



Faculty/college	School of Economics
Level (bachelor's or master's)	Bachelor's
Name study programme	Economics and Business Economics

Destination city & country	, California, United States
How did you travel to your destination?	By plane
Name university abroad	University of California, Santa Barbara
Start date	26 / 09 / 2024
End date	13 / 12 / 2024

You are requested to write on the following topics. Text boxes will expand automatically while typing!

PREPARATION	
How did you experience the exchange application process at Utrecht University?	
	The whole exchange application process was very clear from the very beginning. I remember attending an informational meeting about the exchange in general, which already provided a broader perspective about how the application process is going to look like step by step, which I found helpful. At every step of the process, I was able to meet with the study advisors who were always ready to help and explain uncertainties to me. I would say my experience was very smooth and intuitive.
How did you experience the counselling & support from the International Office?	
	Study advisors were very helpful and patient in answering all my questions and explaining various matters. They always answered my emails quickly and I also didn't have any troubles with booking appointments in person. The atmosphere was always positive; therefore, I didn't feel like I was left alone with all the application procedure.
Did you do any language preparation? If so, what did you do?	
	In my opinion persuading the bachelor's degree in English was enough of a preparation for the exchange. After already spending 2 years studying in English and having international friends I didn't have any troubles with language during my exchange.
How did you finance your exchange?	
	My parents mainly sponsored my exchange

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD	
How was the organisational process regarding your course registration?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was it difficult to find and/or change selected courses? • Can you say something about the language of instruction for the courses available? • Which courses did you end up taking?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everything was on the school's website; the course catalogue was available with all the descriptions and detailed information about the courses. The whole enrolment process was very intuitive, I was getting a lot of emails from the university with reminders of the deadlines as well as instructions on



how to enrol. The website was created in such a way that it was clear, and everything was visible, therefore any changes of the selected courses were available, and it could be done really quicky at any time (I was able to change one course even after the teaching period had already started). In case I had any questions or concerns I would contact the local study advisors, who were very helpful.

- Most of the courses my host university was offering were in English, as I was on the exchange in the United States. Apart from that, there were also courses offering to learn a different language (German, Spanish, Italian, etc.). All of my lecturers were native English speakers, therefore the quality of the lectures was high and it was very clear.
- During my exchange I had 4 courses:
 - auditing: (Developing an understanding of concepts and practices for audits of financial statements. Studying professional standards, ethics, and legal liability. The audit process is covered in-depth: planning, internal control, audit risk, materiality, evidence, program design, sampling, completing the audit, and reporting). The course was taught by an amazing lecturer with a lot of experience in auditing, that's why I really enjoyed all the lectures, as he would show us the more practical side of the matter. I found the course really interesting and even inspiring.
 - Law and ethics in accounting: (Provides a basic understanding of ethics and the legal framework within which U.S. businesses operate. Includes a broad overview of court procedures and in-depth coverage of selected topics including contracts, securities, and property rights). That was my favourite course, and one of the most interesting I have ever taken. I feel like the course was really well-structured and what follows, allowed us to gain a lot of important knowledge. Again, the lecturer did an amazing job in my opinion. Encouraging students to engage and participate.
 - Introduction to psychology: (An introduction to the subject matter and methods of psychology. Topics may include development, perception, memory, learning, cognition, affect, motivation, social behavior, personality, psychopathology and the physiological basis of behavior). I really enjoyed this course (it is not my major but I found it very interesting and expanding). As part of the course we had to participate in various psychological studies and research, which was a fun thing to experience.
 - Elementary German: (Beginning course in German. Student acquires the basic structure of the language, communicative skills, a limited general vocabulary, correct pronunciation, and an ability to read and understand simple cultural texts). I really enjoyed this course as it was something different than all of my other courses. It was a very interactive and dynamic course, which paid off as at the end we were able to have conversations and write in German.

How was the academic quality of the courses?

