



UU Study Abroad Report Form

Contact info at the IO.

faculty/college	Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	Liberal Arts & Sciences

destination city & country	Victoria, Canada
name university abroad	University of Victoria (Uvic)
start date	09/ 01/ 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	26/ 04/ 2023 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

You are required to fill in an application and also a motivational letter. You also have to provide a schedule of your school year and what courses you would want to take at your university of choice. You have to make a top 3 list of you preferred destinations, so it is smart to also look at the amount of students that are accepted every year! I got my number one destination, which was also one that had 16 spots (which is quite a lot compared to other destinations). The application process is pretty clear and you get to know which destination you're going to far in advance.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Before your exchange you are provided with a lot of information from the International Office, which is really nice! You get a booklet about things you should do before going to your destination and you get a digital booklet from Uvic about the university. There are also some information sessions you can attend about finances and culture shock.

academic preparation

As I was taking some courses outside of my major, I didn't really have to do much preparation, besides collecting books and such. Make sure to really study all the requirements for certain courses. Before you go on the exchange you are expected to request access to the courses that you want to follow. You'll have to fill in a document in which you show what courses you have taken in the Netherlands that are similar to the



prerequisites for certain courses. If you are taking courses that don't have prerequisites, you're all good! You also have to get your courses approved by the 'examencommissie' at UU, which you can do by filling in some documents on Osiris. Once you get in Victoria you can order the needed books on the Uvic website and they will be delivered to the bookstore on campus.

language preparation

As I went to an English speaking country, I didn't have to do any language preparation. I believe there are no requirements for this destination, but you might have to show an English certificate or do a test.

finances

Canada is a pretty expensive destination, so make sure you save enough money for your exchange beforehand! As it is a destination outside of Europe it is very difficult to get financial help, such as Erasmus beurs. You will also be paying an currency exchange rate whenever you take out cash or transfer money. I had saved what I believed to be enough money, but I ended up spending definitely more than I expected. Having said that, don't be afraid to spend money while on exchange, especially on experiences, cause in the end it's totally worth it 😊

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I took some random courses because I wanted to try some new things (drawing, Spanish and a Greek and Roman studies course). When you register for courses you can see exactly at which times and on which days the classes are, so you can easily fit them together. I thought the communication with the teachers was very clear and you mostly use the website Brightspace for everything related to a course, which was a nice tool in my opinion.

academic quality of education activities

I think the quality was good and pretty much the same as in the Netherlands, but it still really depends on the course. I found my courses a bit easy, but that was also because the levels differed and the subjects were easier. But I believe higher level courses and master courses are more challenging. One difference was the fact that you take 4 to 5 courses at once during the whole semester, instead of taking 2 courses at once like we do at UU. But because the semester is pretty long, deadlines are stretched out more.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I myself didn't really need any counselling at Uvic during my exchange, but I am pretty sure there are a lot of places on campus where you can get help and information. I suggest you check out the Uvic website to find out more about this!

transfer of credits

Uvic has a different credit system, so if you need to get 30 ECTS I suggest you take a look at the credit table. After your exchange Uvic sends your transcript to the International Office at UU and you have to contact them about transferring them to your UU transcript.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

For the international students that came in the second semester, there was an International Student Welcome night at campus. However this night was mostly focused on information about Uvic and the campus itself. Even though it was useful information, I expected there to be more time for socializing and meeting other students. I was quite disappointed, as the students who came the first semester had a full week of



activities. There were however some small activities organized for international students during the semester, but I didn't attend these.

accommodation

It is possible to apply for on-campus housing and the dorms are really nice. Some live in real houses with a kitchen and living room, and others get a room without a kitchen or living room and have to eat at the different food places on campus. Even though there are a lot of food options on campus, I wanted to live off campus so I searched for a room through Facebook. It took me a little while to find a room, but in the end I found one through another Dutch student who did the exchange before me. I suggest you start searching for a room off-campus a while before the exchange, because there are a lot of ads on Facebook but there's also a lot of demand. There are a lot of nice neighbourhoods in Victoria to live in and I think a lot of the houses on Facebook are close to the university.

leisure & culture

I didn't experience any culture shock when I arrived in Canada, it is all very similar to here! People are very friendly and welcoming, so don't be afraid to ask anyone for help. The city has a lot of charm, because of all the pretty old buildings and the British influence. People love going for a beer in a pub/café, hiking and spending time in nature. They are very down-to-earth. There is also a lot of fun things to see in the city, and the university offers a lot of things for students to do. I definitely suggest exploring the many beaches surrounding the city and some nice nature spots outside of Victoria.

suggestions/tips

- There are a lot of activities on campus. The university hosts a lot of different things, such as a dog café on Wednesdays, sports classes, movies in the campus cinema and sports matches. There are also a lot of clubs you can join during the semester!
- A lot of courses require prerequisites, which means that you need to have taken some courses before the one you want to sign up for. I had some issues with this, because the courses I had followed at my home university weren't similar enough to the required courses which meant I couldn't follow the courses I wanted to. I suggest you research this beforehand!

