



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

	Info at the IO.
faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Media & Culture

destination city & country	Madison, United States of America
name university abroad	University of Wisconsin-Madison
start date	7/9/2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	22/5/2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

<b>PREPARATION</b>	
exchange application process	First, I had to select which 3 universities I wanted to apply to. Once I had made that decision from the UU university exchange website, I had to submit my Study Plan and get it signed by Luuk (my advisor). Then, I had to submit my Motivation Form where I had to explain why I selected those particular universities to apply to.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	The support at UU was great and very beneficial. I had some questions about the Study Plan and they were very helpful in guiding me on the process.
academic preparation	University of Wisconsin-Madison was my first choice and since it is a Top 10 school for my field of study (Media), I had to make sure my grades were solid. Hence, I did well in my courses at UU so that when I sent my transcript to Wisconsin, they would be impressed with my As and Bs.
language preparation	Thankfully, English is the main language spoken all over America so I did not have to worry about language preparation.
finances	Since I ended up staying in the US for an entire academic year, my parents had to send a bank letter and submit the proof of financial support on my behalf.

<b>STUDY ABROAD PERIOD</b>	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	My field is in Media, but my main interest within Media is Film. Hence, at Wisconsin-Madison, I took mainly film courses. I analysed Hollywood, Art films and Noir films in terms of narrative structure and genre hybridity. I also took a course in global cinema history where we studied how cinema began and how it has changed overtime in Asian, European and American countries. I also made some short films in my film production classes where we learned in great detail on how to use cameras, microphone booms and lighting kits. I also took a Screenwriting course where we learned the important basics of writing a script – at the end of the course, I produced a 25 page script for a short film. Outside of film, I also took a course in the history of US Media where we studied how radio, television and newspapers were used to spread news and perspectives



throughout US history – including WW2, the Watergate scandal and so on. I also studied the television industry and its growth from network to Netflix. Lastly, I also took a course in the Italian Renaissance where I studied Michelangelo, Raphael, Leonardo Da Vinci and other artists - studying their paintings, sculpture and architecture during that period. All these classes were very well organised. Although, the Renaissance course was a little tough to follow in the beginning as I was not used to studying paintings and buildings, and the meaning behind them but eventually I got the hang of it.

academic quality of education activities

The quality of education at Wisconsin-Madison was truly impeccable. The professors are so passionate about their job which created such a fun learning environment. I looked forward to my classes everyday – for example, it was exciting to learn how lighting kits were used on movie sets and getting to actually use them. For my film analysis classes, it was also fun to watch a new movie every week and analyse it in class the next day because whenever we watched a movie, it was always in the cinema room. We watched these films in 35mm, on the big screen, with classmates and our professor. The lectures for all my classes were always so entertaining because the professors were so in love with their craft – and my American classmates always asked a lot of thought-provoking questions which created an intellectually stimulating and fun learning space.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

UW-Madison was very helpful whenever I had any concerns about any aspects of the exchange program. They had a nice office space on campus and were always ready to answer any question I had.

transfer of credits

My credits from UW-Madison were super easy to transfer to UU. I simply had to request my transcript through the portal and ask UW-Madison to send my transcript electronically to Utrecht University. Once they had sent it to UU, I logged into Osiris and saw my transfer of credits marked as P (which means Pass). This is because UU transfers study abroad credits as either Pass or Fail.

**STUDENT LIFE**

welcome & orientation programme

The orientation for exchange students was super informative and fun. We had to meet at one of the fountains on campus by 11am. Once all exchange students and two tour guides had arrived, they told us a little bit about the university and its activities and clubs. Then we split into 2 groups and did a tour around the entire campus – the tour guide would stop at certain buildings on campus and tell us about it. I remember there was a dairy building where they make their own fresh milk and ice cream that we can try! The guide also introduced us to the college’s mascot – Bucky Badger! And as we walked, I got to know the other exchange students during the tour. After an hour, the tour ends at Union South, which is a building where you can study, get some lunch, have meetings, etc. I decided to get lunch with the exchange students I had just met. It was a cool way to end the orientation!

accommodation

During my exchange year, I stayed at The Regent Apartments at 1402 Regent Street. It was on campus – and only a 5-minute walk from the football stadium where our college football team plays during fall semester! I was very lucky to have friendly and sweet roommate and housemates! I stayed at an apartment for 4 girls. There were 2 bedrooms, so it was 2 girls per room. I ended up becoming good friends with my roommate so I didn’t mind sharing the space, but sometimes I did wish I had more privacy. We had a huge fridge though – definitely enough for 4, and we had a dishwasher. We also had a microwave, and laundry was free! And since it was on campus, the bars were walking distance. We also had lots of restaurants and cute cafes that were walking distance (like McDonalds and Subway). The cutest café on campus was coincidentally only a 2 minute



walk from my apartment – it’s called Leopold’s. It’s a bookstore and café – all in one, it’s super cozy and pretty inside! The apartment was a little expensive though – I paid about 800 dollars per month.