I enjoyed going to school a lot during my exchange, as the lectures and sections were always very interesting, engaging and beneficial. The academic quality was very high, and I could feel that the lecturers and the rest of the staff is very professional and experienced. The whole academic system was a little bit different than in the Netherlands, as we spent more time in class than studying that much on our own, which I think made it easier.

How did you experience the counselling & support from the host university?

I have contacted the counselling & support a few times and I have only had pleasant experiences. Whenever I asked for some help, they would find a solution immediately. We had a specific person assigned as our guide and would contact her first if we had any questions.

STUDENT LIFE

How was the welcome & orientation programme?

I was very lucky as the international office at my host university was very active and they were organising plenty of events to integrate all the international students. I attended a few events, and I always enjoyed it very much.



I met a lot of people there at the very beginning, who later turned out to be my close friends during the whole exchange. At the beginning the international office welcomed us very warmly, explained all the important matters and gave us a campus tour, which was followed by a welcome party. Later during the exchange, they would organize various events or trips at least once a month.

How was the process of finding housing? For example, was it difficult finding housing, how was the rent, was it what you expected?

I got a student housing, and I was living dorm. It was very easy to get, I just applied for it, then I got an email saying when my deadline for choosing the housing will be, and at the chosen day I got my room. I lived in a shared room in a dorm, which was fine after all, but I definitely had to adapt at first as this is not something I was used to. But after doing some research, the housing offered by university was the cheapest option there. Also, if you live in a student dorm, it comes with a meal pass, which is a pass for meals in a dining hall. There are few options concerning the number of meals per week to choose from and they also vary in price. The dining hall I was eating in had a really big selection of food and surprisingly, thanks to the variety there was always something new to eat and try.

Living in a dorm had a lot of pros as it was really social and people were friendly. There was always something to do and it also had a convenient location.

What did you do for leisure & culture?

I wanted to enjoy the exchange as much as possible, so I was trying all different kinds of activities. I was lucky enough to live in a place that's by the ocean and has mountains nearby. Obviously, I was spending a lot of time by the ocean; at the beach, having walks and picnics there, surfing, paddling, snorkelling and swimming by the sunset. I was also going to the mountains often for hikes (sunrise hike or a hot springs hike). Already being in a place that's so far away from home I was trying to travel and see different places as much as possible and I think I lived in a perfect place to do so. I have seen most of the West Coast of California and much more.

I met so many amazing people with whom I spent a lot of time with, watching sunsets and constantly having fun.

CONCLUSIONS

Would you recommend this university/destination to others? Please explain.

I've had the best time of my life on my exchange! I would definitely recommend this beautiful place, because being able to see the ocean from the university library is definitely something I've never experienced before. Amazing and friendly people, warm temperature and sun even during winter, the nature, and amazing opportunities all make it a perfect destination that I would recommend to everyone who wants to experience an amazing life adventure!

Do you have any additional advice or comments for students who would like to go here?

While you are already there, don't let any opportunity go. Enjoy as much as you can!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Social Sciences
level	Bachelor's
name study programme	Psychology

destination city & country	Santa Barbara, USA
name university abroad	UCSB
start date	15/ 09/ 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	15/ 01 / 2024 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was quite a lot of work. This is mainly because you need to go through two different processes. First, you need to apply for University of California (EAP). Then, after you get in, you need to make a top three of your favorite campuses (mine was 1. UCSB, 2. UCLA 3. UC Berkeley). Most of the people got in their first choice campus, which was nice.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

This was okay! We could always email Cathelijne if something was unclear. Also, as soon as you get accepted at University of California you are expected to email them if you have any questions. Although the application process could be confusing, they always responded fast and helped us out!

academic preparation

I didn't really prepare anything academically wise.

language preparation

I didn't do any language preparation as my Cambridge certificate was sufficient.

