academic quality of education activities
I went to UCSD for an academic challenge, as UCSD was rated as the #2 best college in the US in 2018 and to be honest, the quality of education has disappointed me. For me, my courses were easier than at UU, although the science courses were okay. I would however not recommend doing courses at Rady School of Management unless you want easy courses.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad



I did not make use of any counselling support, but I'm sure it would be excellent support, as UCSD has a lot of attention for everything around education, e.g. mental and physical health and academic integrity.

transfer of credits

My grades have not been transferred yet, as I just returned. I did a photography course for fun and there are a lot of fun courses at UCSD like sports courses, but most likely your Board of examiners will not give you credits for this!

## STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

A great way to meet a lot of new people! Orientation day is only with international students so beware of the 'international bubble'.

accommodation

I found housing in Pacific Beach (great off-campus area for students!) through start-up San Diego Student Housing. It was easy to arrange this from the Netherlands and I loved the location. However, I did not like my roommates that much, so I would recommend to go there early and search housing from there so you can meet your potential roommates.

leisure & culture

San Diego is an amazing place to live and the city is huge! After a few months I still have not seen everything I wanted to see. The beach is always near, so you definitely have to try surfing! Also, San Diego is home to a lot of breweries (my favourite was Ballast Point in Miramesa) and nice restaurants and bars (Duck Dive on Taco Tuesdays!). Since my courses were easier than expected, I had some extra time to enjoy the city and of course when you are there, it is great to make trips to the rest of California. Plus, it never rains in Southern California

suggestions/tips

To make friends, try to go everywhere and say yes to everything, especially the first few days! One thing that's amazing about studying in SD is Taco Tuesdays, cheap drinks and tacos, so everyone goes out on Tuesdays! I would recommend living off-campus as you might feel a little bit trapped on campus if you also live there (my friends did experience this). Also, there very very few Dutch people in San Diego, which I liked because it forces you to out there and get the international experience, rather than the German or French students that all stuck together.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

YES! I had the time of my life in San Diego, even though uni was pretty easy, it is ranked as a good university and you'll have lots of time to enjoy your stay and make many new friends from all over the world! Next month my German friend will visit me and next summer I will visit my new Scandinavian friends! San Diego is a great place to live for a while, because of the people, weather, beach and the great relaxed vibe. And UCSD is fun and has great facilities: free bus, free gym and pools and lots of events for students.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

One thing I liked about Cali in general is that Americans are very chatty and easy to talk to. People speak English so there's no language barrier like in other countries, which makes it really easy to connect to people!



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Bèta faculty
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Physics & Mathematics

destination city & country	San Diego, United States
name university abroad	University of California, San Diego (UCSD)
start date	24 / 09 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	15 / 12 / 2018 (dd/mm/yyyy)

### PREPARATION

#### exchange application process

It was clear which forms needed to be handed in, and the deadline date was also very clear. The visa process took a while (a couple of weeks to get an appointment in the embassy) so start early enough!

#### counselling & support at Utrecht University

My student exchange coordinator Ingrid Dijkstra was very helpful and was always able and prepared to answer any questions I had. Just email them!

#### academic preparation

I looked into which courses I wanted to follow, but ended up trying lots of courses in the first week and taking different courses than I originally planned to take. I didn't need to acquire any additional prerequisite knowledge to be able to enrol in the courses.

#### language preparation

I did the IELTS test. It costs 200-300 euros, but it's quite an easy test for Dutch people I think, and you don't need to worry about passing it. It's just a matter of preparing at home by making an example quiz, showing up on time, making the test and get the results.

#### finances

I made sure I had enough money by looking at how much I was loaning at DUO. I spent some 300-400 on my visa, and 800 per month to live in Pacific Beach. I highly recommend living in Pacific Beach if you are going to study in San Diego. The plane tickets to Los Angeles are relatively cheap, so I flew to Los Angeles and took a FlixBus (or Greyhound) to San Diego. The grocery prices are about the same as in The Netherlands, maybe a tiny bit more expensive, but you don't really notice. I bought a bike for 100 euros and enjoyed having it!

### STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

#### study programme (content and organisational issues)

Enrolling in courses is a bit chaotic, you have to ask permission to enrol by submitting your prerequisites. It can take a long time before the teachers answer your requests. I recommend enrolling in as much courses as possible, and then de-enrolling from the courses you don't want to take in the end of the enrolling period, which is a couple of weeks after the start of the courses.

#### academic quality of education activities

The content of the bachelor courses was below the level of bachelor courses in The Netherlands. On the other hand, I took one graduate class and that was very challenging.



#### counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I didn't ask for any counselling at UCSD. There are plenty of people from the UCEAP group to contact, though. It didn't look like this would be a problem.

#### transfer of credits

Not done yet.

### STUDENT LIFE

#### welcome & orientation programme

They had a general talk about boring stuff and how exciting everything is, but still with a couple of good things to take home. I think I missed the orientation programme, because I was busy finding a house at that time. I'm sure there's so much to do that there must be some fun stuff for everyone, though.

#### accommodation

I arrived in San Diego and only had hostels for 2 weeks. I made it a full-time job to search for housing, and found it in one week on Craigslist. This is really a golden place to find housing. Just make sure to not pay anyone until you've seen the house (and maybe the housemates, which will probably be internationals too if you're in Pacific Beach), and be realistic in the price you pay to rent a room here. I paid \$850 per month for a Double Room (I shared it with someone else), and single rooms in my house were \$1250. You will be able to find cheaper rooms if you look a bit harder, but anything under \$650 per month is unrealistic. Don't forget that water, electricity etc is not included in the price you see advertised, so my room said \$800 but was really \$850.

There are also some Facebook pages you should look at. They post advertisements for rooms a few times a day.

#### leisure & culture

Leisure: I surfed a couple of times, I biked around, I went to house parties, I went to bars and clubs and weird combinations of those. On the weekends I sometimes made short trips.

#### suggestions/tips

Go to Tijuana once, it's a fun experience. Make sure you have someone with you who speaks Spanish fluently. Go climb a mountain! They're there, and you won't have them in The Netherlands once you are back. Be sure to be on time: in December, there will be ice and it will be cold.

Make sure to not get too caught up in your university work. Studying is important but if that prevents you from partying or surfing altogether, then that's a bad thing.

Flixbuses to Las Vegas and Los Angeles are pretty cheap. I spent 2 whole days in each, and it was worth 4x the price I paid for it. Don't miss those!

The Grand Canyon is very far, and very difficult to reach without a car. With a car, it'll take you a day (7 hours) to get there. It's possible, but not many of the international students I met went there.

I didn't go to San Francisco, but lots of people did. Apparently it's a very nice city.

### CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes. The weather is astoundingly good. I got wet by rain once, and it's almost never even cloudy. In December maximum temperatures will still be 18-20 degrees Celsius. You have the cliffs of La Jolla nearby, Mission Trails Park for some hills, and Tijuana in Mexico for some fun.

If you are in Pacific Beach, you can go to the beach to surf, swim or bake whenever you want. Also, you will probably meet some international students from around the world (mainly Germany and Norway) and learn from them. Some of my housemates were German and my German improved a lot, for example.



do you have any additional advice or comments?

I would recommend to not book your return flight yet. In December, the flights from Los Angeles will still be quite cheap (i.e. some below 300), and you might decide that you haven't explored enough yet, or that you want to have a vacation in Canada, Central America or Hawaii or anywhere after you are done with your courses.

I stood in line for 3 hours during the Customs. Take this time into account.



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	University College Roosevelt
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Liberal Arts and Sciences

  

destination city & country	San Diego , United States of America
name university abroad	University of California San Diego
start date	07 / 01 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22 / 03 / 2019 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	
The exchange application process overall takes quite a long time and effort, especially for me as a UCR student. So good planning and organization is definitely needed.	
counselling & support at Utrecht University	
The support of UU was overall quite good. Most of my mails regarding questions were answered quite fast and thoroughly and the information session really helped me to feel more prepared for my exchange	
academic preparation	
Overall I think it is hard to prepare academically. Every university is so much different from each other and it just takes a while to get used to the differences once you are there. However the information session helped me get an impression.	
language preparation	
As a native english speaker in the US I did not have to prepare when it came to the language.	
finances	
Although I just had to pay the tuition fee of Utrecht, California as a destination was as expected very expensive. Especially living costs as well as the rent were way above average.	