leisure & culture

UW-Madison is a college with tremendous school spirit! Their school activities definitely filled me with a lot of school spirit. During fall semester, the whole school would attend the football games at Camp Randall stadium every Saturday. Football game days were always so fun because, firstly, there would be tailgates before the game actually started. Tailgates are parties hosted at student houses or in parking lots where we would drink, play music and just have fun before we cheered for our players in the stadium! And on game days – whether it’s football, volleyball, basketball, hockey or any sport, we all wear red or white – those are UW-Madison’s school colours. I remember the very first football game I attended – it was so cool to see everyone dressed in red or white with the words “WISCONSIN” or “BADGERS” written on the clothing. Badgers are what the students at UW-Madison are called – so during games you’d say, “Go Badgers!” or if you’re meeting someone you can say, “I’m a Badger” and they’ll know you’re studying at UW-Madison. It was so fun to cheer for our players in a filled stadium of 80,000 students and alumni – all in red, along with our cheerleaders and our mascot Bucky Badger running around the stadium! Halloween was also part of the culture where everyone would dress up in scary costumes and attend parties! Homecoming was exciting too with a parade through the campus streets and fireworks at the end of the night. And if you’re into partying like I am, the party nights at UW-Madison are on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights – partying takes place at bars, clubs and frat houses. The bars and clubs were always fun because it was campus bars, so whenever we went out, we’d get excited to see our friends inside – and we always felt safe because there were only students at these bars and clubs. My favourite bar is Whiskeys because every Thursday night, you could get a drink for only 25 cents – it’s a “Thirsty Thursday” deal they have. However, sometimes I preferred house parties, so I went to fraternity parties. Those are super fun too because frat houses are like mansions – huge. So it was fun to dance to pop music while holding a beer in hand with my friends – plus the frat guys were really cute haha. During the spring semester, UW-Madison also has a Winter Carnival where they have activities all week! You can walk on the frozen Lake Mendota and also watch people do some skateboarding tricks among other cool activities! You can also watch the Ice Hockey Badgers play – they just won their 7<sup>th</sup> National Championship this year – so trust me, they’re really good! And if you’re a film lover like me, there is a cinema on campus where you can watch movies for free every Friday, Saturday and Sunday evening! I watched The Godfather, a Cary Grant film, Heat, and many other classic films! There are also two big parties during every spring semester – Lily’s Classic and the Mifflin Block Party. Lily’s Classic is towards the end of January where the whole school parties on the frozen lake. It is super cold but super fun! There’s drinks, people dancing and falling on ice (haha) and a DJ playing music. The Mifflin Block Party takes place sometime in April – it’s a block party, so the entire street of Mifflin is partying. It was so cool to experience this because every student house on the Mifflin block was partying, and the streets were so crowded that you could also party on the street if the houses were too full. If you google Mifflin or Lily’s, you’ll see a huge crowd in red because we wear our school clothing at both parties to show how proud we are to be Badgers!

suggestions/tips

Pack your warmest and thickest winter coats because Wisconsin gets extremely cold from end of October until end of March! On average, the winter temp is around -5 to -15 degree Celsius. My second tip is to search for accommodations immediately after you get accepted! Madison is the capital of Wisconsin and is the largest campus in Wisconsin so it is not easy to find a place to stay if you want to live on campus. I thought finding accommodation in Utrecht was tough.. until I was accepted to Madison. Students here find accommodation a year before, so please start looking right after you get accepted. The average price of student accommodation here is more expensive - around 600 to 900 dollars.

**CONCLUSIONS**



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

YES! I highly, highly recommend the University of Wisconsin-Madison to students who want to feel like they're in a movie. Seriously, being at UW-Madison made me feel like I was attending the colleges they had in movies. The professors there were always so enthusiastic and full of passion for what they do. I loved the feeling of being excited to attend classes every single day. Furthermore, there were always fun school activities to do – football games every Saturday, different frat parties every week, a cinema on campus where you can watch movies for free, chilling by the lake, etc. UW-Madison taught me the importance of school spirit – I loved that feeling of being proud to be a Badger, and I loved seeing other students feel proud to be a Badger too – whether it was through partying or at our weekly sports games or seeing other students wearing red or white Wisconsin Badger tops to classes – it was a loving atmosphere. I had the privilege of being a Badger for a year – and it was the best thing I ever did – and it could also be the best thing you ever do if you choose UW-Madison!

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I always knew that Americans were friendly in general, but I never knew that the Midwest is the friendliest region in the US. In the Midwest, Minnesota and Wisconsin are the friendliest states (Seriously, ask other Americans and they'll tell you about the 'Midwest nice'). People in Wisconsin are always smiling and are more than happy to help – whether it's the college professor, a man waiting in line in front of you, or a stranger on the street. Their friendliness kept me warm during the winter cold! Haha but seriously, being there, I felt like everyone was my friend.