finances

Santa Barbara/ Goleta is a very expensive area! Make sure you save enough money before going to UCSB. I did a lot of traveling throughout and after the quarter (I went to Yosemite, Los Angeles, Santa Cruz, Monterey, Carmel by the Sea, San Diego, San Francisco, New York and Hawaii) and I think in the end, everything included, I spent about 12000 dollars. I think that was pretty average and there were even people who spent more money, so take that into account. Even if you decide not to travel it is smart to save at least 8000 dollars, because the 'daily life' is also expensive. For example, groceries are way more expensive than in Utrecht (5 dollars for a bread is normal) and the rent is high, especially if you live on Del Playa.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

My major is psychology, but because I already have all my credits in Utrecht I decided to follow some random fun courses. I did Elementary Spanish, Basic Astronomy and Sports & Exercise Psychology. The courses were well-organized and I especially liked the Spanish and Astronomy one. The sports and exercise psychology one was a bit boring, but still fine.



academic quality of education activities
I feel like the level of the courses was somewhat lower than in Utrecht, depending on the course. I think UCSB is more the vibe of a Dutch high school: they give a lot of homework and there are many deadlines, but the level is not that high. In the end I think I spent somewhat more time studying than in Utrecht, but the work I needed to do was easier (so I also got higher grades than in Utrecht).
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The counselling and support was very good. If I had a question I could just email them and normally they responded very fast.
transfer of credits
I am still in the process of transferring my credits so I cant see a lot about this, but it seems relatively easy.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
There was not a really extensive welcome & orientation programme. However, they did organize some activities in the first week, like a campus tour. This is a very good way to make friends and meet new people. I met most of my abroad friends through these activities, so I definitely recommend attending at least some of them!
accommodation
You need to find housing yourself, which can be hard. However, in my year everyone found housing easily, mainly through Facebook. There are two groups called 'UCSB housing' and 'IV housing for UCSB students', where people post when they are looking for subleasees. If you have the choice, try to live in a house on Del Playa Drive (if possible Ocean Side, the view is so pretty there, the sunset is beautiful). Del Playa is the main party street and also the street closest to the beach. It is also the most expensive street to live on in Isla Vista, but it is definitely worth it! Also, a good thing to know, although the university is called UC Santa Barbara, you will be living in Goleta (a smaller college town next to the beach) NOT in Santa Barbara. However, from Goleta, you can easily go to Santa Barbara ('downtown') by bus. The bus is free with your student access card.
leisure & culture
The culture in America is somewhat different than in The Netherlands. I think Americans are more welcoming and open to internationals than we are, but they can also seem a little 'fake' at times. However, overall they are very kind and interested and I became very good friends with some of my housemates, but I think I also got lucky as this was definitely not the case for everyone. Furthermore, Americans use venmo a lot to transfer money to each other (for example when you split an uber), so it's smart to open an American bankaccount. Most of us opened one at Chase Bank (this is free). It was very easy since there is a Chase bank located in the center of Goleta. Also, UCSB really is a party school, so there are a lot of parties every weekend. On Thursday, most people go downtown (to Santa Barbara), but you need to be 21+. However, for the house parties at the weekends, it doesn't matter how old you are. The weekend parties are at houses on Del Playa or at the frats (which are a little bit farther away) and most of the time you can just go in. I really miss the parties already, they are so cool!
suggestions/tips
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Find housing on Del Playa Drive- Go to the introductory activities- Open an American bank account at Chase Bank



- For your insurance, waive the UCSB insurance (that one is very expensive) and take the ISO one instead. UCSB will accept ISO as well. For your travel insurance, you can take the Allianz Globetrotter one.
- Join excursion club, you can use their surfboards/ wetsuits/ backpacks/ tents etc for only 30 dollars per quarter (if I remember correctly). Also, they have nice activities that you can sign up for like hikes, surfing lessons and little trips (I went bungeejumping ☺). For some of the activities you need to pay extra (like the bungeejumping one), but most of them are free! DON'T join the Adventure program one, that one is expensive.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend UC Santa Barbara. I loved it so much. They have the beach, crazy parties, great weather and such nice people, who doesn't want that?

do you have any additional advice or comments?