CONCLUSIONS

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

Definitely! For me personally, Victoria was a great destination for living abroad. The city is not too big and overwhelming, which makes it a nice place to live and I felt at home very quickly. On the other hand, there is still a lot to do and to see in the city and the surrounding areas, such as ice hockey games, high tea places, whale watching tours, parks and thrift stores. There are a lot of cafés and nice shops and there are beaches on every side of the city! The island itself is so beautiful and there is a lot of nature to explore. I also really liked the university itself. The location is very nice and you are surrounded by nature, which makes it a very peaceful place. The campus is well organized and there are many places to study and to get food. The atmosphere is nice and the quality of the classes was good in my opinion, but the level difficulty really depends on the faculty. There is a wide variety of courses and because I could choose my own courses I was able to take some very interesting ones.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Some important things to consider:

- It is very important to have a credit card while you are there (or start a Canadian bank account), because European debit cards are hardly accepted in stores and restaurants. I was able to use my Dutch debit card to take out cash at the ATM, but besides that I always used my credit card.



- If you are staying off campus and don't know how to transfer your rent to your landlord/roommate, Wise is a good app for this!
- The buses in Victoria use a very different system than in the Netherlands. You cannot buy tickets at stations or bus stops, but you have to pay 2 CAD in cash to the bus driver (for a single ride) or 5 CAD for a day ticket. The bus drivers don't carry change so if you don't have the exact amount you might have to pay more than it actually costs. If you are planning on living off campus and travelling by bus a lot, I suggest you purchase a semester long bus pass that will be connected to your OneCard (your University card) and you can pay for this at one of the offices on campus. It is a bit pricy, but I used the bus at least twice a day and the busses go all the way to some towns nearby and the ferry terminal Swartz Bay. For me it was definitely worth it!
- Vancouver Island is beautiful and there is a lot to explore, but public transportation won't take you very far. So if you really want to explore the island, I suggest you rent a car and do a multiple day road trip around the island. A cheap way to do this is to rent it through Turo, which is kind of an Airbnb but for cars (you rent from people personally). To rent a car on Turo, you have to be at least 23. Some great places to visit on the island are Tofino, Ucluelet, Mystic Beach, Nanaimo and Strathcona National Park!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

	Contact info available at the IO.
faculty/college	Social Sciences
level	bachelor's master's
name study programme	Pedagogische Wetenschappen

destination city & country	Victoria, Canada
name university abroad	University of Victoria
start date	01 / 09 / 2022
end date	22 / 12 / 2022

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The process started a year before my exchange was supposed to take place. The deadline for my application was December 1st 2021 and I did research before that. I always knew I wanted to go on exchange so I started looking at universities a few months before this deadline. Utrecht University has a lot of information available about every destination they offer and they have connections with a lot of universities all around the world so I can only encourage you to do a lot of research about all the available destinations.

I first decided that I wanted an English speaking country and I wanted to go overseas. This left me with America and Canada which narrowed the search down. I chose Victoria and the application process was fairly easy, also because I got some valuable information in the Study Abroad meetings (go to those meetings!!). I wrote a motivation letter (even though I knew they were not going to read it because my first choice was not a faculty exchange). I also handed in a list of possible courses I wanted to follow and luckily those courses could easily be found on the website of the University of Victoria.

I submitted these files and after around 2 months I got an email that assigned me to Uvic and that I could start my application process for Uvic.

The coordinator approached us with an email that explained how to apply for that university and the deadlines. You do not need to figure it all out by yourself and whenever you have questions you could send an email to your coordinator.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

Utrecht really helps with applying for an exchange. They have a lot of information available for anyone who is interested and when you want more specific information, you can always send an email and they will help you.

academic preparation

Since I only chose first year courses, I did not need to prepare myself academically. All the courses I wanted to do did not have any requirements.

language preparation

I was already comfortable with my level of English, but I prepared myself by watching shows with English subtitles or no subtitles. It is a very easy way to slowly improve your English and getting used to only hearing/seeing English around you.

finances



Expect to spend a lot of money, it is very expensive. I started my loan in January before my exchange so I could save it up, but in the end I did not have enough money saved. My family luckily helped me and borrowed me some money as well. Really prepare yourself by saving up and accepting that you are going to spend a lot of money. Groceries on Vancouver Island are more expensive than on the mainland and I think Victoria is number 1 in 'most expensive cities in Canada'. The conversion rate (from Euro to CAD) is also good to check regularly because in my semester it dropped with 10 cents! You also probably want to do some nice trips while you are there (because everything is beautiful), but these trips are expensive. Renting a car is doable if you split the costs (enterprise is a good rental company).

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

I started the semester with 5 courses, but I ended up dropping 2 courses. I did this because those 2 courses were different than I expected and the workload was quite a lot. The courses I ended up following were: Astronomy 101 (Exploring the night sky); GEOG100 (Food in the world); PSYCH100A. ASTR101 was a very interesting course. You have some labs you have to follow and one of them is at night and you get to look through telescopes to look at planets and nebulae. The teacher is very nice and he explains it very well. It is really an introduction which was nice, considering I did not know anything about 'the night sky'. You have a lot of smaller assignments which is nice because if 1 of them didn't go so well, you can compensate with the other assignments. GEOG100 was interesting because food security is a subject that is becoming more and more relevant, the teacher also explained this very well. The lectures were a bit boring at times, but the assignments were interesting and I learned a lot about food security. (also more smaller assignments). PSYCH100A is a pretty easy course I would say. The material of this course is very basic psychology and is a good introductory course. Again, there are a lot of smaller assignments which is very nice if you miss one of them for example.

academic quality of education activities

I think the level of education is a bit lower than in Utrecht. This may also be the case for me because I only followed first-year courses. The teachers are very friendly and helpful and they want you to pass. They give feedback in a good way and they really know what they are talking about.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