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

	Contact info available at the IO.
faculty/college	Information and computing sciences
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Information science

destination city & country	Madison, United States
name university abroad	University of Wisconsin-Madison
start date	01 / 09 / 2022
end date	24 / 12 / 2022

### PREPARATION

#### exchange application process

The application process at UU was straightforward. The explanation on the website of UU was enough to figure out the process. However, applying at UW-Madison took some more work. A lot of paperwork is involved. Especially around requesting a visa at the US embassy. My first visa request was denied because I didn't provide all the information necessary. But eventually it all worked out and I got my visa on time.

#### counselling & support at Utrecht University

The counselling at UU was great. The exchange coordinator was always available for questions and answered very quickly. I eventually didn't need much help though because the application process wasn't too hard.

#### academic preparation

Academic preparation wasn't necessary. I followed all kinds of introductory courses without any prerequisites.

#### language preparation

Language preparation wasn't necessary. My level of English was enough to follow the courses easily.

#### finances

I saved up money for the exchange during the past couple of years. Expect to spend a lot of money. The US isn't cheap... I paid around 10k dollars for the entire semester. It was more than worth it though! Try to save a bit extra as well if you can. There are lots of cool trips to make. I went to Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and after the exchange ended, I went to California. All of those trips costed a lot of money but were so worth it. One tip for finances, lots of European debit cards (and credit cards as well) get declined. I used an international debit card (from Wise), which I highly recommend.

### STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

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

The study program was nice. I followed introductory courses in various topics. The workload was quite high though. Not necessarily the academic level, but more the amount of homework and little projects. However, each homework assignment is taken into account for your final grade. This makes that it is quite easy to obtain a high grade for the courses.

#### academic quality of education activities



Academic quality was quite comparable to UU. The professors are usually very good speakers, which made the lectures interesting to attend. Generally, the difficulty of the courses was doable.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
UW-Madison takes really good care of its exchange students. There is always someone available to ask questions to. I haven't used it that much though, because I simply didn't need it. They also organise lots of activities for exchange students, especially at the end of summer and beginning of the semester. It is an easy way to get to know lots of people.
transfer of credits
Fairly easy process. You just must order an official transcript and let UW-Madison send it to UU.

<b>STUDENT LIFE</b>
welcome & orientation programme
This is where UW-Madison excels. Their orientation program and the starting activities were amazing. They organize so much for exchange students. Everything was clearly explained, and you could always ask questions.
accommodation
It was hard to find an apartment. Eventually UW-Madison hooked me up with one just down the state capitol building. It was a lovely place where I met lots of students. I wouldn't recommend getting a full year lease and subletting it for the later semester. Lots of students had difficulty finding subtenants for their apartment. Going for a dorm in the first semester isn't an option because it is too full.
leisure & culture
It was amazing experiencing US college life. Lots of things to do in and around Madison. From American football games to frat-parties, there is always something to do. You can also make lots of trips. Chicago is just around the corner, and from there you can literally go anywhere.
suggestions/tips
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- You should definitely go visit the various sports games from UW-Madison. The atmosphere on game days is just something different. You can even get a season pass (and if you don't want it, you can easily sell it with a profit)</li><li>- Try to save as much money as possible. You can make so many trips in and around Wisconsin.</li><li>- You have a thirty-day grace period from your visa. I used it to travel in California, which I highly recommend.</li><li>- Just try to say yes to as many things as you can. It will bring you to so many cool situations.</li></ul>

<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
I highly recommend it if you want to experience American college life. It was such an amazing experience, and if you have the chance to go to UW-Madison, you should definitely take it.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
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## UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Natural Sciences
level	master's
name study programme	Climate Physics

destination city & country	Madison WI, USA
name university abroad	UW Madison
start date	16 / 01 / 2022
end date	23 / 05 / 2022

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	The application process was during covid and therefore a bit hectic. It was uncertain for a long time if I would be able to go on exchange at all. When finally I got permission from the UU, the process went smoothly.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	In general the support was helpful and present, but I think it was very busy in the months before leaving for the counsellors, causing some delay in email responses.
academic preparation	Deciding on courses to take at UW Madison was interesting because they have so many options. In the end, I was even able to switch after the classes had started. That was nice because it is hard to judge how a course is going to be at a different university.
language preparation	Not necessary in an English speaking country.
finances	I was not able to get any grants or money for the exchange, and there were a lot of costs in preparation (visa, healthcare etc) but in I managed to pay them all.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
study programme (content and organisational issues)	The choice of courses was very big, and it was unclear at first what the requirements were. Since I also did research I was allowed to take less courses and when that was organized it all went smoothly.
academic quality of education activities	Professors were much more involved and available to students which was nice. Courses were not harder than in NL but more work.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad	Support was very available at UW Madison, from exchange coordinators, teachers, mental health professionals etc. I did not end up needing much support.
transfer of credits	



I think everything worked out with my credits, I got approval of the courses while I was already in the USA and am waiting for the courses to be entered in Osiris.