GO TO UCSB



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Santa Barbara, California
name university abroad	UC Santa Barbara
start date	09 / 01 / 2023
end date	16 / 06 / 2023

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	<p>Application for the UC was not that difficult. From what I remember (it's a while ago already), it is a motivation letter and some other stuff like choosing the classes. You can still change the classes later, but it is for getting a better view on how your exchange is going to look like. Then if you're in you must choose a top 3 of UC's. In my semester everybody got their number 1 choice, but we were only with 4 people.</p> <p>The Visa application is another story. This can be quite stressful. Besides having to fill in huge questionnaires, it is mostly a lot of waiting on other parties. I got my Visa a week before I left, so expect to be stressed out about it but one way or another it usually works out.</p>
counselling & support at Utrecht University	<p>The support from the International Office coordinator for the application process was good. She was always ready to help with any question I had, and I had a lot. Also, in my year they added an extra meeting, which was nice. In this way I got to know the people that went to California in the same semester, and we were able to help each other with the application process.</p>
academic preparation	-
language preparation	<p>You need to show that your English is good enough. I did the Duolingo test which was convenient from home and relatively cheap.</p>
finances	<p>I started saving money a while in advance. You can find on the site of UC reciprocity how much is recommended/necessary to save. For UCSB this was around 13.000 dollar for 2 quarters. Life in California is really expensive, so I would definitely be sure to have this amount of money when you are there. Expect housing to be between 700 – 1200 dollar a month. I continued to receive money from DUO, this is possible since you're still enrolled at the UU. You can also choose to get money instead of studentenreisproduct (OV). Then there will be half a year subtracted from the 7 years of studentenreisproduct.</p>



We were not eligible for the Erasmusbeurs, so I googled and found the K.F. Hein Fonds. I applied and got a part of the scholarship.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

At the beginning of every quarter, you can enrol in classes. Not everybody can do this at the same time, there are passes. You can see in GOLD which pass you are in and when it opens. Beforehand you can look at which classes there are and which ones you are eligible for. Some classes are only open for that specific major. You can see this all in GOLD. The classes fill up very fast so be on time. But it happens a lot that you get waitlisted. No worries, just go to the class and talk to the professor. In the first week a lot of people drop out.

academic quality of education activities

My major is mathematics. I did one math class per quarter because I did not need more for my bachelor. I expected the American education to be easier, like I heard from a lot of people, but this was not per se the case for math. Like at the UU, you get a weekly assignment which consists of a few questions and is at the same level of difficulty. You can sometimes spend a day or more on the assignment. But the assignments were the "only" thing you had to do, and the material of the exams were these assignments. If you made all the assignments and you understood it, it was easy to get a high grade.

Furthermore, I took Intro Astronomy, Geography of Surfing & Intro Painting. These were easy and a lot of fun. Although painting could be time consuming, I enjoyed it very much.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I did not really use this, but the EAP person was Emily. You could always make an appointment to speak to her if you needed that.

transfer of credits

I did not hear from the UU yet about this.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

In the first week there is an EAP meeting for all new EAP students. GO THERE!!! Here is where I met all my friends.

accommodation

I found a house with 3 housemates on a FB group. I would advise to find an accommodation in Isla Vista (the neighbourhood right next to campus). Usually living on campus is a big thing in America but at UCSB living in IV is where you want to be. In this neighbourhood are almost only students of UCSB living. Students that live on campus are mostly first and second years, because they get priority. These are usually 18- and 19-year-olds.

leisure & culture

There is sooooo much to do at UCSB. There are a million clubs you can join. UCSB is located between the ocean and mountains, so you can go surfing, swimming, hiking etc.