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	
I really enjoyed all of my courses. It was always clear what to expect and the workload was doable.	
academic quality of education activities	
The quality of the teaching staff as well as the lectures was overall really good. Although the classes were way bigger than I am used to at UCR, the professors were always open for questions and comments.	
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	
My exchange University provided me with a lot of assistance regarding academic and organizational matters. The student help-desk was always available and an information session at my first day made me felt welcomed and better prepared.	
transfer of credits	
When it comes to the transfer of credits there were no problems. My grade transcript was being sent from my exchange university to the Board of Examiners at UCR and I did not even have to do much, wich was really	



convenient.

## STUDENT LIFE

### welcome & orientation programme

As I have already mentioned the first day of uni was just getting to know other exchange students as well as the university and its social and academic life. The International office talked about the city and what it had to offer, socially and cultural.

### accommodation

I was living in the International House, which was probaly my best decision. Although you might get better accomodations outside the campus socializing there was by far easier. Besides that I was also really close to campus facilities.

### leisure & culture

Even for cultural things to experience I did not have to leave the campus. Concerts, speeches and lectures were organized which were always free to attend. But also the city of San Diego has a lot to offer culturally.

### suggestions/tips

Overall I would suggest that organization is key. There will be quite a few deadlines when it comes to academics, housing contracts etc. So just make sure you keep an eye on your deadlines as well as mattrrs back home although you are on exchange.

## CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes I would definitely do as the university as well as the city has a lot to offer. You have a lot of opportunities to express yourself and do what you love, when it comes to attending art events or join a sports or social club.

### do you have any additional advice or comments?




## UU Study Abroad Report Form

Family name:	xxx
First name:	xxx
Student number:	xxx
Faculty/college:	Social Sciences
Level:	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor
Name degree programme:	Ethnic Studies

Destination city & country	San Diego, USA
Name host institution	University of California – San Diego
Purpose of exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> study/courses
Departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	17-09-2018
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	22-12-2018

### Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

Applying is not that hard as it seems. However, make sure you know all the deadlines in the application process. Getting all the right documents for each deadline might take some time, so make sure you know what to hand in and where to hand it in

Counselling/support at Utrecht University:

Going to all the pre-departure meetings is really helpful to make sure you know everything what you need to do. Furthermore, if you have any questions, sending an email can help you out, too, and you'll receive an email back pretty quickly

Academic preparation:

Making an overview of the courses you want to take is already a good start. It makes sure that you now know which courses you can take, and which ones you cannot. Also, it is really important to know the period to sign up for classes. UCSD used a system where some groups of students are allowed to pick their courses earlier than others. This means that international students are allowed to pick to first in order to let them pick the courses they'd like to take. If you miss this deadline, there is still an opportunity to choose classes later on, but this might result in full classes and you missing out on a course you would have liked to take.

Language preparation:

There is really no need to prepare for the English language. Most American universities expect you to have a good level of English proficiency, and you need to prove this with documents. If you do





not have these documents yet it is advised to get them before the application deadline. This also means that your English is good enough to live in the States. Furthermore, people are also pretty helpful and understanding. Lastly, you might struggle the first week to get used to talking English, but before you know it you'll get used to it and you'll notice that your English is getting better. The

Finances:

The only thing I can say about finances is that you'll need to pay some things up-front, like housing and insurance. This is a pretty big expense. This means that you'll have to pay a lot of money before you'll arrive at your destination. However, this also means that you don't have to pay monthly rent or other monthly expenses

### **Study abroad period**

Study programme (concerning content and organisational issues):

At UCSD, the diversity and variety of courses you can take is way bigger than at UU. You can take a lot of different courses for different interests. You can really make your course schedule your own. On the other hand, many classes are shorter than here in Utrecht. Seminars or working group often tend to take more or less an hour. This means more classes throughout the week but they are not as long as here

Academic quality of education:

I experienced that the quality of education was good. There is a lot of reading material, but it makes sure that you know a lot about the subject

Counselling/support at host institution:

The international office was really helpful for questions regarding your visa or passport. Next to this, UCSD provides a lot of other services, like a health centers and sport facilities, but also services that help you with your study, or even your interests (e.g. clubs, communities, etcetera)

Transfer of credits:

Transferring your credits is straight-forward as the UU provides a guide to tell you what to do. One thing to beware of is the level of difficulty of your courses and the amount of credits you need to take to be considered a full-time student

### **Student life**

Welcome/orientation programme:

The orientation program is recommended; it tells you the basic things you need to remember, but it is also an opportunity to make new friends

Accommodation:

Beware of any application deadlines if you wish to stay on-campus. However there are also plenty of other places to stay off-campus for international students.

Leisure/culture:

There is plenty of free time to do other things. The weekends are a great opportunity to do stuff with friends. Also, there are also plenty of other breaks (e.g. Thanksgiving, Spring Break) to do fun stuff somewhere else.

Suggestions/tips:

Try to enjoy your time. Of course school is important, but the things you can do with your new friends are once in a lifetime. New friends are easily made, and integrating into American life is not



that hard

**Conclusions**

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

I would definitely recommend UCSD as a destination. Life is not as hectic as it is in other places. I felt it was more a long vacation than an exchange abroad. Furthermore, you'll make new memories and friends. Even after your exchange, you have friends all over the world that you can visit.

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:




## UU Study Abroad Report Form

Family name:	xxx
First name:	xxx
Student number:	xxx
Faculty/college:	Utrecht University
Level:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
Name degree programme:	Law

Destination city & country	San Diego, United States
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	University of California Education Abroad Program University of California – San Diego
Purpose of exchange	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> study/courses <input type="checkbox"/> work placement <input type="checkbox"/> field work <input type="checkbox"/> other
Departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	05-01-2018
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	06-07-2018

### Preparation

#### Exchange/placement application process:

The application process for the University of California is different from the application process for any other destination/organisation. First there is the application for the UU Universiteitsbreed exchange, where you have to meet the requirements for this exchange program, such as a minimum GPA of 3.0 (minimaal 7 gemiddeld). After a while I heard I got accepted and I was super happy, but now the application process started within UCEAP. One of the hardest things for me was to choose where I wanted to go to in California. I had to make a list of my top three, and most likely you will be placed within your top 3. My first choice was San Diego, so I was very happy when I eventually heard I got placed at UC San Diego.

It definitely is quite the process and will take a lot more of preparation and time compared to other exchange application processes. But do not let that stop you from applying for this exchange program, it is more than worth it!

#### Counselling/support at home university:

The counselling and the support from the exchange office in Utrecht is just great. Ingrid always responded fast and if you want to have a little more time I would recommend to make an appointment or just go to the walk ins. I heard different stories about the counselling from my department at Utrecht University, but I could always ask anything to Ingrid, something I am very



greatful for because I always had a lot of questions.

Academic preparation:

For this exchange program it is first of all strictly necessary your GPA is a 3.0 or higher. This is a strict line, at the beginning of the year my GPA was 2.99 and I had to work really hard to get my GPA to 3.0.

Language preparation:

For this exchange I had to do a TOEFL test for my English. I thought this would be really difficult and I stressed a lot about the test, but in the end it is fine and for this exchange you do not need a very high score, almost everyone who takes it will get the right score. I did have some preparations for the test, like online tests on the internet, and that really helped me.

Finances:

Studying abroad is not cheap, but I would say it is definitely an investment for your career you're your personal growth. Going to the United States is more expensive than going on an exchange in Europe, because we do not get the Erasmus scholarship. Also, you are not allowed to work in the States as a student, only on campus in the dining halls. I had to put the loan of DUO to the maximum while I was abroad.

#### **Study/placement abroad period**

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

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

Transfer of credits:

#### **Student life**

Welcome/orientation programme:

In the first and second week of the start at your new University in California they will organize a lot of things to welcome you and to make you meet other people. Especially if you decide to live in the International House, where you will live with a lot of other exchange students from all over the world. The International House also organizes a lot of things during the whole semester.