## STUDENT LIFE

### welcome & orientation programme

I arrived a week before classes started and there was an orientation activity a few days before classes started. I would have liked more organized activities so that we could meet different people. I was mainly up to us to get together and organize things.

### accommodation

I found a room off campus using facebook. It seemed there were a lot of rooms available to sublease and I was happy with the room and roommates.

### leisure & culture

Since university sports are a big part of the culture, it was very fun to be part of that. Also, the university had a lot of cultural opportunities (free film showings, open mic nights, theatre).

### suggestions/tips

I think joining a club can be a fun way to meet Americans!

## CONCLUSIONS

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

UW Madison is a good university with a very active college life. Winter is very harsh though and there is not a lot to do in the area except Chicago, which is a fun city! So if you want to see more of the USA, maybe a different city could have more opportunities for short trips.

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

Be prepared for winter and make sure you can spend some extra time in summer, because that is the season that Madison really comes alive!



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

Faculty/college:	Betawetenschappen
Level:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
Name degree programme:	Twin

Destination city & country	Madison , United States of America
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	University of Wisconsin-Madison
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)	14/08/2015
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	20/01/2016

### Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

Lot of work, finding a good university took it's time. For application a lot of forms had to be filled-in, but none were difficult. The hardest part was writing a decent application letter and writing an essay for the application at Madison itself.

Counselling/support at home university:

Great, all my questions were answered in time and I had no problem getting the information I needed.

Academic preparation:

All I had to do was finish my first year of courses, and a bit more to make sure I could follow some of the courses abroad.

Language preparation:

None, I've spoken English since I was 2 years old.

Finances:

I had to save up for two years, around ten thousand euros in total. It could have been done cheaper, but I didn't want money to limit me in any way.

### Study/placement abroad period

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

Registering for courses was a bit of a hassle due to the really confusing course system at UW-Madison



Academic quality of education/placement activities:

Ranging from poor to great, really it just depends on what level course you take at what college.

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

Barely needed any, but some minor problems were solved within days after sending an email to the appropriate office.

Transfer of credits:

Not yet completed

### **Student life**

Welcome/orientation programme:

Quite boring for me, as I already knew everything they told us about. Was fun to meet some other international students, but that's it.

Accommodation:

I choose to arrange this completely on my own. I managed to get a room in a fraternity house at lake Mendota, which was pretty awesome. Rent was fair (around 500 a month), utilities were ok. Getting a dorm would have been the easiest option, but more boring than what I eventually choose to do.

Leisure/culture:

Great city, with great bars and great plays. I highly recommend going to one of their American Football games, the atmosphere is just something else!

Suggestions/tips:

Befriend some Americans in your classes/dorms. They will love to show you around and take you to parties, you'll never feel alone!

### **Conclusions**

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

Absolutely yes, it brings the best of America, while still keeping a bit of the European vibe (they even have proper bicycle lanes!). It's a city that lives off of student culture, which makes it very similar to Utrecht in many ways.

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:

No



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

Faculty/college:	Social science
Level:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
Name degree programme:	Sociology

Destination city & country	Madison Wisconsin, United States of America
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	University of Wisconsin Madison
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)	12-01-2015
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	13-06-2015

### Preparation

#### *Exchange/placement application process:*

The exchange/ placement process was long and stressful, but not too hard. Everything was really clear and written out for you. The waiting was the hard part, not knowing whether you were going to be accepted or not. But eventually it is all worth it of course!

#### *Counselling/support at home university:*

Even before I made the decision to go abroad there was much support from the university of Utrecht. People helped me decide where to go, what to do, and what the cost would be. When I started the application for the university and visa we had a pre-departure meeting which helped a lot and gave me a feeling of security that everything would be going to be okay.

I also went to my friends and family for support, they really helped me with making the emotional decisions. Going abroad means, going without knowing anybody and making new friends when you arrive. Furthermore the decisions about where to live, going to university



housing or search something yourself, are subjects I wanted to talk about with my friends and family.

*Language preparation/ academic preparation:*

Before I left I took an Academic English writing class at the university of Utrecht. In this course I learned the differences between American and British English. Because I went to the United States this was very helpful! In high school I learned British English, but in the United States they really wanted me to turn in papers in American English. I am very happy I took the course.

*Finances:*

Long before I left I started to think about finances. My visa required that I had to have a certain amount of money on my bank account. I looked this up very early, and because of that, they only notified the amount that people had to have the year before for a visa. So when I thought I had my finances right, I found out I had to have more money on my bank account than I had. This was of course very stressful, but it all worked out eventually.

**Study/placement abroad period**

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

Working out my study program was a lot of work, but it was also nice, because I could choose freely what courses I wanted to take. Sometimes I had to email the professor of a course, because the system of the host university will say that you don't have any credits. For some courses you needed a certain amount of credits or had to have followed specific courses. When I emailed the professors they both said it was okay for me to take the course, and they added me to the list. Again, it is a lot of work and I had to take my time for it, but it is all worth it! Eventually, I had the study program I wanted.