Next to spending a lot of time in the library doing math (not recommended, take easy classes if you have the choice), I spent my days surfing, playing beach volleyball, doing yoga and I planned a lot of weekend trips with my friends. If you choose UCSB for the surf, note that there are practically no waves in spring/summer. Winter is good and I don't know about fall, probably fine.



Thursday night is student party night downtown. There are cheap party buses going from IV. But every night from Thursday – Saturday there is stuff to do in IV too, like parties and live bands. There actually stuff to do every night of the week if you want to.

Note that UCSB is known in California for being a party school. The parties are indeed nice, but there is so much more than just parties.

suggestions/tips

One of the pros of UCSB is that it's flat and everything is close enough so you can take the bike. Although getting a car is still nice if you want to go hiking or surfing elsewhere.

If you can have your Monday and/or Friday off, I would recommend that. In that way you can make longer weekend trips, because sometimes you have to drive quite a bit.

Trip recommendations: San Francisco, San Diego, Yosemite, Big Sur, Las Vegas, LA. You can also go skiing in Mammoth.

If you are interested in trips, join the Excursion Club! They do cheap excursions and it's a great way to make new friends.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes!! UCSB has such a nice community feeling. Since it's so small, you meet the people you know quite often, and it makes you feel at home.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Please contact me if you have any other questions, I'd love to talk about it.



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Santa Barbara, United States
name university abroad	University of California, Santa Barbara
start date	12/ 09 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	10/ 12/ 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	<p>Applying for studying abroad is pretty simple; it is the paperwork that can get messy. I sent in my top 3, UC was my third choice. I sent another top 3 of UC schools and got into UCSB (my 2nd choice). In this process you have to write a motivation letter and send same papers to the UC portal. They will decide your UC. This was the easy part.</p> <p>My biggest obstacle was getting a VISA appointment. Start with this process AS SOON AS you get your SEVIS number from UC. So did I, but because of the pandemic the consulate in Amsterdam was full. I heard they opened up space so I made an appointment four months later, hoping I could squeeze in if a time slot opened. This never happened and I wasted 120 euros. Next try was the consulate in Frankfurt. I made an appointment, 5 days before my appointment they cancelled my appointment, no refund. My flight was planned in two weeks so I was stressing hard. Paris had plenty of spots so I went there. Whenever you apply for a VISA abroad, they cannot send your passport back so you have to go back to the place of the appointment (Paris in my case). In total, I spent 360 euros + the transportation costs to Paris to get a visa, ridiculous.</p> <p>My advice, start with the VISA as soon as you have your SEVIS ID. There is a website where you can see every consulate's first available appointment, use that.</p>
counselling & support at Utrecht University	<p>The international office helped us a lot. I felt like they could guide us more regarding the VISA process, but because of the pandemic they had to improvise too.</p>
academic preparation	<p>Through UCSB Gold you can choose courses, however EAP students have a delayed registration period, so a lot of courses are full. Read carefully if you actually can apply for the course, some courses have prerequisites. Luckily, I had the freedom to choose any course I wanted because I had enough ECTS at UU. If you are in this position too, make sure you look at the time slots of the course. If you want to have a lot of free time, be smart in choosing a schedule. I was free on Fridays and my lectures times were relaxed too. I made a small list of courses that I wanted to follow, from best to worse. I highly recommend this. I will explain why in the part of <i>study programme</i>. After making this list I simply chose the courses that were available and the highest on my list. If I had a question about the course I emailed the professor.</p>
language preparation	<p>During high school I did bilingual education. My IB score was good enough as a proof English proficiency.</p>



finances

This depends on your financial situation. I knew I was going to study abroad during my bachelor, so I started saving and working early on. I also used DUO to save more. Make sure you temporarily disable your student OV for your period abroad to get something like 93 euros a month. I had saved about 10000 euros before I left. Don't worry, I know people who spent way less. It just depends on travel and how much you are willing to spend. I wanted to enjoy myself as much as possible (travel, luxury etc.) so I spent money like I was Jeff Bezos. At the end of the trip, I think I spent 12-13k euros. However, I travelled with my friends after the quarter so that makes a big difference.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

