The Netherlands
UCEAP Advising Notes

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to present challenges related to health concerns and international travel. UCEAP has been updating their website’s Coronavirus Notice with up-to-date information on program cancellations for the 2021-2022 cycle. All programs listed in this Advising Notes document are scheduled to proceed at this time, and UCEAP will inform campus offices if there are any updates.

Last updated Nov. 2020

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 a UCEAP 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. If any concerns you have are not addressed on the UCEAP website 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 our website.

Capacity Constraints
All programs except for Business & Economics, Wageningen University and Maastricht Summer have limited spaces reserved for UC Berkeley students. For this reason, please read through all program options, have a back-up program in mind, and contact the Netherlands Adviser early about your intentions to apply.

In order to make an informed choice about which program in the Netherlands is the best fit for you, it is important to consider geographic location, university model, and instructional style. Below is a breakdown of two types of universities in the Netherlands: the traditional university and liberal arts university.

The Traditional University accepts all students that choose to attend and who pass qualifying examinations after high school. Students take fixed courses in the same subject their entire college career. As a study abroad student, you have the ability to take courses you choose from more than one field. Because they accept all students, traditional universities often feature large lecture courses, especially years one and two. At lower levels professors lecture, but do not have much personal interaction with students and usually do not hold office hours. Grading tends to rely heavily on the test at the end of the semester.

Utrecht University, Fall, Spring, Year
Utrecht University comprises of two campuses, and the main De Uithof campus is in the downtown area. International students live in residence halls situated throughout the city with fully equipped kitchens. Students do their own cooking and shopping. The De Uithof Campus has a student cafeteria. UCEAP students contract with Short Stay Solutions to find housing or look for housing on their own upon arrival. Be aware that there is an approximately $1800 deposit required for housing due in the semester before participation and before financial aid students receive a disbursement.
Many undergraduate classes are taught in Dutch, but in some faculties (departments) instruction is in English. Humanities, Law, Social Sciences, Biomedical Sciences and Geosciences offer some courses in English. All Economics courses are offered in English.

Coursework is offered in two block periods per semester. For the second block period of the Fall semester, students have to find courses that are taught by professors that will allow early final exams so they can leave before the winter holidays.

Utrecht is a popular city within the Netherlands and also hosts the University College Utrecht program (more details below). Check out this resource created by alumni from both programs.

Maastricht University
Maastricht University offers four program options for UCEAP students and all offer an innovative method of teaching called Problem Based Learning (PBL). Students must do assigned readings and be prepared to participate in every class. Students must also facilitate at least one class, usually along with a fellow student. This requires posing questions for the class on the day’s assigned topic and guiding the discussion. The courses will be challenging but stimulating. Students will participate in group projects and develop writing and presentation skills. Prospective students must mention their interest and understanding of the PBL method in their statement of purpose.

In each program, students take courses in two blocks (like quarters). During the semester, each block is 8 weeks long and during summer, each block is 3 weeks long. Students take two courses during each block in the semester, or one course per block in the summer.

Maastricht is a small town in southeastern Netherlands near the Belgian border. Most students ride bicycles to get around efficiently. Below are the programs offered in Maastricht University.

**Business & Economics, Maastricht University, Fall, Spring, Year**
This program is appropriate for second semester juniors or seniors with background coursework in economics and business. 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.

Courses are only available in the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. Students who wish to take accounting, finance, decision-making and game theory, or economic modeling courses should have some background in calculus and possibly econometrics or statistical modeling.

**Psychology & Neuroscience, Maastricht University, Fall**
Maastricht is particularly well-known for its strong offerings in cognitive and biological psychology. Students will take one core course and one seminar per block. The core course will allow an independent study project. One course can be on Dutch art or culture. Field trips and excursions are offered throughout the semester.

**Biological and Life Sciences, Maastricht University, Fall**
This program is only open to Biology, Molecular and Cell Biology, and Biochemistry majors. Students will take one core course and one seminar per block. The core course will allow an independent study project. One course can be on Dutch art or culture. Field trips and excursions are offered throughout the semester.

**Maastricht Summer**
This summer program is six weeks long and is for international students, meaning you will not interact much with Dutch students. There is an orientation at the beginning of the program.
including a trip to Amsterdam and there are field trips and museum visits offered throughout the program. Each student will take two courses, one per block. A list of 16-18 courses is offered in a variety of subjects. Students stay in the Guesthouse, which is about a 40 minute walk to campus. Most students bike-ride and if you do not plan to bike, please consider this commute time in your daily routine. Students buy their own groceries and cook their own meals.

Wageningen University, Fall
This is a relatively new program. This university ranks #1 in the world in Life Sciences and also offers Environmental Sciences, Food Sciences and Social Sciences. Research is part of every course. 2/3 of Bachelor’s courses and all Masters-level courses are taught in English. Students take 4 courses, 2 per block, and can sample from a wide-ranging curriculum. Be sure to look at the Minors offered in 23 different areas: courses are offered ranging from agricultural studies to food studies, to biotechnology, sustainability and resource management. Research is not available at Wageningen.

The Liberal Arts University Model reflects a focus on undergraduate education and a broad curriculum. Admission is selective. At these institutions, classes are small and seminar-sized. Attendance is mandatory and your grade goes down if you miss class. Special skills courses are offered at these institutions (UCEAP students can’t take these courses for credit) and instruction is entirely in English. The method of instruction at University Colleges 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.

The curriculum at University College Utrecht and University College Maastricht 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.

University College Utrecht, Fall, Year, Spring
UCU was the first such liberal arts university in the Netherlands, founded in 1998. It is a small honors liberal arts college within, but physically separate from, Utrecht 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.

Univ. College Utrecht has a semester of instruction, similar to Berkeley. Students must take four courses each semester. 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 and the residential nature of the program. UCU students can easily get involved with clubs and social activities on campus; there are activities every week.

University College Maastricht, Fall, Year, Spring
This is a similar small liberal arts institution within the larger Maastricht University. UCM 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. Students with dependents can choose to live off-campus.

The language of instruction is English, and about 50% of the students come from outside the Netherlands. 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 UCEAP 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 Maastricht uses the Problem Based Learning (PBL) method. The ideal student for this program is a highly motivated, independent learner who is interested in the PBL method. 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.

**Leiden University College**

University College Leiden is part of Leiden University, although it is located in a separate city, the Hague. There are limited spots for this program so please apply early and contact the BSA Adviser if you are considering this program.

Leiden University College is also much smaller than UC Berkeley. Most students live in the main university building where there are also classrooms, staff apartments, and a bar. UCEAP participants have the choice to apply for housing here or off campus. Living off campus may mean not being as immersed in the Leiden community and result in having to make a more concerted effort to build friendships.

The grading scale at Leiden is different from the United States and Berkeley students should not be shocked when they do not receive as high of grades from Leiden faculty as they are used to receiving in Berkeley. UCEAP has a grading scale that is employed to ensure the grades that show up on your UC Berkeley transcript reflect the expectations of UC.

The International Criminal Court is also in the Hague. LUC’s distinctive majors seem to have been influenced by its setting in this part of the Netherlands with an emphasis on global studies, especially for law, human rights and public health.