There are a lot of ways to get extra support and counseling at Victoria. I did not reach out to any of them, but they give you a lot of information of where you can go to get more help.

transfer of credits

This was very easy. Uvic emailed me saying that they send the transcript to Osiris. I emailed Utrecht saying that the grades were in Osiris and then the grades were transferred.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

The first day of introduction was very fun, mainly because it is your first day walking around at that university which is a very surreal feeling. The first week, there were a lot of activities for first year students and international students. I can highly recommend going to the international introduction activities because it is a very good way of meeting new people, that is where it all starts. Uvic will invite you to all of these activities and it is very easy to sign up.

accommodation



I went to Victoria 2 weeks before classes started. I started looking for a place when I got there and I only looked on Facebook. There were a lot of rooms available but there are also a lot of students who need a place. It took me a while and it made me a little bit stressed, but I found a place a few days before classes started. I started to worry that there may not be a room for me anymore, but people in Victoria are pretty late when it comes to advertising there available rooms. They start posting stuff a few days before the 'contract' would start. Rooms popped up on Facebook on the 30th of august that were available september 1st. So don't worry, in the end, everybody finds a room.

leisure & culture

Downtown Victoria is fun, but it's not a big, vibrant city. There are some nice restaurants, bars and clubs but most of them are fairly small. The bars/clubs are fun, I can recommend going to Lucky Bar on Monday nights (look it up 😊)
The city is beautiful, the harbour and the government building were beautiful every single time I saw them (which was a few times every week). The views on Vancouver Island are amazing, I mostly went on trips to go hiking and to explore the island.

suggestions/tips

I don't really have any general suggestions. I think everybody can enjoy this destination because there is something for everybody. However, if you want to experience living in a very big city or capitol, then this is not your destination. Victoria is fairly small and people who live in Victoria, know a lot of people in Victoria (ons-kent-ons). Which is something I enjoyed, because I didn't want to live in a big city like Toronto. I also enjoy going outside and going on hikes which made this an excellent choice for me.

CONCLUSIONS

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

I would definitely recommend this destination. It was amazing and I would love to go back. I think you'll have a great time no matter where you go, but this one was extraordinary. The island is insanely beautiful and people were nice. Yes it is an expensive destination, but it's totally worth it.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Please email me if you have any questions or want some more information. I enjoyed it so much, I don't mind talking about it if you want to know *anything*.



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Canada, Victoria BC
name university abroad	University of Victoria
start date	01 / 19 / 2022
end date	31 / 12 / 2022

PREPARATION
exchange application process
UVic was my first choice. I only had to write a motivation letter for Utrecht University and that was it. Some time later I received an email from UVic that I got in and I had to activate my UVic account. It was easy to enrol in courses, I even switched some of my courses after I got there, which was no problem. Just make sure you suffice on the pre-requisitions for each course.
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I didn't make any use of it.
academic preparation
I didn't do any academic preparation since this I was in my third year on Utrecht University and I only followed first year courses at UVic. I passed all my courses with an A or A+, so the level of my courses were rather easy.
language preparation
I didn't do any language preparation either and I manage just fine.
finances
I paid around 950 CAD each month for my room (I lived with 5 other students). There wasn't really an option for a scholarship, but I did get an 'ov-vergoeding' for around 100 euros a month. Canadian life is quite expensive.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
At Utrecht University I'm in law, but I wanted to follow some different courses for my exchange. I enrolled in 2 psychology courses, 1 philosophy course and 1 educational course. All the courses I followed were first year courses, since I didn't qualify for any of the pre-requisitions for the second and third year courses. I started with 5 courses, but I wanted to have some more spare time for trips and stuff so after 2 weeks I dropped one of my courses. The content of the courses was interesting but quite easy compared to the courses at Utrecht University.
academic quality of education activities
There are lots of clubs and activities to join at the UVic. I joined some of the activities at the opening week, which was a nice way to get to know some of the other international students. Besides, I joined an intramural for soccer with Canadian students, a nice way to stay active and meet some local students.



counselling & support at receiving university abroad
There are lots of counselling and support options at UVic, they really want to make you feel home. However, I didn't use it because everything was well organized.
transfer of credits
My credits aren't transferred yet.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
As I said, the orientation programme is a nice and easy way to get to know other international students. I would definitely recommend joining some of the activities, since lots of students also decided to hang out together afterwards.
accommodation
I lived in a room in Gordon Head, with 5 other students. I found the room on Facebook. It is really recommended to start searching early because it is not easy to find something.
leisure & culture
In my spare time I did some weekend trips with my roommates and other international students to some nice spots on the island (Tofino, Strathcona and Mystic Beach). We also went to Vancouver (to watch an ice hockey match) and we went on a super awesome road trip to Seattle. Victoria downtown is such a nice place to have brunch, go shopping, or go clubbing and it is super easy to get there by bus. Besides, the university also organises fun activities, we went to music bingo every Wednesday evening.
suggestions/tips
Go camping!! The island has so many beautiful places to visit, there are some cheap hostels but if you arrive in summer camping is so much fun. Also, in reading break there is some time to go a bit further away, we went to Seattle by ferry and car, but some people flew to Hawaii for instance. Visit some of UVic sports matches and other fun activities like the music bingo or karaoke night. Lastly, walk as much as you can, the nature is awesome (I loved the beaches) and there are so many squirrels and deer!!