*Academic quality of education/placement activities:*

When the courses started I had to get used to the different style of teaching. It was not harder than in the Netherlands, but it was also not easier. Everything took a bit longer because I had to do everything in English, something I of course already knew, but I did not anticipate on the fact that it would take me longer to adjust to the English speaking, writing, and reading. Furthermore, I had the feeling that the university of Wisconsin Madison was more controlling and watching what I studied and whether I studied or not. For example, for most of my courses I had to turn in something about the readings for that week, every week. With that, in discussion lessons the TA asked people certain questions to check on us whether we read the



material for the week or not. In the beginning I thought this was really annoying and like high school, but later on it felt like the TAs and the professors really wanted me to learn and wanted to check whether they taught the material to fast or to slow. Overall the quality of the education was very good.

*Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:*

The university of Wisconsin Madison had an entire department focused on international students. They called it the ISS (International Student Service) and were located in one building. The office stayed open and people could walk in at office hours (9 till 4) and ask any questions they had. It felt like they really wanted to help you with anything. I didn't use the facility much, but it was very nice knowing that they were there.

*Transfer of credits:*

Did not happen yet. For all I know right now, the University of Wisconsin Madison will send a transcript to the University of Utrecht.

**Student life:** The student life was awesome in Madison! The city is a real student city with a big beautiful campus. The university has a lot of options to get in touch with people, or to join an association that you like. I joined the group BRIDGE; this is an association that connects foreign students with American students. When you're accepted you get a buddy, with whom you are supposed to meet up several times during the study abroad time. Furthermore they arrange all fun trips, like going to a waterpark, or go skiing in the winter, etc.

*Welcome/orientation programme:*

At the welcome/orientation program they made sure everybody had done the last part on the visa application, and told us about what to do, and what not to do. The first days they organized some informative things about subjects we needed to know about, and some relaxing things. For example, they figured that a lot of international students had to buy some supplies for in their rooms, or cooking supplies etc. The ISS arranged a bus to drive us to the nearest mall and back.

*Accommodation:*

I decided to live in student housing from the university. This was very overpriced. It was the easy way, but I would recommend other people to search for something in the city center (near state street). The easy part of university housing was that the bathrooms were cleaned for you and that you had a 30% discount at the dining halls. It is nice if you want to have the full American student experience, but very expensive.



Leisure/culture:

You may think the American culture is like the Dutch culture, but it's not. In the beginning I thought things were pretty similar, but I found out that this is not true. The 'American feeling' people have is a very interesting thing to see. Americans really feel American, and are very proud on the fact that they are American. Sometimes, I found out, they do not think that much about other countries. I had one example of someone who was really impressed that we used the same letters and numbers, or somebody who thought I was teasing him about the fact that the Dutch have their own language. He really believed we speak French, I hope I thought him something that day. But of course not everybody is like that, most of the people, especially the students in Madison know a lot about other countries.

Another thing that I found very fascinating is their food! Everything is very big! I never ordered something bigger than small, and most of the time I had leftovers! That is a nice thing about the big amounts you get in the restaurants, because you can take the leftovers with you. Don't feel ashamed for asking a box, it is weirder if you don't ask for a goody bag! Also, going out for dinner is really affordable. Don't feel afraid to go out for dinner with friends sometimes, it is really not that expensive. Only thing you should be really worried about is that vegetables and fruits are really expensive compared to the other meals you can get, and that the Americans put butter, salt and sugar in every meal! Watch your weight ;).

*Suggestions/tips:*

Enjoy every moment! It is over in a blink of an eye! Of course your main goal of going abroad is to study, but that doesn't mean you can't do any fun things! There are a lot of busses going to the big cities around Madison (Look for 'megabus', or 'Badgerbus', don't take 'Greyhound', their bus stops are in the middle of nowhere and you pay the difference to a taxi to pick you up). Don't hesitate to visit the main attractions of the city and surroundings, don't hesitate to rent a car and go to a big mall or state park! Study and enjoy!

**Conclusions**

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

Madison is a very awesome place to study! The people are nice and open-minded. The university is good and people are willing to help you anytime! The university of Wisconsin Madison, and the town are a really nice place to experience your study abroad!

*Do you have any additional advice or comments?:*

Don't stress to much about the costs, arrangements and waiting, because in the end,



**Universiteit Utrecht**

everything is worth it and you will look back at one of the best experience you can have while being a student!



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

Faculty/college:	Geesteswetenschappen
Level:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
Name degree programme:	History

Destination city & country	Madison, WI
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	University of Wisconsin-Madison
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)	12-01-2015
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	29-05-2015

### Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

In my opinion, the placement application process was the most work of all considering preparation. I started quiet early since the University of Wisconsin-Madison demanded an application earlier. I definitely recommend to start early, especially regarding the permission by the exchange coordinator and by getting a bank statement.