Accommodation:

I lived in the International House at UCSD, where you will live on campus. I really wanted to live in iHouse because I heard good stories about it, but it is very popular so I would recommend taking your time for the application process. For iHouse at UCSD you will have to answer a couple questions in essay form. Living in iHouse was great, even though the rent is higher than the usual student rooms. This is because it is mandatory to buy dining dollars with your rent when you live on campus, with which you pay in the dining halls. Because of iHouse I immediately met a lot of people, so I would definitely choose it again.

Leisure/culture:



Before I went to San Diego, I never been to the United States. Of course I had my prejudices. But the people in California are very open minded which makes it really easy to speak to them and get to know a lot of people. The culture in San Diego has a lot of Mexican influences since it is so close to the border. If you love Mexican food San Diego is the place for you. Every Tuesday, for example, was Taco Tuesday, a well known concept in San Diego where the taco's are 1 or 2 dollars, so it is a very popular day to go out for the students in San Diego.

Suggestions/tips:

Start with the preparation for everything on time, especially the TOEFL test and for your VISA. That saves a lot of stress!

### **Conclusions**

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

I would definitely recommend going on an exchange to California. It was an amazing adventure to go to the other side of the world and being able to study at the University of California, an university which is very popular and highly regarded. The weather, the people, the food, everything was new for me and I learned so much, on academic and personal level.

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

Family name:	xxx
First name:	xxx
Student number:	xxx
Faculty/college:	Faculty of Social Sciences
Level:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
Name degree programme:	Psychology

Destination city & country	San Diego, California (USA)
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	University of California San Diego (UCSD)
Purpose of exchange	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> study/courses <input type="checkbox"/> work placement <input type="checkbox"/> field work <input type="checkbox"/> other
Departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	15-09-2017
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	02-02-2018

### Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

I did the UCEAP exchange program. This is a little bit different from the other programs UU offers since once you've selected this program, you still don't know what campus you will study at. During the first application process this feels kind of strange. On one hand you want to explore all the different options within the UCEAP program, but on the other hand you also want to explore other exchange universities. This results in a lot of orientation up front. But the more you orientate on all campuses and other programs, the better you'll be able to motivate your decision during this first part of the application process. I think that fact that you know a little bit of the destination and that you've actively thought it through, is the most important thing.

Counselling/support at home university:

We had 2 information sessions with the whole UCEAP group. The first one was all technicalities; what are the things you have to think about and what are the steps you'll have to undertake before you'll be accepted to the campus of your preference. The second one was more about sharing experiences. Two students who'd done the same program (at different campuses) shared their experiences about their campus, but also on the last things you had to take care of before being able to study in the US.

Academic preparation:

Applying for courses at UCSD was quite different from what I'm used to. There's very little



information about the courses beforehand and some courses have pre-requisites. These are criteria you have to meet before being able to enrol in the classes. Therefore I recommend looking at these classes at least a week before enrolment is open. You can check all the pre-requisites and you'll already know quite well which courses you'd like to take. Some of the people I met weren't able to enrol in all the courses they wanted because they were full. Therefore, if you have already figured everything out before the enrolment opens, you'll be able to apply right away which enlarges your chance of getting in to the courses you find most interesting.

Language preparation:

Was not necessary because English is easy for me.

Finances:

There are quite some financial requirements you have to meet. However, I am a US citizen and have a US passport, so therefore these things didn't apply to me.

### **Study/placement abroad period**

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

During the first week of classes you could see whether you liked the courses you chose or not so you could still add and drop classes. Not all courses are open for adding anymore (there have to be spots available of course) but you meet others who may have looked at completely different types of courses that you find interesting after all. That's convenient because you'll still be able to change your decisions.

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

They expect you to do a lot of preparational reading before class. One of my courses had 4 different books you were expected to read. That makes it kind of overwhelming in the beginning. However, once you've had your first test scored or your first paper, you find out that they're not as strict in grading as what you're used to. They do expect you to be prepared and to participate in discussions (sometimes participations is a part of your grade even). But as long as you pay attention, make sure you won't get behind too much and participate, you'll be one of the highest scoring students. Also, use the opportunities to receive extra credit. These extra credit assignments are usually not that hard and time consuming. Choose wisely and you'll profit from it easily.