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes, I would definitely recommend UVic. It is so cool to really experience campus life, and everyone at the university really tries to make you feel home. People from all over the world come to UVic, so it is such a nice opportunity to meet people from all sorts of countries and cultures. There is lots of stuff to do at university but also outside of it. The location is amazing, I can't wait to go back.
do you have any additional advice or comments?
Start searching early for a room and be prepared to spend a lot of money, but it is definitely worth it!!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Victoria, Canada
name university abroad	University of Victoria
start date	01/ 09 / 2022
end date	31/ 12 / 2023

PREPARATION

exchange application process

It was all very straight forward and went quite easily. Follow the instructions on the UU website.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

There were several meetings about the exchange from Utrecht University and these really helped answer any questions I had.

academic preparation

I choose to only do courses without prerequisites so I didn't need to do any academic preparation.

language preparation

My study in Utrecht is English so I didn't need to do any preparation.

finances

Victoria is one of the most expensive cities in Canada to live in so keep that in mind. Rent (750-1000 CAD) and groceries are expensive and you will likely be going on weekend trips and do fun things around Victoria. So, save a little more than you think you'll need.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The application process for the courses at UVic is not very straight forward so attend the seminars the international office organizes and read the instructions on Online tools.

There are a lot of fun and interesting courses that you can take. The international office at UVic provides a list of courses without prerequisites so keep an eye out for that. Courses I can definitely recommend are Ten Days that Shook the World and Exploring the Night Sky. In Ten Days that Shook the World you have 10 lectures about different historically important days/events and then a discussion with other students which was a very nice way to study. There is a small assignment for each lecture and no exam.

academic quality of education activities

I only took first year courses and those were easier compared to the courses I've taken in Utrecht. There were more small assignments and quizzes that you had to do every other week. However, these were not a lot of work and just a way to keep up to date with all the material.



counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The international office at UVic is really helpful and responded very fast to any questions asked through email. They also organise activities throughout the semester and while I personally did not go to any, it is a good option if you want to meet new people.
transfer of credits
I haven't submitted a request to the board of examiners yet so I don't know how this will go. UVic did automatically sent the transcript to the international office at UU which is nice.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
UVic organised an international student welcome week. The first day was on campus and was a good way to get familiar with the campus and meet new people. There were also other activities throughout the rest of the week that you could join.
accommodation
I ended up finding a room in a small suite off campus in a really unconventional way but most people I know found a room through Facebook. There most useful Facebook group is 'UVIC Off campus housing'. Before I found my room, I was quite stressed about it because I had heard that it was really difficult to find a room. However, looking back, it was not as hard as I expected and everyone I spoke to found a room before classes started. A lot of houses are still looking for roommates the week before classes start and two of my friends even found rooms after the first week of classes when they wanted to move. I heard that UVic recently opened a new on-campus housing building which meant that all first years are guaranteed to have on-campus housing. I guess this means less people are looking for off campus housing and could be a reason why it was a bit easier this year. Start looking on time and you should be fine!
leisure & culture
<p>Explore the island during the weekends! Especially during the first few weeks when the weather is still nice. Halfway through October it starts raining and while you can definitely still go on trips and hikes, it is a bit harder to do a long hike when you're soaking wet and cold from the rain. Places I would recommend going to are Tofino (stop at Taylor River rest area along the way), the West coast up from Sooke, Strathcona regional park, the Cowichan Valley area, Vancouver and Mount Douglas (which is in Victoria).</p> <p>Victoria is not really known as a party city and the nightlife is very different from the Netherlands. Lucky Bar has a 90s night on Monday and that's really fun! Sticky Wicked also recently opened a downstairs area. You're in Canada so definitely go to a hockey game of the Victoria Royals. It's the local WHL hockey team and going to one of their games is a great way to experience ice hockey for lower price than a NHL game in Vancouver (although that is definitely something I would also recommend).</p> <p>One thing that you should not miss out on is whale watching. While it is one of the most expensive activities to do in the area, Victoria is one of the best places in the world to see killer whales. Eagle Wing Whale Watching is the best company to go with and bring your onecard with you for a locals discount.</p>
suggestions/tips
<p>You can get a local sim card at the tourist office downtown by the inner harbour. I paid 35 CAD a month for 7 GB and unlimited calls and SMS.</p> <p>You can get a bike with a program from UVic but the bus system in Victoria is really well organised so if you live close by a bus station you don't really need a bike. Also, Victoria has a lot of hills.</p> <p>If you miss Dutch food and snacks there is a store called The Wooden Shoe near downtown that sells Dutch food.</p>



If you're planning to arrive in Victoria before the semester starts stay at Ocean Island Inn. A lot of Dutch and some other exchange students will likely be staying there. I met some of my closest friends while I was staying there and it's a great way to get familiar with the downtown area before you move to a neighbourhood closer to UVIC.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Definitely!! Victoria and Vancouver Island are beautiful and there is a lot of things to do and see. UVic is a great university with a ton of fun courses and a nice campus.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

Be open to meeting new people and doing new things and you will have a great time!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Victoria, Canada
name university abroad	University of Victoria
start date	24 / 08 / 2022
end date	18 / 01 / 2023

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was not very difficult and the process was pretty straightforward. In October the UU international office organises some information meetings about studying abroad and the different destinations. If you are still in doubt about where to go, I would strongly advise you to attend!