Counselling/support at home university:

I would have preferred some more support by the university and more information. It was a lot of unnecessary searching because things were not clear. For example when Madison decided to close their website for a while, no one at the university of Utrecht could tell me when it would reopen. Besides that, when the University of Wisconsin-Madison did reopen their website, they asked for another 2000, - dollar in money which should be available during my trip. I was again not informed of this. The pre-departure meeting was however very helpful.

Academic preparation:

On academic level I was well prepared. At first it was not completely to me how lectures and discussion sections in Madison would be, but by speaking to some former students I got a pretty good idea.

Language preparation:

I think language preparation really depends on the person and their English proficiency. In my opinion, if English is a problem you should practice off course. However, everyone including professors and TA's are very helpful and understanding about English not being you native language.



Finances:

Finances were my biggest problem. As I said before, it became clear at a late time that the University of Wisconsin-Madison preferred to have another 2000, - extra as a minimum amount. Besides that I think that the University of Utrecht should have stressed more the importance of currency/value changes! The Euro being dramatically low, caused a lot of financial problems!

**Study/placement abroad period**

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

The Study programme was clear. In my case there was a lot to choose from which made it hard sometimes, but all together the programme was well structured.

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

The Academic quality was the same as I experience at the University of Utrecht. The final grading however seems to be taken more lightly and so it is actually possible to get an A, while at the UU a 10 for history is practically impossible.

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

I didn't use much counselling/support from the institutions. Usually people around you at UW-Madison are more than willing to help you with all your problems. Besides that professors are always open for questions, after lectures and during office hours.

Transfer of credits:

My credits have not yet been transferred to the UU.

**Student life**

Welcome/orientation programme:

The welcome programme was exactly what you can expect from it. It was pretty long, but instructive and there was enough time to ask questions and talk to other international students. I think the welcome programme was the place where the first groups of people are being formed, or at least were you make your first friendships!

Accommodation:

Accommodation was a bit of a bummer! I signed a contract to live in one of the Residence Halls and although it was a nice and quiet neighbourhood at the lake (!), it was not the best accommodation one can have. Besides you have to be aware that the cost are extremely high, around 4000 dollar per semester! That's around 700 euro a month for 12m<sup>2</sup>. If I could do it again, I would have taken an apartment, since these are way nicer, cheaper and give you a better experience of the student life!

Leisure/culture:

Madison is a beautiful city, full of life and places to go. You can go to the lake (frozen from November until April), see museums, use one of the many free sport halls, see a basketball game, go grab a beer on state street, etc. Madison is besides that a pretty liberal city, meaning that it is open-minded. It is also has a big international community and many different organisations you can join, from fraternities and sororities to charities and sport organisations.

Suggestions/tips:

- If you want to have a nice quiet area, I definitely recommend living at Lakeshore in the Residence Halls. If you prefer the American student life then you should go to the



Residence Halls in Southeast or get an apartment in the city centre!

- If the snow is gone, get a bike! The city is really bike friendly and sometimes your classes can be pretty far away from each other!
- Get an American Bank account (go to UW CreditUnion)! Americans don't have a singular way of paying and so your usual bankcard may not always work and you don't want to be unable to buy people a drink!
- Pay close attention to currency changes. If the currency at home starts to drop you can lose a lot of money! In my case I lost more than 600, - dollars because of currency changes! Transfer you money in time!
- Get you groceries outside of town at stores like Target, Wallmart, Copps or Wholefoods! Stores inside of town are really expensive!
- I would definitely recommend to subscribe to BRIDGE. BRIDGE is a partner programme which links you to an American student. There is a selection procedure from the start making sure that you get the perfect match. BRIDGE organizes fun events like skiing, trip to Devils Lake, fancy dinners and much more.

### Conclusions

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

I would definitely recommend the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Besides the fact that everyone is very friendly, it is also a very inviting city. Not too big and not too small, Madison makes the perfect student city, incorporating both the potential to study very hard and to have fun!

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:

-



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

Faculty/college:	Humanities
Level:	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
Name degree programme:	Comparative Literary Studies

Destination city & country	Madison, The United States
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	UW-Madison
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)	31-08-2014
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	24-12-2014

### Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

The application process was less work than I expected, however not all aspects were entirely clear. Fortunately the employees at the international office were very helpful.

Counselling/support at home university:

As mentioned before, the employees at the international office were very helpful. Furthermore the supervisor of my masters program helped me as well.

Academic preparation:

I was well prepared for my semester abroad at UW-Madison. I did not have any trouble whatsoever in my courses – of course I was stimulated intellectually and offered new perspectives – but my academic knowledge gained in Utrecht was sufficient. In hindsight, it might have been better if I had chosen three instead of four courses in Madison (which would count for 30 ECTS for master students). Following four courses in one semester was a lot – in the end I am happy though, for I completed all courses with good marks.