At UCSB you have something that is called "crashing courses". This is not something we have at UU. The first few weeks are a mess. If a course is full, you can try getting into the course by showing up the first few lessons. The professor will take notes and (hopefully) give you an access code. I crashed the courses that were on top of my list. Luckily, I was able to get into three new courses and I dropped my previous courses. I chose to follow the minimum of 12 units so I had a lot of free time.

academic quality of education activities

My lectures were amazing, I did two sports courses and one business course (ESS 130 &160, TMP 122). The sports courses were focused on the NFL, which was like a dream to me. The Entrepreneurship course was a lot group work, the professor was really helpful and he made the course very entertaining. The biggest difference at UCSB was the interactivity of the lectures. Students were encouraged to speak up and everybody contributes to the class discussion. The level was not harder than UU. Every school day I spent like 1 to 2 hours at the library, so when I came home I was completely free. UCSB gives you low-level weekly assignments, at UU you can sit back more but the exam is harder in my opinion.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I did not have any contact with UU while I was abroad.

transfer of credits

Not done yet.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

There was no real welcome or orientation programme. In the first few weeks there were some social activities like the Rec fest where you find out about clubs and sports. There was an EAP facebook group made by UCSB that held some events. These events were very simple, they made sure there was food and invited all EAP students. I went to one event and met some new internationals. It is really easy to make friends at UCSB, you talk and exchange Instagram or whatever. Everybody is very chill so don't be afraid to talk to people.

accommodation

In my opinion, you will get the most of out your experience if you manage to find a room in Isla Vista (IV). This is a small town literally right next to campus where everything happens. The main way to find a room in IV is through FB groups like UCSB housing



I did everything I could but due to the housing crisis I could not find a room in IV. I signed up for university housing as a backup, luckily they placed me in an beautiful apartment. The university apartments are very nice too, the only con is the distance to campus. It was like 8 min bike ride to campus, which is nothing compared to Utrecht. I lived in Sierra Madre, I had amazing roommates and the apartment was very new. In my opinion, the people who live in the university apartments are more laid-back while the people in IV like to party more etc. Again, make sure you start looking early. If you are into partying, try to get a room close to Del Playa (DP). Try to live on DP if you really like parties, every weekend it is a chaos there.

Also, it is rare to have a room to yourself at UCSB. I lived in a triple, so I shared my room with two other boys. This was really not bad at all. We went out to eat and talked about our personal preferences regarding the room. Just make sure you communicate about everything.

leisure & culture

I was never bored. The thing I absolutely love about the US is the huge involvement of sports. UCSB offers every type of sports, so make sure you check it out. Try out new things while you are there, go surfing, hiking, partying, make trips etc. Group up with other international students to make trips, SB is surrounded by amazing places. I tried planning trips with Americans but I had way more success with internationals. Rent a car and go plan a trip. I went to LA, SF, Yosemite, Vegas, San Diego, SLO, Denver and some other small places. I know students who went on trips every weekend. It is just a matter of preference. Personally, I went to the US to get the American college experience, so I did not travel a lot during my time at UCSB. If you have other goals like exploring the US, go find a group and travel. Most of the internationals are down to go somewhere. If you are into partying, Thursdays a lot of students go downtown for clubs. There is party bus that goes from IV to downtown SB every Thursday night. Fridays and Saturdays DP is crowded with crazy house parties. As a guy you might have some difficulties getting in but that is the way the game is played there. After a while your social circle will provide you plenty of parties. Americans are very friendly and social people. Although it might seem a little fake sometimes, small talk is everywhere. After a while you will get used to talking to random people.

suggestions/tips

Go out there and make the most out of your experience. Try out new things, meet new people, travel to big cities etc. Time will FLY by and UCSB is very special place.