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I did not really need any extra counselling or support. The international office was always quick in their responses when I emailed them questions.

academic preparation

I did not really need any academic preparation. When you look for courses it is important to check if there are any prerequisites. If so, be sure to ask permission to follow these courses if you believe you have the right prerequisites.

language preparation

I did not need any language preparation.

finances

Canada is going to be expensive. Everything is more expensive than in Utrecht. You will spend more on rent, groceries, food, alcohol, going out, etc. I also went on quite some trips, which definitely made it even more expensive for me. Having said that, don't let this stop you from going here. Start saving money early, take a student loan at DUO or see if your parents/family are able to lend you some money. Even though I spent a lot of money, it was worth it without a doubt!

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

In the beginning I signed up for 5 courses. I took courses in various departments. Once you're accepted, UVic will provide you with a long list of courses that you can take, in many different departments. I ended up following 3 courses, which were in the Environmental Science and Political Science department.

academic quality of education activities

In general I would say the courses at UVic are easier than in Utrecht. In my personal experience, it was not that difficult to get high grades. One thing I did notice was that there were more deadlines and smaller



assignments throughout the semester. In Utrecht I usually have 1 assignment and 1 exam for a course. At UVic I often had many smaller assignments (sometimes weekly) and a midterm and a final exam. For me personally this was a nice way to keep up with the course material.

counselling & support at receiving university abroad

I did not really need any of this. The international office at UVic is always available for questions and support. They also send out a lot of emails to check in with the international students.

transfer of credits

Still in the process. After I finished, UVic sent a transcript of my credits to UU. Note that the grades you receive on exchange will not count in Utrecht. You will only receive a pass/fail.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme

In the week before classes start UVic organises a whole week of activities for international student. In my experience, this has been really fun and a great way to meet other international students. There are many different activities, such as walks and socials at the beach. In this week I met so many amazing people, who have become great friends. I would really advise you to go to as many of these activities as you can, since this is the perfect opportunities to make many friends before school starts.

accommodation

Finding housing in Victoria can be a challenge. Most exchange students stay off campus, although I knew some who stayed in cluster housing on campus. I found my room through Facebook about a month before I left. I started looking in April and joined as many Facebook groups as I could. I would really advise you to respond to as many ads as you can. Finding a room before you leave will really give you some peace. Having said that, don't stress out too much if you can't find a room before you arrive. I arrived a week before my move in date, so I stayed in a hostel for my first week. Here, I met many other (mostly Dutch) exchange students. Some of the had not found a room yet. Eventually, everyone I know found a house before classes started. Expect to pay (a lot) more rent than in Utrecht. Most people I know paid between 800-1100CAD per month for their room.

leisure & culture

Even though it's not a very big city, Victoria is an amazing city to live in! The downtown area is very nice with great shops, café's, and bars. We went out to bars and clubs almost every weekend. In the beginning we went to Lucky Bar every Monday, which is always fun because they have 90's night and it's always super busy. The culture is something I really loved about Canada. People are generally super laid-back and always so nice. Everyone always wants to chat and is very interested if you tell them you're an international student.

UVic has many clubs and societies you can join. There's a surf club, kayak club, photography club and many more. I also had a lot of friends who joined sports teams, like volleyball and soccer. I joined the field hockey team, which was an amazing experience.

Some of my best experiences of my exchange were the many trips I went on. In the first few weeks, the weather was still amazing. It's easy to rent a car and explore the island with a group of friends. We went on a few day trips up island, and also went camping on Sombrio Beach, which was absolutely amazing. Later on we went on a weekend trip to Tofino to go surfing. Even if you're not into surfing, go to Tofino! It's an amazing town and the surroundings are so beautiful. During the reading break in November I went to Hawaii with a group of exchange students and we absolutely had the best time. Hawaii is relatively close and cheap so I could really recommend it. I also went to the mainland a few times. Vancouver is a really nice city and is



perfect for a weekend trip. I also went to Whistler which was amazing. If you're into skiing, mount Washington is a nice ski area that is only 3 hours away. We went in the beginning of December and there was already a lot of snow.

suggestions/tips

If you have the time, come early and stay longer after the semester. Before the semester starts, the weather is still nice. This is the perfect time to go on some trips on the island, go surfing, camping, beaches, etc. Also I can really recommend to stay longer after the semester ends. I ended school on December 14 but stayed for 5 more weeks. Over the Christmas break me and 3 friends made a road trip through the Rocky Mountains, which was stunning. We visited Edmonton, Jasper, Banff and Calgary. If you have the time, I could really recommend. In January I also went on a trip to New York, which you can reach through a direct flight from Vancouver airport.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, yes and yes. My time in Victoria exceeded all my expectations. The people, the school, the city, the surrounding, everything was perfect. It's a really nice environment, and Victoria is a city that will easily feel like home.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

If you are in doubt, do it! Yes it is expensive, yes it is far, but it will all be worth it. Just go!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Victoria, Canada
name university abroad	University of Victoria
start date	07/09/2022
end date	24/12/2022

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process is really clear. The international office of Uvic is really good, they respond quickly and they have several online information sessions to prepare you for your exchange.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The international office of UU has helped me with deciding where to go and with the preparation. They organise a pre-departure meeting in which you can talk to student who already went on exchange to Victoria.

academic preparation

N.A.

language preparation

I did not do a lot of language preparation, because my bachelor is taught in English. In addition, I already did my Cambridge exam in high school, which I could use in my application.

