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 our website.

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.

In order to make an informed choice about which program in the Netherlands is the best fit for you, it is
important to understand the distinction between the Netherlands’ Traditional University and Liberal Arts
University Models.

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, unlike students
from the Netherlands. Because they accept all students, traditional institutions 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 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 situated throughout the city.
They 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. UCEAP students
will contract with ‘Short Stay Solutions’ to find housing or they can look for housing on their own
once they arrive. 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 and must be paid out-of-pocket).
Many undergraduate classes are taught in Dutch, but in some Faculties instruction is in English. Humanities, Law, Social Sciences and Geosciences offer some courses in English. There are also offerings in Biomedical Sciences in English. All the Economics courses are offered in English.

Coursework is offered in 2 block periods per semester. 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.

**Maastricht University**
This university has an innovative method of teaching, i.e. Problem Based Learning (PBL). This comes with the responsibility for each student to have prepared for class by doing assigned reading 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 semester is divided into two eight-week blocks. The first seven weeks are for instruction and the eighth week is for the final exam. Students take two courses worth 7.5 ECTS points (4 semester units each) during each block. 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.

**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 2 courses total, one per block. A list of 16-18 courses is offered in a variety of subjects. They are taught in the Problem-Based-Learning format over two blocks, each 3 weeks long. 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 are responsible to buy their own groceries and cook their own meals.

**Business & Economics, Maastricht University, Fall, Spring, Year**
This program is appropriate for second semester juniors or seniors with background coursework in economics and business. Prospective participants must be aware of and interested in the Problem Based Learning (PBL) method. Mention your interest and understanding of this in your Statement of Purpose in the EAP application.

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 and its Problem-Based Learning approach. Students will take 4 courses, 2 per block. Each block will contain one core course and one seminar. 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.
Public Health & Pre-Med, Maastricht University, Fall
Maastricht’s programs allow students to explore public health from a European perspective and especially the Dutch system up close. Students will take 4 courses, 2 per block. Each block will contain one core course and one seminar and an independent study project is possible within the core course. One course can be on Dutch art or culture. Field trips and excursions are offered throughout the semester.

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. The course scheduling is worked out to fit within a 2-period scheme. 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, the residential nature of the program and its isolation from the main city of Utrecht (30 minutes away by bicycle). 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**

This is a relatively new program. 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. Due to housing deadlines, many end up off campus which 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.