University College Utrecht (UCU) is the International Honors College of University Utrecht, the Netherlands. It was founded in 1998 as the first academic institution in the Netherlands offering a 3-year Liberal Arts & Sciences (BA and BSc) undergraduate education to a highly selected student body. UCU admits approximately 220 students per year, 50% of whom are non-Dutch. Our graduates are readily accepted by prestigious Master and PhD programs in the Netherlands and elsewhere.

For more details about UCU and its curriculum, see [http://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/university-college-utrecht](http://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/university-college-utrecht)
ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The UCU East Africa Program runs since 2008, when Dr. Caroline Archambault, then teaching a course in Development studies, proposed the idea to put theory into practice by travelling with a group of students to East Africa. Since that pilot year, the program has matured into its present, highly successful form. It aims to offer students interested in development issues an intensive cross-cultural personal and interdisciplinary academic learning experience. The program enables students to appreciate the importance of an inter-disciplinary perspective to the development process. Students learn to evaluate critically the nature and impact of policies and programs implemented by governments, NGOs, and other agents of development. They are introduced to the major environmental, cultural, socio-economic, and political issues of communities participating in development processes. Through participation in internships, students have an opportunity to contribute personally to the aims of an NGO, or local - community-based organization, as well as to a local community.

The program prepares students for a professional or academic career in the field of development, and consists of 3 main components:

1. **A three-month Preparatory Course: Theory and Practice in International Development**

2. **A four-week Summer Field Course: Topics and Field Methods in East Africa**

3. **A six-week Summer Internship**
ABOUT THE STUDENTS

Through an extensive interview process, the UCU East Africa program accepts a limited number of students each summer, following their second or third year. The program looks for the following characteristics in our students:

1. Genuine interest in development issues
2. Excellent academic performance
3. Interdisciplinary interest
4. Cross-cultural interest
5. Maturity
PREPARATORY COURSE

The preparatory course is taught in the semester preceding the summer field program and internship. The course provides students with:

1. **Foundation in development and African studies**
   Seminars and readings about international development, critical development studies, and African studies expose students to the current debates on how to define and approach issues of development, the discourses and power relations that define it, and the key issues and challenges emerging in Africa.

2. **Specialized Knowledge on East Africa**
   Topical seminars on history and livelihood dynamics in East Africa with a foundation for the field course and their internship.

3. **Exposure to Development Organizations & Practitioners**
   A development speaker series offers students the opportunity to get acquainted with development practice.

4. **Theoretical Preparation for their Internships**
   The second half of the course is dedicated to students pursuing independent reading and research culminating in the preparation and presentation of an internship proposal.
FIELD COURSE

The field course: Topics and Field Methods in East Africa, takes the students on a journey through four very different socio-cultural environments: 1 - highland agricultural communities, 2 - rangeland pastoral communities, 3 - urban informal settlement communities, and 4 – coastal fishing communities. The course provides students with a unique opportunity to engage with and understand different livelihood practices and development challenges facing local communities. Students engage locally through homestays, local teaching staff, and many other encounters. The course also focuses on directing students to various qualitative and quantitative field methods, which they can later employ for the benefit of their internship project.
The following general conditions apply to all internships within the UCU East Africa Program:

1. Internships have an approximate duration of six weeks.
2. Preferably, pairs of interns will be allocated to one location.
3. Internships contain the following elements:
   * a community service component, i.e. hands-on work for the host organization
   * if so desired, a research component serving the host organization
   * a personal cross-cultural learning experience, on which the students will reflect in both a personal and academic way.
4. Internship programs can relate to any academic field (Humanities / Social Sciences / Sciences / Interdepartmental).
5. The selection of candidates for a particular internship program will be a joint responsibility of UCU and the host organization.
6. The host organization will appoint an on-site supervisor for each internship.
7. UCU will appoint an academic supervisor for each internship.
8. The host organization will assist interns in finding accommodation during their internship, but interns will finance their own travel and housing unless agreed otherwise by the host organization. UCU tries to compensate host organizations for the costs of hosting and supervising interns.