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

There are a lot of institutions you can go to for a meeting whenever you have a question. Also they don't mind if you happen to choose the wrong institution. They understand and just forward you to where you should be.

Transfer of credits:

My credits were sent to Utrecht after 3 months so it took quite a while. If you depend on these credits to be transferred quickly because you want to graduate, my advice is to go to the office at your campus while you're still there. You could maybe ask for a hard copy right away so the transfer of the credits doesn't take as long. I did still manage to graduate at the end of February though, so not such a big deal afterwards. Although it probably would just save you a lot of stress.

### **Student life**

Welcome/orientation programme:

The first 2-3 weeks there's activities at campus everywhere. Also make sure you know what college



you are in. The specific colleges have their own activities plan which makes it fun to meet more people and have more things to do if you arrive early.

Accommodation:

I wasn't accepted to I-House so I came into the US without a home for my stay. But luckily I was able to find a room very quickly through Craigslist. There's a lot of possibilities, just prepare yourself to pay a lot more than what you're used to and also maybe to share a room. Average price for a single room is \$900-\$1000 a month. If you share, it's more do-able. All the facilities on campus are great. Lots of choice to eat, huge gym, very special library with everything you can think of and just walking around at campus gives you a warm feeling.

Leisure/culture:

I-House organises a lot! Just apply to all the Facebook groups and walk over Library Walk a lot. There's always people handing out flyers. Whenever you're not staying at I-House (like me), you can always experience most of the things by just hanging out with the people who are living there. You have to put in quite some effort in the beginning during orientation, but it definitely pays off! And besides the activities organised especially for exchange/international students, there's plenty of American college clichés to be found at and around campus that you can enjoy. From frat-parties to sports games.

Suggestions/tips:

Use Mint Sim for a cheap local phone plan. All the plans you can find at T-Mobile, AT&T, etc. are very expensive. Mint Sim has promotions if you pay more months up front and has good coverage. Also, you'll have free transportation through the whole area of San Diego with your student card! So no need to ask the home university for public transportation coverage.

**Conclusions**

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

Yes! Definitely! Studying abroad at UCSD makes the semester feel like a Californian vacation because of everything you can do and find at and around campus. But it also has an interesting range of courses. They combine fields of study and take approaches you wouldn't have thought of in the first place. Everyone at the university is so friendly and helpful and the city of San Diego itself is amazing!

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:

Open yourself up for everything and create your own perfect abroad experience. For me it was a dream come true and looking back I would have been happy to stay another quarter. It's such a privilege to be able to study at a very good university in the United States and experience student life a whole different way than from what you're used to. For anybody who has the chance, don't hesitate!





## UU Study Abroad Report Form

Faculty/college:	Humanities
Level:	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor
Name degree programme:	UCEAP program

Destination city & country	San Diego, America
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	University of California, San Diego
Purpose of exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> study/courses
Departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	04-01-2017
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	08-07-2017

### Preparation

#### Exchange/placement application process:

It is now already more than 1.5 years ago that I applied for my exchange. For my application I had to make a motivation letter, sent my grades, a financial plan, a study plan (with all the courses you are planning to take), and my curriculum vitae. After I got accepted in the UCEAP program, I had to do this all over again for three different universities within the program. You choose a top 3 of universities you want to go to and then have to make a study plan for all three of them. The program wants you to make your financial plan again and answer a few questions of what you expect and want to learn. Then about a couple of months later (a few months before you actually leave) you will hear which university you got accepted to and then the process of looking for a place to stay and all the preparations for your visa etc will begin!

#### Counselling/support at home university:

With all my questions I could email Ingrid Dijkstra, my exchange program coordinator. I could always reach out to her and ask every question I wanted to.

#### Academic preparation:

Just being enrolled in courses at Utrecht University. I didn't really need to do something academic other than the TOEFL-test. Maybe, your average at the moment of applying for the University of California has to be a 7 out of 10. That means a GPA of 3.0.

