



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

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

PREPARATION	
exchange application process	Application was quite easy. You just had to upload some forms and write a motivation letter. After that, it was mostly waiting for YU to reply and accept.
counselling & support at Utrecht University	I e-mailed a lot with the exchange office and they helped me quickly and nicely.
academic preparation	I did not prepare at all for the courses at YU. I read that the level is somewhat lower and because I already finished my mandatory law courses, I was able to choose fun and interesting courses at YU which made it easier for me to stay concentrated as well. I chose 5 3-credit courses, one of which would not give me credits for my Dutch bachelor. Five courses is a lot though, so if you can, be sure to choose less. I ended up dropping the fifth course in the last weeks. Three of my courses were first-year level and one was second year, so I had it quite easy in comparison to my friends. Doing five third-year courses is near to impossible – you won't be able to enjoy Toronto!
language preparation	I did not prepare. I got my Cambridge certificate in 2015 and included that one but it wasn't even necessary. It was really easy for me, but if you struggle with English, I would advise you to practice a bit before you go!
finances	I saved money in advance big time, because (as you probably know) life is expensive in Toronto. I didn't had the mealplan which meant I could cook on my own and I saved a lot of money doing that. I bought a coat and other necessities at a thrift shop, thrift shops and vintage clothes are really big there. When going on trips, try to go with many people so you can split AirBNBs, car rent and everything else. I downloaded all my books on my e-reader, so I saved a lot of money that way too. You can buy cheap souvenirs in Chinatown, and most of the times when you eat out, the portions are so big you can ask for a container and bring it with you and eat it the next day. Also, tipping is a big thing there too and taxes are not included in the price, so those come on top of your purchase as well.

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



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

academic quality of education activities

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

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

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

transfer of credits

I don't know yet.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

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

accommodation

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

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

leisure & culture

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



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

suggestions/tips

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

CONCLUSIONS

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

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

do you have any additional advice or comments?



Universiteit Utrecht

Best time of my life!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

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

PREPARATION

exchange application process

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

counselling & support at Utrecht University

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

academic preparation

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

language preparation

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

finances

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

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

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

academic quality of education activities

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

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

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



questions.

transfer of credits

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

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

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

accommodation

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

leisure & culture

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

suggestions/tips

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

CONCLUSIONS

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

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

do you have any additional advice or comments?

no



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

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

Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

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

Counselling/support at home university:

Academic preparation:

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

Language preparation:

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

Finances:

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



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

Study/placement abroad period

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

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

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

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

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

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

Transfer of credits:

Still in procedure

Student life

Welcome/orientation programme:

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

Accommodation:

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



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

Leisure/culture:

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

Suggestions/tips:

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

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

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

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:

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



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

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

You are requested to write on the following topics.

Text boxes will expand automatically while typing.

Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

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

Counselling/support at home university:

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

Academic preparation:

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

Language preparation:

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

Finances:

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

Study/placement abroad period

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

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



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

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

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

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

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

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

Transfer of credits:

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

Student life

Welcome/orientation programme:

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

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

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

Accommodation:

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



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

Leisure/culture:

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

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

Suggestions/tips:

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

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

Conclusions

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

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

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:

-