finances

Make sure you have enough money before you go!! I think I spend around 2500 euros per month, but we did a lot of trips and fun things. It can thus be cheaper, but it is a shame if you cannot do everything you want because you do not have the money

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

To receive 30 ECT's you have to follow 5 courses, but in the end I decided to do three. In the first two week you have the chance to drop/change courses, which is very nice. I dropped the courses Indigenous Science, and Gender, power and differences. Indigenous science was taught online in my semester and the gender course I followed for a week but was not my thing. The workload is mostly related to the level of your courses. I followed three courses on level 3, namely: Geography of Canada, Ethnoecology, and Understanding the Oceans. Of these courses Ethnoecology was the most work, because there were a lot of mandatory readings, but it was also my most interesting course. You learn a lot about the different Indigenous group in the areas and they relationship with nature. The other courses I can also recommend as they were both interesting and easy.

academic quality of education activities



I think the level of education is lower than in Utrecht. I think I spend around 20 hours a week on my courses and got good grades.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The international office is great at Uvic. Also all the teachers are really willing to help you. They organise a lot of office hours in which you can visit them and ask all your questions.
transfer of credits
The transfer of credits is really easy, Uvic takes care of everything

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
Before the school started the Global Community (organisation of Uvic that focuses on exchange students) organised several different activities. Almost all exchange students attended these event and in this way you met a lot of new people and this is also where I saw most of my friends for the first time. The university also organises an international student welcome. This is a more formal introduction and they tell you about the first weeks of schools and insurance and stuff. I slept the two weeks before the university started in the Ocean inn hostel. A lot of other exchange students also slept here, so I also met a lot of people there.
accommodation
I struggled a little bit with finding a room. Eventually I found a room on Facebook in the neighbourhood Fernwood with 5 Canadians which was really nice. I paid 825 dollars + utilities. Most students live in Gordon head which is closer to campus. Fernwood is closer to downtown which had the benefit that I could walk home after going out instead of a cab. I had to walk 10 minutes to the bus stop and the bus took me 15 minutes. I also rented a bike from the spokes program of the university (100 dollars). In my opinion, the bike was really convenient to get around and do groceries at the Walmart. Other supermarkets were at a walking distance, but are a lot more expensive.
leisure & culture
Vancouver island is amazing. There is so much beautiful nature to explore and the Canadian culture is really nice. The stereotype is true, Canadians are really nice and you will have a lot of conversations with strangers. We made a lot of weekend trips, for example: Tofino, Strathcona park, Vancouver, west coast (Sombrio beach, mystic beach), etc. For the weekend trips you need a car. The best thing of course is to know people with a car (most Canadian students have one), but we often rented one. If you are over 23, you can book a car on Turo which makes it cheaper. The downtown area of Victoria is not really big, but big enough to have fun for one semester. Because the city is not too big you feel at home really quickly. One of my highlights was the trip to Hawaii in the reading week. Book this quite quickly because flight tickets get more expensive as long as you wait, definitely worth it!
suggestions/tips
Other nice places to visit are the rocky mountains, Goldstream provincial park (salmon run!!), skiing on Mount Washington (can be a day trip), whale watching. On campus there is one pub called Felicita's, you can drink cheap beers and have dinner. Visit as much places as you can!! It is amazing

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yesss!! the communication with Uvic is really easy and they are organised. The city is nice and the surroundings are amazing.



do you have any additional advice or comments?

Enjoy enjoy enjoy, time flies



UU Study Abroad Report Form

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

destination city & country	Victoria, Canada
name university abroad	University of Victoria
start date	01 / 09 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	31 / 12 / 2021 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

I had originally been accepted for the Fall term in 2021, but due to Covid-19 that fell through. For this application I went to the seminars and orientation days, which helped a lot with the application process. The following year I applied again, this time Covid did not get in the way of the exchange.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

The information and seminars the UU offers are very good. From choosing your destination to writing your motivation letter.

academic preparation

N.A.

language preparation

N.A.

finances

Victoria is quite expensive. Expect to pay prices like you would here at Albert Heijn and then some. I mealprepped all of my meals to save money. Had I cooked every day, my wallet would not have been very happy with me. Going out for dinner is often cheaper than cooking, which I found surprising. Green Cuisine was a personal favorite; delicious vegan food for next to nothing!

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

UVic has so many amazing courses to choose from, it was honestly hard to pick. I ended up going with Healthy Sexuality, an Indigenous studies class, a French class and a Gender studies class. I would recommend each and every one of these courses. Healthy Sexuality is taught by Charlotte Loppie, whom is an amazing teacher. The Netherlands don't offer a class like this. It's such a safe space and you'll learn so many things! While you're in Canada, I would highly encourage you to take an Indigenous studies class. You'll unlearn a lot of things we're taught about history from a European perspective. It'll teach you a lot about the actual history of the land we now refer to as Canada.

The application process for the courses is confusing, though. So make sure you attend the seminars provided by UVic, explaining this process.

academic quality of education activities
The level of the courses is lower than in the Netherlands. There's a lot more small projects and less exams. Most exams are multiple choice. I took 5 classes, which was very doable. I worked very hard the first two months and once I made some friends and had settled, I had plenty time to enjoy a ton of trips, without having to worry about my grades.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The profs I had were very encouraging towards students to reach out. They focused a lot on mental health, which made it feel like a safe space to reach out if you needed to. They're very willing to offer help of any kind, so don't hesitate to reach out!
transfer of credits
The first studyplanning I had checked by my student advisor was approved. However, only 1 of the courses I planned on taking, was available during that semester so I had to pick other courses. If that happens, make sure to get it checked again!