**Participating Host Organizations, past and present:**

Refugee Law Project - Uganda
Enduimet WMA - Tanzania
War Child - Uganda
Twende - Tanzania
GreenPower - Kenya
MTD - Kenya
Chako - Tanzania
Maria's libraries - Kenya
Illepa - Kenya
FT Kilimanjaro - Tanzania
Mnazi Moja Hospital - Tanzania
HIVOT - Ethiopia
Vision on Africa - Ethiopia
Sauti Moja - Tanzania
OSSA - Ethiopia
JamiiSawa - Tanzania
World Friends - Kenya
Muthaa - Kenya
WASH alliance - Kenya
MHC - Tanzania
Mama Watoto - Uganda
Fairtrade Africa - Kenya
Yaden - Kenya
HOST ORGANIZATION TESTIMONIALS

“Our UCU intern was academically well prepared for her internship. Her academic program before the internship was very thorough and provided many opportunities for learning about various indigenous cultures as well as issues of development in Kenya. I would gladly work with more interns from University College Utrecht in the future.”

“The students were innovative. They were willing to learn and were fast to meaningfully interact with the community. The interns demonstrated good interpersonal, team-building and communication skills and were professional in their approach.”

“The UCU interns have excellent research and analytical skills and have contributed significantly to our programs. They are hardworking, eager to learn, enthusiastic and motivated. They recognize the value of socially integrating and approaching the field with cultural sensitivity.”
“Our UCU interns delivered an in-depth research report. The document will be immensely useful in informing our advocacy and lobbying for durable solutions to the problems of internal displacement.”

“UCU produced a detailed report on food security at the household level. Their scientific approach towards food production and agricultural practices will help us identify workable solutions that will enable the community to be food secure.”

“The UCU students managed to undertake an impressive amount of work during the relative short duration and produce a report that was clear, well organized and that provides a nuanced and well substantiated description of the key components of the program.”
“I learned a lot about important theory and so on but the most significant learning was about myself”

“The Maasai community offers people from outside a mirror through which someone all of a sudden sees himself from a different perspective.”

“The UCU in Africa program was interesting and engaging. I believe that I contributed to the NGO just like the internship greatly complemented my education at UCU by providing a practical understanding of the various theoretical concepts concerning development I had studied. I learned a lot from what I saw, heard, and experienced. I am grateful for the opportunity as it was truly an unforgettable experience.”

“I learned valuable lessons from my experience in the field. The UCU in Africa program allowed me to meet fascinating and extraordinary people. I also learned the value of nature and became committed to conservation. I learned a number of things about myself, which I could only have discovered in difficult moments that put one up to the test. This has been one of the most precious experiences I have ever had.”
“Being in the company of so many inspiring individuals opened up a very different world to what I had naively decided to box as yet another case of undefeatable political processes and the inevitable fading of tradition by the unyielding Westernized idea of modernity.”

“It is a privilege to study East African society from so close and to see the world changing in front of your eyes, brought alive through observations, stories, personal contacts and friendships.”

“This program unraveled to us the complexity of development and posed new questions about the solutions to end poverty.”
A FACULTY REFLECTION:

By Corey Wright, Director & Instructor

“I have almost two decades of experience working and living in East Africa. My own experience began with a student program, like UCU East Africa. For me, UCU’s program has always been about so much more than so-called development theory or African studies. These fields of study are all important and remain a focus. However, I think what is most important is how we can learn from the ‘difference’ that is encountered in the program: e.g. different histories, different ways of seeing and being in the world, etc. etc. By no means do I say this to espouse any further ‘othering’ of Africa. There has been far too much of that already. Rather, I am stressing the fact that a program like UCU East Africa offers the opportunity to experience difference and learn to see things from different perspectives. In the process, I think we gain an opportunity to become more attentive to our own assumptions about the world, think self-critically and, ultimately, build our capacity to navigate today’s world, whether that be in the field of international development or otherwise.”

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