

The Netherlands

UCEAP Advising Notes

Objective of the Advising Notes Document

This document is an advising tool written by a Berkeley Study Abroad adviser to review program specific details that may impact a student's *decision to apply* for an EAP program. The document is *not* a summary of eligibility requirements, academic, housing, application and other logistical details freely available to students on the UCEAP and BSA website, and reviewed by a student in the Program Self-Assessment. The best source of detailed program information is always the [UCEAP Program Guide](#) from the prior academic cycle. If any concerns you have are not addressed on the UCEAP website, in the Program Guide or the Advising Notes document, please contact the BSA adviser for this program.

Advisor Contact Information

For BSA Adviser name, email and drop-in advising hours, visit <http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/advising>

New Program for 2017-2018: Wageningen University will be a new EAP Program for Fall 2017 with options for majors in agricultural, biological and environmental sciences.

The Dutch University System, two possible philosophies:

To help you decide which of the four possible programs is right for you, it is important to first understand that the universities reflect different educational philosophies. (Much of the next two paragraphs is a paraphrase of the article, "[A New Notion in Europe: the Liberal Arts College](#)" from the Chronicle of Higher Education, May 8, 2011.

Traditional university model: Utrecht University and Maastricht University (Business & Economics Program) are more traditional institutions. The traditional European university does not compete for qualified students. It accepts all students that choose to attend and who pass qualifying examinations after high school. Students select their subject concentrations when they enter university and stay with the same subject the entire time. Students often begin to be serious about a subject concentration during the last two years of high school and they have more background knowledge than the average U.S. high school graduate when they enter university. At the university students are enrolled in a subject and take a certain set of courses every semester to make the required progress in their field; in other words, the requirements for a degree are rigidly fixed and students aren't allowed to dabble in different subject areas. Because they accept all students traditional institutions have limited control over the size of their student populations and often feature large lecture courses, especially at the lower levels years one and two. In addition, traditional universities combine the equivalent of a bachelor's & master's degree into a single degree; i.e., most students progress to the masters level without a pause. The bachelor's degree is a three-year program and the master's degree a two-year program, for a total of five years. Overall for European universities the drop-out rate is more than 35% during the first semester at university. Overall graduation rates at traditional universities average around 40%. Traditional universities tend to concentrate their efforts and resources on the more-advanced students because so many students drop off along the way. At lower levels professors lecture, but don't have much personal interaction with students and usually do not hold office hours. Assessment (grading) tends to rely heavily on the test at the end of the semester.

Liberal Arts Model: There are five new Netherlands universities which were created to reflect the model of the public-liberal arts college in the U.S. These universities are very different from the traditional model described above. UCEAP has established exchanges with two of them. University College Utrecht was the first such liberal arts university in the Netherlands, founded in 1998. It reflects a focus on undergraduate education and a broad curriculum. It is a small honors liberal arts college within, but physically separate from, Utrecht University. The college has 14 core teaching staff members and relies on the wider Utrecht University for professors to teach courses that its dedicated staff can't handle. The curriculum has been described as "one big elective" and progress toward specialization is according to the developing interest of the student. University College Maastricht is a similar small liberal arts institution within the larger Maastricht University. At both institutions classes are small and seminar-sized. Admission is selective for both UCU and UCM. 90% of the entering student body graduates (similar to Berkeley). Special skills courses are offered at both institutions. Instruction is entirely in English. The method of instruction is the tutorial. Students are responsible for doing group presentations and discussion of the day's assigned reading. The professor or tutor does not lecture and only becomes involved when necessary to facilitate discussion. Professors are readily approachable and have office hours.

For the study abroad student these are important things to consider. The best advice to help you make a decision about which university you would be happiest attending is to talk to students who have been on the program. Ask your Study Abroad Advisor for the names of students to write to.

As a study abroad student you won't be impacted by set curricula at traditional universities because you have the ability to take courses you choose from more than one field, unlike students from the Netherlands.

Do you want small tutorial size classes? If you choose to apply to Utrecht University and take 1st or 2nd year courses you may be likely to encounter large lecture classes. The flip side to large lecture classes is that attendance isn't taken. Attendance is mandatory in your classes at UCU and UCM and your grade goes down if you miss class.

The curriculum at UCU and UCM tends to include writing "busy work". Because English is the language of instruction there are frequent writing assignments for the Dutch students for whom English is not their native language. These writing assignments are very beneficial for the Dutch students but may be less so for you as a native English speaker, unless you enjoy writing.

Maastricht University Business & Economics and University College Maastricht both use a teaching method called “Problem-Based Learning” or PBL. This comes with the responsibility for each student to have prepared for class by doing assigned reading and also to be prepared to participate in every class. Berkeley students, although they are used to participation, sometimes would prefer not to participate every time, so this requirement takes some getting used to.

Do you want to live in a small city or a larger city and urban area?

University College Utrecht is a small campus-based honors university. It is residential, so all students must live on campus in the dormitories and take the campus meal plan. Dorms are with both Dutch and international students, and students have single rooms within a suite of six rooms, a common room, and small kitchen facilities (small refrigerator, micro wave and hotplate so you can cook occasionally). Since you must use the meal plan you will be eating Dutch cuisine.

University College Maastricht is not a residential campus. Dutch students find their own apartments off-campus in the city of Maastricht. However, international students live in the UCM Guesthouse, also known as the “P” or “C” dorms. Maastricht Business & Economics participants will also live in the “P” or “C” dorms. Students with dependents can choose to live off-campus.