Also,

Get an American bank account. The only reason you get this card is for Venmo (tikkie). This made it easy to send and receive money from my American friends.

Get a room in IV

Get ISO instead of UCSB insurance to save some money.

Join a club or sports team.

If you are into sports, go in the fall semester. This allows you to go to a NFL or big college game. These games are insane. If you are into basketball, this does not matter.

Rent a car and go on trips.

Buy a used bike and make sure you U-lock it everywhere

Use YouTube to learn more about universities you are interested in. The internet is full of information about college experiences.

CONCLUSIONS

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



1000%. I never thought I would go to UCSB, it was never on my radar because they have no football program (very important to me). Looking back, I honestly think this might be the best school I could have chosen. I had the best time of my life. UCSB is very social school where people know how to enjoy life. They study hard but know how to have fun. It felt like I was on a resort with beautiful weather all the time. UCSB's location is ideal for traveling too.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Go Gauchos!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Santa Barbara, USA
name university abroad	University of California, Santa Barbara
start date	15 / 09 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	20 / 12 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

This actually was a lot more work than expected. Make sure you have all the paperwork and visa preparations fixed in time, otherwise you're gonna make it harder on yourself. Please don't underestimate the preparation work for the application! Also, I communicated with other students going to UCSB during that period who also had to arrange all the things. This really helped cause there was always someone who knew how to fix something.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Cathelijne really helped us in our preparation. We received a lot of emails explaining how to arrange everything, but at some point it was a little too much for me and I didn't know where to start anymore. At that point don't panic and just make a list of everything you have to get done and just fix them on at a time. This really helped me getting an overview of everything I had to get done.

academic preparation

Academic-wise there wasn't a lot I had to do. I picked some random courses at UCSB for which I didn't really need any academic preparation.

language preparation

You have to prove that your English is at some level. If you haven't done the TOEFL or IELTS then you should do them or another one. I did the Duolingo test because it is way cheaper than the ones above. I think most people should be fine with their English level, so don't worry too much about that! As soon as you're in the US, you start transforming to speaking English and even thinking in English and your English will improve pretty fast.

finances

I saved a lot of money before going to the US, cause you don't want to do a job or anything while you're there. I think, in total with travelling after the academic quarter, I spend around \$9000. You can definitely spend less than that though!

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I did three random courses which all seemed really interesting to me; Health & Wellbeing, Business & Environment and Math 2A. The content of the courses was really interesting! Only math was a little too easy,



since in the Netherlands we already discuss the topics they taught in this course in fourth grade of high school. The other two courses were so diverse and I could definitely recommend both to everyone who is interested in mental health and in business&environment.

academic quality of education activities

UCSB is one of the best public universities in the US. The first day of school I saw why. The teachers were so enthusiast about their subjects and really got you listening to them. During the quarter, I learned a lot in all three of my courses, which were very different. Just pick a subject you're interested in and you will probably love the course and learn a lot.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

The counselling and support from the UU was really good! They made sure everyone could go on exchange to their preferred option. Even if you don't get your first or second option (UCSB was mv third), please give the other university a chance and you will still have the best time.

transfer of credits

I'm currently still in the process of transferring my credits. You can request an official transcript of your grades at UCSB for \$16 and they will email it to you the same day. Now I just have to send it to the board of commissioners and then they will upload it to Osiris and add it to my UU list of grades.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

Due to covid, the orientation program was a little shorter than usual. Still there were some activities (especially for first year students and exchange/international students). I think this could be a really good way to get to know other international students, but personally I didn't go there myself. I already had a group of Dutch friends and this group kept expanding with German, Swedish and other Dutch people. In addition, I had my housemates who have become really good friends. In the first days I really wanted to invest in them so those are the main reasons I didn't attend the activities organized my UCSB.