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
UVic has a very extensive welcome & orientation programme with everything you need to prepare yourself and/or meet people. I went to a few, mainly to find my classes. Those were very helpful. A lot of people met their friends through those programmes.
accommodation
I had already found accommodation pre-Covid and I was able to keep that accommodation during the second time I applied. There's currently a housing crisis happening in Victoria, which didn't make it easy for people to find housing but it was still doable. Make sure to look for housing on time! Landlords tend to pick people who are well prepared.
leisure & culture
Canadian culture, especially on the island, is a lot more laid back than in the Netherlands. People tend to look out more for each other, are less hasty and have more time for each other. As to leisure, UVic has over 200 clubs! There's several sports clubs, gaming clubs, creative clubs, programme-specific clubs, plenty to choose from! They're very welcome towards internationals, so I'd definitely recommend joining some!
suggestions/tips
Not a lot of people know about this, because it's not widely advertised, but UVic has a pet café where you can cuddle with therapy dogs! Keep an eye on the activities page from UVic, since UVic has activities nearly every day. As to food recommendations: try the cinnamon buns from Cobs!

CONCLUSIONS
would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Without a doubt. Vancouver Island is such a beautiful place. It's got everything, from beautiful beaches to snowy mountains. From rainforests (yes, there are rainforests on the island) to the most beautiful lakes. The people on the island are the friendliest I've ever met, it always felt like people were looking out for you. UVic itself is an amazing university, with a great course selection, even better professors and a very LGBTQIA2S+ friendly space!



do you have any additional advice or comments?

Take your time to adjust to living in a new country. Some people will be doing activities every day, some will pick a few. Do whatever works best for you :) Whether you decide to go to UVic or not, I would definitely recommend going on an exchange!



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Science
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> master's
name study programme	College of Pharmaceutical Sciences (CPS)

destination city & country	Victoria, Canada
name university abroad	University of Victoria
start date	10 / 01 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	30 / 04 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION

exchange application process

The application process was easy. All the steps are listed on the exchange website, with the necessary documents as well.

counselling & support at Utrecht University

I did not have much counselling or help from the University as I mostly figured it out myself because everything was self-explanatory. There were online meetings before departure about important things for in Canada like the documents we needed and living there. I didn't attend all of them but they were helpful and we could talk to students who had been there previously.

academic preparation

Since I chose to follow elective courses, I had did not need any academic preparation before going to Victoria. I also made sure to choose subjects and courses there that did not have any prerequisites so that made the process of following courses there easier. There were some courses that I wanted to follow that were in the same field as my studies in Utrecht so I had to fill in a bunch of forms before a certain deadline to show that I had the right knowledge in order to follow the course. The exchange team in Victoria was helpful with that.

language preparation

For me there was no language preparation because my study in Utrecht is in English, and I am fluent in English.

finances

Victoria and British Colombia is rather expensive compared to the rest of Canada. I knew it was expensive but I wasn't prepared for how expensive it was going to be. The cost of living there is similar to the cost of living in Utrecht; probably more expensive. I save a decent amount of money but with the amount of the travelling I did in Canada, it wasn't enough.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD

study programme (content and organisational issues)

The courses I followed were electives and not at all related to what I study in Utrecht. I did some economics, political science, and environmental sciences courses. They were all first or second year courses but I was all doable to follow. I did not feel like it was very challenging. The courses were all interesting and given in a way that was engaging. The tutorials (which were mandatory) were all very interesting and provided me



with more hands on work with the material we were covering in the lectures. It was also an opportunity to meet Canadians as well. The courses all had the same structure and planning in terms of when the mid terms and finals were.
academic quality of education activities
The level of academics in my opinion based on the courses I followed, is in general lower than in Utrecht. However, the workload is higher. I spent more time working on smaller weekly deadlines and homework assignments (all of it counted toward my final grade) than I would have spent on assignments in Utrecht. My courses at UVIC had multiple quizzes and midterms which was an adjustment for me as I'm used to having one exam and a couple of projects for my CPS courses. So in general I did spend more time on coursework than in Utrecht but it was not difficult at all. I still had enough time to explore Victoria and Canada next to following courses.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
The international office at UVIC was super helpful! They were very kind and welcoming; also very responsive to emails and any questions I had. They organized activities as well but I didn't end up going to them, but it was nice to have the option there.
transfer of credits
I contacted the board of examiners of my faculty and it was arranged through them.

STUDENT LIFE

welcome & orientation programme
The welcome and orientation at UVIC was online due to covid which was disappointing. However there were a lot of online activities you could join and various online orientation seminars about living in Victoria, finances, culture shock, etc. These were aimed at all international students, not only exchange students.
accommodation
Finding a room was very difficult. I searched facebook with little success and managed to find a room . The rent is expensive, more expensive than Utrecht in my opinion. My room was also off campus, but it was easy to get around with the bus or bike.
leisure & culture
Downtown Victoria is relatively small and the most lively area of Victoria. Victoria is very small and all the bars, restaurants, shops, and etc is located there. Its about a 20/25min bus ride downtown from campus. There aren't a lot of options for going out but all of it is very fun! There are lots of fun things to do or see in the area such as Fisherman's Wharf near downtown and Ogden Point. Hiking is also very popular in Victoria and there are lots of places to go visit and go for a fun hike (having a car is handy for this).
suggestions/tips
Explore the island! Canada is huge, but Vancouver Island is so beautiful and it is definitely worth while to see as much of it as possible!