Language preparation:

More than sufficient, partly because my current masters program is all in English.

Finances:

My financial planning was accurate for the most part – however I did need some extra money at the end of the semester. Luckily my parents were able to help (so it's nice to always have a backup plan!).

### Study/placement abroad period

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



At the beginning of planning my courses there was some uncertainty between myself and other students who were going to the US regarding how many courses we were supposed to take. In the end our supervisor made it clear that taking three courses would be sufficient. I chose to follow four courses, since I had to take one extra course in order to graduate in 2015 (I only completed seven out of eight courses in the previous year). In the end however these four courses count for 30 ECTS nevertheless (in stead of 37,5 or 40, which was what I had hoped for) – so luckily I chose on extra course here in Utrecht. So my advice for those other master students planning to go to the US or elsewhere: pick three courses – it's more than enough!

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

The quality of the courses I chose (one tutorial; two PhD courses and one regular masters course) was very high and comparable to the courses of my program here in Utrecht. In order to follow the courses I did have to send some emails to the departments in Madison/contact persons – but this was hardly any work.

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

Good, the international office was helpful. Furthermore my professors were super nice and helped me with a lot as well.

Transfer of credits:

Quite a bit of work, although when you are well prepared and have everything sorted out it is certainly doable. I made sure to include all my papers and course descriptions, together with my official transcript, when I handed in my dossier at the international office.

### **Student life**

Welcome/orientation programme:

The general welcoming afternoon was nice, although sometimes a bit boring and very American. This was, however, also very interesting and in some ways very typical for my further experience in Madison. The dean, who gave a speech, was very open but also quite dramatic in her statements (“You are not leaving your family behind, you now have a new ‘Badger’ family here in Madison” etc.). The other welcoming events were nice as well, especially because I got to experience these events with other international students.

Accommodation:

I stayed in a dorm, where I had a single room. While the costs are high I would certainly recommend living in a dorm. Not only because in Madison you get a 30% discount on all food on campus, but also because you truly get to experience American college life. I did not stay in a ‘freshmen dorm’ but in a ‘transfer house’, and so my housemates came from all over the US and some even came from other continents. Also, my housemates were generally older than in other dorms, which was nice. I made many American friends while living there, and it was a blast! Also, everything is arranged for you if you live in a dorm (you don’t have to buy furniture etc.).

Leisure/culture:

I truly experienced American culture: I went to football and baseball matches (especially football since this is a big college sport in Madison), enjoyed hiking across the lake, celebrated Thanksgiving in Chicago, hung out at the terrace (definitely worth checking out!!!), went to frat parties, got to experience American Indian culture, etc. Furthermore Madison offers all kinds of activities for



sporty people (a range of clubs) such as rugby, football, soccer, etc. I really loved the overall cultural in Madison, very laidback and liberal.

Suggestions/tips:

Choose three courses instead of four! And hang out at the terrace, make lots of American friends (they'll both debunk and reinforce American stereotypes), check out American Indian culture, go pre-gaming before the football game on Saturday, hang out at the terrace... I can go on and on. Madison is awesome.

### **Conclusions**

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

YES. Not only is Madison an awesome city, as mentioned before, UW-Madison also has excellent education and everything is clear and perfectly sorted out.

Do you have any additional advice or comments?



## UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	USE
Level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor
name degree programme	Economics & Business Economics

destination city & country	Madison, United States of America
name host institution and/or company/organization	University of Wisconsin – Madison
purpose of exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> study/courses
departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	23 / 08 / 2013
return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	23 / 12 / 2014

### Preparation

#### exchange/placement application process

It is a long process, and you will need some time to do all of the paperwork. I really recommend following the date guidelines of UU. Make sure you immediately send the necessary paperwork to UW when you get officially accepted for exchange by UU, because mail takes some time to reach Wisconsin. I also suggest going to the American Consulate as early as possible. Its best to book a flight after your visa is sent to you, and prices will skyrocket in the early months of summer. The consulate will also take your passport for a few days, and send it back to you with the visa, so make sure you do not go to the consulate a few days before going on vacation, in case you need your passport to travel.

#### counselling/support at home university

I did not really need too much help preparing, since the instructions in emails of both UU and UW were very clear. However, Miss Dijkstra, the exchange officer for North America here at UU, was very easy to reach and more than happy to help.

#### Academic preparation

I had a shortlist of courses I wished to follow in the US beforehand, because I was not sure what courses I would be able to actually follow in the US. About that later more. Therefore I could not really academically prepare for my courses, but luckily most of the courses which were on my list would perfectly complement courses I had previously done at UU.

#### language preparation

I grew up bilingual so I did not have a hard time following the courses. My study here in the Netherlands is also taught in English, so I did not have to adapt a lot. However, the university requires you to show some proof that your English level is sufficient. I did an advanced English test by the University of Cambridge while I was in high school, and showing this certificate was good enough for UW.