accommodation

I had the perfect house, it was located on the east side of IV on DP, which means I had a house with sea-view, on the party street of IV and it was super close to campus. One big tip (cause I had no idea before I got to UCSB) everyone wants to live in IV (Isla Vista, the student town next to campus)!!!! It doesn't reaaally matter where, as soon as you have a spot in IV, then you're good. In the end everyone owns a bike and you can bike anywhere in IV. The best spots in IV are definitely on DP (Del Playa Drive), which is the street next to the beach. Every weekend all the parties are at houses on this street, so if you like partying, go here! I got my house through facebook (UCSB HOUSING or IV Housing for UCSB Students). Make sure you join the group and look on it way before you go, I got my house a couple of months before I went on exchange. When you're reading this, and already know you will be going to UCSB, just join right away!! Also, some of my friends posted about themselves looking for housing and a lot of them actually got responses and found housing through this, so don't hesitate and just post yourself. One last tip, there are some scams on facebook, so please be careful before paying anything. For example, call with the person renting the room before, ask for the location, for pictures and that kind of stuff. Good luck!

leisure & culture

UCSB has a lot of sport teams you can join. I joined the field hockey team the first week, but quickly decided that I wanted to quit. As an exchange student you want to make to most of your time there, and I didn't want to spend a minute doing something I could do in the Netherlands (like field hockey). Most teams train 4/5 days a week and have a game on the weekend, so it takes some time and effort, but some of my friends made a lot of friends in sport teams! I decided to join the excursion club and I can recommend everyone to join it!! It is



only 30\$ per quarter and you can rent almost anything for outside sports (surfboards, sups, camping gear, canoes etc etc etc). They are located really close to the beach and always open. Adventure program, on the other hand, is twice as expensive, closed really often, and they are located on a beach on campus that is less pretty, way smaller and has almost no waves. So join excursion club and NOT adventure program! (I made the same mistake and ended up joining excursion club anyway, so trust me do not join adventure program).

Also, please do trips! We did one every other weekend and they were so much fun. We did San Francisco, Los Angeles, Yosemite, San Diego and Las Vegas. After finals, I did an RV tour to the national parks (death valley, zion national park, Bryce canyon and grand canyon) and it was amazing! After that we went to Hawaii as closing of our exchange. I did the trips with other exchange students since they all want to make the best of their time in the US, you will notice that you automatically hang out and do trips with other exchange students.

Lastly, but maybe most importantly, UCSB is known for their partying life and they definitely live up to that name. The weekends at UCSB were crazy and even during the week there is a party almost every night if you want one. On Thursdays we always went downtown (to Santa Barbara, which is half an hour drive from IV) to the club Wildcat. Every Thursday all exchange students would be there, and we would have the best (drama-filled) nights. There are other really cool clubs downtown such as backstage and sharkeez. For downtown you do have to be 21+, but I was 20 the first two months and managed to get in with my friends' passport, who used her own ID. But please be careful, cops in the US are not the most tolerant.

On Fridays and Saturdays everyone would go out in IV, where no one cares about your age. I've had the craziest houseparties there and people there get so so drunk. Do not prepare for drinking wine or beer, cause it is only shots and mix drinks at UCSB. There are also a lot of daygers (parties during the day), which are the most fun. They are at houses with big decks over the ocean and people are so happy and crazy, I miss these parties already. There is a lot more to say about UCSB, you're gonna have the best time and I'm jealous that you are still going there.

suggestions/tips

Get a bike! Everything is easier on a bike and a lot of people have one. There is a bike shop in IV but students also sell their bikes on facebook often (Free & For Sale (UCSB)).

Go watch sunset at sands beach (5/10 minutes by bike and 20/30 minutes walk, depending on where in IV you live).

Join excursion club and not adventure program!

Scan facebook groups for housing on time!! A couple months before you go preferably.

Bring converter plugs, cause the US has other outlets and the converters are hard to get over there.

CONCLUSIONS

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

YES, for all the reasons above. It is a good academic school and the party/social life is amazing. The best of both worlds! + it is located next to the ocean and the weather is really good.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

GO TO UCSB.