CONCLUSIONS

would you recommend this university/destination abroad to others? please explain
Yes I would! UVic is a great university to spend time at! Campus is small yet very welcoming and the people in Victoria are very kind. The courses were fun and easy to follow. Life around Victoria is fun as well and Vancouver Island is such an amazing place to explore.
do you have any additional advice or comments?

faculty/college	REBO
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor's
name study programme	Bestuurs- en Organisatiewetenschap

destination city & country	Victoria, Canada
name university abroad	University of Victoria
start date	06 / 01 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)
end date	30 / 04 / 2022 (dd/mm/yyyy)

PREPARATION
exchange application process
<p>The exchange application process is easy. You just had to write a motivation letter and make sure you would choose courses that your study programme would agree on.</p> <p>When applying at University of Victoria after you get accepted, the University of Victoria offers great assistance, and their international office is quick with responses. They did multiple zoom calls for different parts of the application process, like how to register for classes, how to prepare for housing and how to get a visa (this was only necessary because of Covid).</p>
counselling & support at Utrecht University
I did not have much contact with Utrecht University before or during my exchange. So I cannot really offer any advice.
academic preparation
-
language preparation
It is necessary to understand and speak English, but you will also learn quickly when you are there. I did not have to take any tests or anything. I follow a Dutch-speaking bachelor, and that is no problem. The courses and everything was easy to follow for me.
finances
It is kind of expensive to live in Canada, especially Vancouver Island. Housing off campus was for me around 800 dollars, but I also heard people who had to pay more. On campus housing is more expensive, but in some types of housing, there is a meal plan included. When you go travelling in Canada during or after your exchange, you also must know that staying in hostels etc. is not cheap. I think it is possible to apply for a job at the university, but you do have to make sure your visa allows this I think.

STUDY ABROAD PERIOD
study programme (content and organisational issues)
I took 4 different courses. This was easy to do. You have to look how many courses you must take, to be able to get all the credits you need. When you apply for your courses, you can already see in which time schedule it will fall, so that it does not overlap. I took some intro level courses in politics, I think that is part of why it was not that hard, but I would also recommend it, because otherwise you might miss some part of important pieces of

information about the history. I would also pay attention to the fact that some courses are in the evenings, which I would maybe not choose, because most of the activities are held in the evenings.
academic quality of education activities
I feel like it is easier to follow courses in Canada then it is in the Netherlands. The course load is less, and there are fewer contact hours. Most of the professors I had are easy to contact and like to help when you are struggling with the course.
counselling & support at receiving university abroad
As mentioned before, the support from University of Victoria for me has been great. They check in with emails multiple times during the exchange and they are easy to reach for question about courses, accommodation, etc. But they also have services if you need help with mental health for example.
transfer of credits
I think you get a pass or fail for your classes, so your grades will not get transferred directly. So if you pass the course, you get all the credits I think.

STUDENT LIFE
welcome & orientation programme
Because of covid, there was not much of a welcome. We had an online welcome and introduction. From other people, who started in the first semester, I heard stories that they normally try to organise a day/ afternoon where all the exchange students can meet each other. They tried to do this online via a zoomcall, to also give some more information about the coming term, but you were not able to meet other exchange students this way. We did have a groups chat on WhatsApp with all the exchange students, where students organised their own things, like hikes on the weekends. This way I was still able to meet a lot of people.
accommodation
There is a possibility for on campus housing, but it is not guaranteed that you will get in. I for example did not get in. I would recommend to search for a student home in advance via Facebook or AirBnB. There are multiple facebook groups you can join, such as 'UVIC off campus housing'. The university also gives recommendations on which websites are good to look at.
leisure & culture
There are multiple clubs you can join, also as an exchange student. At the beginning of the exchange, I got a document with a lot of pages of all the clubs you can join. I for example joined the Photography club. It is very accessible to join a club and there are, as far as I know, no rules to it. With the photography club, you could just sign up for days to go on an excursion day/ weekend, but nothing was every obligated.
suggestions/tips
I would recommend to use your free time in the weekends to explore the island and do fun weekend trips. I for example went to Tofino, Salt Spring Island, Mount Washington (skiing) and Vancouver on different weekend trips. There are beautiful hikes you can do near Victoria and some of them are also easy to reach with busses. There is also a reading break when your halfway into the term, and it is nice to go away during this period. You have a week, so people choose to do a lot of different things, such as visiting Vancouver and surroundings, but also flying to Hawaii, Montreal, Toronto, etc. I would definitely use as much time as possible to travel during term. From the beginning, you know when your deadlines are (except the finals in the last month, they will give the schedule for that a bit later), so you know when the weeks are that you get busier. But I also think that tests and papers are easier to pass, so you can do most of the work during the weekend. I made sure I almost never had to work during the weekends.

CONCLUSIONS

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

Yes, I would definitely recommend going to Victoria. The surrounds of Victoria are beautiful and there are a lot of nice places you can visit in the area. There are enough things to do to keep busy, but you can also relax and enjoy the nature and nice cities. Victoria itself is not very big, which made me feel at home quicker than I expected, because you can get to know the city easily.

do you have any additional advice or comments?