#### Language preparation:

To be able to get into the University of California, San Diego, I had to take the TOEFL-test and had to score more than 80 to get accepted.

#### Finances:

It is quite expensive to study in America. Only the health insurance itself is around the 700 euro's



each quarter. Everything is more expensive than in The Netherlands and it is important to save enough money so that you can enjoy every moment being here. I lived on Campus in a residence hall and food was included in my rent. Nevertheless, everything you want to buy is more expensive, shampoo, food etc. Be aware of an expensive time abroad! (But it is all so worth it!!)

### **Study/placement abroad period**

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

Be on time with enrolling in courses (there are timeslots available). Courses are full really fast and there is always a waitlist, but then you are not sure if you can actually enroll and they don't give priority to exchange students. If you want to enroll in level 100-200 courses, you have to fill in a form that you meet the prerequisites, it can take a few days for the faculty to answer this request. Further, it actually works the same as in The Netherlands. Be on time and have a look if you don't have overlapping timeslots or final exams.

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

The quality of education depends on the faculty, the courses and the professors. In my first quarter I had a really good professor, who inspired me and motivated me to study and develop myself. In my second quarter I have never been so bored during my classes. It can be very helpful to look up the courses beforehand (CAPE's) and see what other students wrote about the professors and the quality of the course.

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

There are multiple resources available on Campus.

Transfer of credits:

On the University of California, San Diego website (tritonlink), you can easily find how to transfer your transcript to your hometown university. It is free and you fill in the email address which you have to send it to. In general I got 5 ECTS for each course I took.

### **Student life**

Welcome/orientation programme:

The welcome/orientation programme was not really helpful. You will actually figure out everything yourself. The only thing it was good for is to meet new people if you haven't already met loads.

Accommodation:

I stayed on Campus in a residence hall. This hall is meant for freshman students who are 18/19 years old. I was definitely the oldest (23 years old), but had an amazing American experience, living in a triple room and get along with my 17 other suitemates. My roommate was a girl from New Zealand also 23 years old and we got along really well, which made my stay in a triple room a lot easier! The rest of our friends stayed in International-house (I-house) which was very close (3 minute walk) to where I lived. The reason why I stayed in a residence hall was because I was rejected for I-house, but still wanted to live on Campus. If I could do it over again, I might not live on Campus anymore, but in Pacific Beach (where everything happens). Although, if I wouldn't live on Campus I wouldn't have met all the amazing friends I made who did live in I-house.

Leisure/culture:

The first thing I experienced is America is bigger in every single aspect. Bigger toilets, bigger cars

(and more cars), bigger cities, bigger meals etc. Everyone loves to talk. If Americans hear an accent they are straight away really interested and want to know everything about you. Americans are super friendly and I never experienced a culture shock. San Diego is a city close to the border of Mexico and there is a lot of Mexican influence visible. Everywhere you go you will find Mexican restaurants with amazing Mexican food.

Most Dutch people are very direct. Americans are not used to it, but all my American friends loved my directness. I was afraid that this would be a big thing, but it turned out that it was only an eye opener for a lot of Americans.

Suggestions/tips:

Go to Spring Break in Cancun (Mexico) and you will have the typical American Spring Break experience!

### Conclusions

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

YES, definitely! I had an amazing time and would recommend everyone to study in San Diego. It is a beautiful city and you are so close to the border of Mexico. The university is close to the beach and a perfect spot to start surfing. San Diego is also a very diverse city, although the university exist for 80% of Asians, the city itself is very diverse!

I would not recommend studying in America if you are under 21. I-house in San Diego was mega strict and it was not possible to throw parties there or just being in big groups, so most of the times we head off at around 10 to go to Pacific Beach (where you have to be 21 to get in). The campus is very big and people were riding bikes and skateboarding to class. I always walked to my classes, and that is absolutely possible, but it can take some time to get there. In a 2 hours drive you are in Los Angeles and in 5 hours in Las Vegas, so actually everything is not even that spread out if you would think.

Live the real Californian life and go to San Diego, start surfing and enjoy every moment with all internationals and Americans around you!

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:

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