Utrecht University has two campuses, one in the main downtown area and the De Uithof campus in another part of the city. International students live in residence halls, which are essentially student-run dormitories, situated throughout the city. The residence halls are equipped with kitchens, dishes and cutlery and cooking utensils, and students must do their own cooking and shopping. The De Uithof Campus has a student cafeteria. Dutch students often live at home.

Curriculum

At all four of our partner universities the undergraduate curriculum is taught in three years, levels 1, 2 & 3. Level 1 tends to be introductory, levels 2 & 3 for students who are majoring or minoring in a subject. Most courses specify the period of instruction or “block”, the level, and how many ECTS points the course is given for. All students are required to enroll in 30 ECTS points a semester. A 7.5 ECTS point class is equivalent to a 4-unit semester course. Courses can vary in how many ECTS points a student must enroll in.

You can study in most fields at any of the four universities, including humanities, social science and science. At Utrecht University many undergraduate classes are taught in Dutch, but in some Faculties instruction is in English. Also at Utrecht for the second block period of the fall semester, students have to be careful to find courses that are taught by professors that will allow early final exams so they can leave before the winter holidays.

Semester period of instruction: Univ. College Utrecht has a semester of instruction, similar to Berkeley. Students must take four courses each semester.

Block periods of instruction: At the other three institutions the semester is divided into two block periods, each 8 weeks long. Two courses are taken per block, for a total of four courses for the semester.

University College Maastricht has six periods. Periods #1, #2, #4 and #5 are block instruction periods and periods #3 and #6 are for special projects. Year long EAP students attending University College Maastricht have the option of doing projects but semester students for either fall or spring will be finished after blocks #2 or #4.

University College Utrecht (UCU) Fall, Spring, Year:

Class Standing: This program is intended for Sophomores and Juniors. Seniors may apply but in the past some have not been happy in the program because of UCU's size, the residential nature of the program and its isolation from the main city of Utrecht (30 minutes away by bicycle). Students are responsible for searching out their own resource materials; past students have commented that they do not have access to an adequate library on campus.

Clubs & Social Activities

UCU students can easily get involved with clubs and social activities on campus; there are activities every week. Having a built-in social scene is a very satisfying aspect of the program for UC students.

Utrecht University (UU) Year or Spring:

Academics:

There is a *very limited amount of coursework in some fields offered in English* at UU.

There are four faculties at UU offering courses in English: Humanities, Law, Social Sciences and Geosciences. Particularly strong fields at UU are Art History, Dutch Society, Economics and Women's Studies. All the courses in the Economics Dept. are offered in English. Please ask the Netherlands Adviser to see a course catalog for the Economics Dept. Please be aware that the UU Economics Department is located on the UCU Campus, requiring additional travel time. There are also offerings in Biomedical Sciences in English.

Advance Housing Deposit Required!

Short Stay Solutions will place the EAP student in housing, based on the student's preferences. Be aware that there is an \$1800 deposit required for housing in the second half of the semester before participation (this is before financial aid students receive a disbursement for EAP and must be paid out-of-pocket).

Housing Gap Between Dutch Culture & Language Program and Beginning of Semester

There is a three week gap between the end of the Dutch Culture & Language Program at the beginning of the semester and the start of classes at Utrecht. Students can use this break to travel or may be able to stay in the UCU students rooms until Utrecht housing is available.

Maastricht University Business & Economics Program, Fall, Spring, Year:

Maastricht University was founded in 1986. It has some innovative methods of teaching, i.e. Problem Based Learning (PBL).

Academic Program:

This program is appropriate for second semester juniors or seniors with background coursework *in economics and business*. Courses are only available in the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. The semester is divided into two eight-week blocks. The first seven weeks are for instruction and the 8th week is for the final exam. Students take two courses worth 7.5 ECTS points (4 semester units each) during each block.

Prospective participants must be aware of and interested in the Problem Based Learning (PBL) method commonly used at Maastricht University & Univ. College Maastricht (see description in the [Student Guide](#)). Mention your interest and understanding of this in your Statement of Purpose in the EAP application.

Advanced juniors and seniors who are looking towards graduate school in business or economics and who want to put together much of what they have learned here at UCB in a setting of teamwork with Dutch and international students will find this program rewarding. The courses will be challenging but stimulating and students will have the chance to do group projects with fellow students and to work on their writing and presentation skills. Students who wish to take accounting, finance, decision-making and game theory, or economic modeling courses should have some background in calculus and possibly a course at UCB in econometrics or statistical modeling. Class presentations are expected to be in PowerPoint format.

Course Prerequisites:

Completion of the intermediate micro and macro economics series, (Economics 100A and B) and additional upper division coursework in Economics or Business is required before departure. Students will be better prepared and get more from this program by participating near the end of their studies. This program is *not suited for a first semester Junior* beginning his/her upper division coursework abroad. Since space on the program is limited, students who have good background preparation will be given priority.

University College Maastricht, Fall, Year, Spring:

Academic Program:

University College, Maastricht is a small liberal arts college. The language of instruction is English, and about 50% of the students come from outside the Netherlands. University College Maastricht uses the Problem Based Learning (PBL) method (see description in the [Student Guide](#)). The ideal student for this program is a highly motivated, independent learner who is interested in the PBL method. The semester is divided into two, eight-week blocks. The first 7 weeks are for instruction and the 8th week is for the final exam. Students take two courses each worth 7.5 ECTS points (4 semester units each) during each block.

Skills courses focusing on academic skills such as making presentations, writing academic papers, and working with different research methods are also offered but do not transfer to UCB for credit.