#### Finances

I worked a little bit before departing, but I did not earn as much money as I expected before going to Madison. Luckily my parents could borrow me some more money, which however meant that I could not travel at all while being in the United States, which was a shame. Make sure you bring a bag of money with you, because a lot of international students go on a roadtrip through the entire country after their semester has ended, and I deeply regretted that I could not join them!

#### study/placement abroad period



study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)
Like I said earlier, I had a shortlist of courses I wished to follow in the US beforehand, but signing up for economics courses and courses from the Business school were limited for international students. Therefore, I did not have a clear picture of what courses I was going to follow until arriving in Madison and talking to professors. If you really wish to follow one particular course, and you are not able to enrol when the registration opens, due to missing prerequisites or because exchange students may officially not enrol, go talk to the professor of the course in the first weeks! Chances are he/she will let you join his/her class anyway if you seem motivated.
academic quality of education/placement activities
UW Madison has one of the top 10 Business schools in the US and also has one of the better economic faculties, so you can imagine that the quality of education was astounding. What was really different compared to classes in the Netherlands was that students were more involved. Attendance was often required and homework was part of your grade. I would like to warn people for a curve which is in place at some courses though. Everything is way more competitive in the US so to speak, and scores at exam which would be decent here in the Netherlands (say, a 67/100) can still translate in a failing grade in the US if you were to be part of the lowest scorers.
counselling/support at host institution/organisation
When I was desperate to get a place to stay, I contacted Mr. Quackenbush, the exchange officer of IAP, which stands for International Academics Program. He kindly tried to help me find accommodation. Also, at the end of my semester I became more and more certain that I wanted to return for a second semester, and I went to visit him. Even though that it is really unusual, he still tried to help me find an extra spot for next year, which unfortunately did not work out. The point of my story is that you should not be afraid to ask the people of IAP something, because whatever your problem, Mr. Quackenbush and his colleagues will gladly assist you, which I would still like to thank them for.
transfer of credits
There are still some issues (which I am solely to blame for myself) with the transfer of credits, so I do not have them transferred yet. What I do know is that 3 credits in the US are generally converted to 6 ECTS here and 4 credit courses are converted to 8 ECTS.
<b>student life</b>
welcome/orientation programme
I suggest signing up for the barbeque of MFIS, which stands for Madison Friends of International Students! At this organization I also found my host parents. At the barbeque I immediately met other international (exchange) students, who are in the same situation you are in. I made many friends at the barbeque and other MFIS activities. UW also has its own orientation activities, where I met both international students and Americans. Furthermore there are several initiatives by Madison students themselves to make you acquainted with Madison and its way of life, and I encourage you to participate in as much as you can, especially in the first two weeks!
Accommodation
I lived with a host family for 2 weeks before finding a place to stay. I lived in the Towers at State Street, which is a great location, but the prices are fairly high. I could not stay any longer with my host parents however (my initial planned stay there was 3 nights!), so I decided to pay a little extra. I can really recommend living in the Saxony apartments however: I had quite some friends living there, and it was really affordable for a great location.
leisure/culture
Madison has a great nightlife, and according to the internet, one of the better college scenes of all the American universities. Be warned though: partying does not happen as big as in Utrecht. In Utrecht, every night of the week there is a place to go and to party, whereas in the US this is only the case on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. But on these days, students party big. House parties, frat parties, dorm parties, but also bars and a club: you can



experience it all in Madison. The best days are on Saturday, when the universities American Football team plays (I can really recommend you to go to watch their sport teams. American Football games are only in Fall though, and Basketball and Ice Hockey games mostly in Spring). Everyone starts partying as early as 7 in the morning and end at 2 at night.

Madison is situated next to a lake, which means renting a boat, windsurfing, and swimming are other leisure options. If you want your study abroad experience to be more about culture, I would advise you not to go to Madison, which is not as rich in culture as options in France or Italy. If you however, want a study abroad experience with a true American college life experience, good academics and sports, and the opportunity to travel a very diverse country, I can totally recommend UW-Madison.

suggestions/tips

Except for making sure you are active in the first weeks in Madison with going to orientation activities, meeting professors and exploring the city, I should really encourage you to make sure you either have a place to stay during Thanksgiving, or go travel in this extended weekend. Madison turns into a ghost town, since all the Students take the entire week of to go back and celebrate Thanksgiving with their family. And travel! I deeply regretted not being able to travel.

**Conclusions**

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

I cannot recommend Madison enough. I had the best 4 months of my life and I still wish I could go back every day. I am actually still trying to return one way or another, and therefore I should maybe not be so positive! I met friends over the entire world, some of them who turned out to be better friends than my friends in the Netherlands, I loved the academics, I loved the lifestyle, I loved every second about it.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Make sure you pack warm clothes, because it gets really cold at the end of Fall Semester/ at the beginning of Spring Semester! On Wisconsin!