



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Molecular life sciences
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	23/08/21 until 10/02/22
Country (exchange)	France
P	Paris
University (exchange)	Université Paris-Saclay
Faculty (exchange)	Biology

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to broaden my horizons and meet more international people. I also wanted to learn a new language.

What is the reason you chose for this country/university?

I wanted to learn French and this university was in France and a bit outside of Paris so I wouldn't be in too much of a busy area.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination? (E.g. bus, train, etc.)

My parents took me by car, this was nice because that way it was easy to bring all of my stuff. If you want to take the Thalys my advice is to book as early as possible, because then it is much cheaper!

4. University and studying

Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

	Course	ECTS	Short description of the contents	Appreciation of course: 1(low) – 5(high)	Remarks
1	Nanophotonics	7	This course aims as basic knowledge in both theoretical and practical aspects of the physical description, the fabrication and the characterisation	4	

			techniques of nano-objects and nanostructures for photonics.		
2	Light-Matter Interactions in molecular media: basics	3	The aim of this course is to provide all basic information related to light, from Basics Maxwellian Optics (light propagation) to Laser and matters interactions. Particular attention will be devoted to lasers and properties of the laser beam.	3	
3	Signal Processing	5	This course aims at the acquisition of basic knowledge about the analysis, the understanding and the elaboration of a digital transmission line.	4	
4	Microfluidics	4	Microfluidics lectures aim to introduce students to fluid mechanics at the microscale, in the framework of lab-on-a-chips and their technology associated. Fluid mechanics at the microscale has the particularity to be multiphysics. Lectures contain both theoretical backgrounds and microfabrication analysis. Examples of technical solutions illustrate the course. Practical work will give the possibility for students to design,	5	

			fabricate and characterise a microfluidic chip.		
5	Biosensors	5	The students will be able to understand the working principle of commercial fluorescence sensing kits, to optimize them and create new ones. The students will be able to understand the working principle of ion selective electrodes, Ion Sensitive Field Effect and Organic FET, to optimize them and create new ones.	4	
6	Ion Channel Recording	5	This course proposes to review most recent research and industrial developments in micro and nanotechnology devoted to biological applications. In particular DNA biochip, protein chips and Cell biochips will be studied. Practical course, where real experiments are conducted on biomicrosystems, are confronted to the theory and simulation are proposed in the framework of biodevices course.	5	
7	Python Programming for Biological data Analysis	3	Python is a simple, multi-purpose language that is a reference in data science (statistical analysis of data and machine learning). This course is an overview of the tools and libraries needed for high-performance exploratory data analysis and	5	

			collaborative scientific software development using Python. The course is fully hands-on, and tackles modern problems in data science and emerging practices to solve them.		
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How is the study formalized? (E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material)

I never needed any books, the slides were always the only thing necessary. The slides were available either in print or online depending on the lecturer. The study form in most of my courses was mostly lectures. Some tutorials and a few practicals. The course Ion channel recording also contained paper reading sessions and presentations. The workload is quite high especially near the end when you have all the practicals you need to write reports about and also all the exams you need to study for as all the exams are at the end of the semester.

What is the culture of the university? (E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with the WUR?)

My courses were located at the sub-university of Paris-Sacaly called ENS Paris-Saclay. Here they had a BDE (bureau des eleves) which is sort of like a study association for the whole school. This BDE did not really do their best to include internation students, but if you speak some French or make some French friends you can learn about all their activities. The lecturers are very approachable and you can always drop by their offices to ask them questions. The biggest difference with the WUR would be for me that the small scale, WUR is already small scale but I had lectures with maximum of about 25 people. Which is even less than I am used to at WUR.

What does the university offer the student additionally? (E.g. Catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?)

There is a restaurant next to it called Crous, where you pay only 3 euros for a 3 course meal. But this meal is not the best quality, especially the vegetarian option is often lacking any source of protein. It is still a nice place to have lunch with your classmates and 3 euros for a 3 course meal is very cheap and where the quality might lack they make up for in quantity. There are also sports classes you can follow and join but make sure to sign up quickly because you sign up at the beginning of the year for all classes and the group lessons like Zumba or yoga were already full. This gave me the opportunity to try the team sport rugby though so it is also a good way to discover something new. The laundry facilities were present in the accommodation provided to me by the university and the cost was about 3 euros for washing and 1 euro for drying (the detergent is included in the price)

5.Housing-travelling-living

What are the possibilities for housing? (E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?)

The rent here is much cheaper than in Paris itself and comparable to the rent in Wageningen for university housing! The university provided me with a document to fill in and gave me a university room. If I would not have wanted this room I would have had to look for something private which I've heard people say is much more expensive.

What is the culture of the country like? (E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?)

The most noticeable change for me was the level of English, French people, even the younger people, can have difficulty speaking English. This is of course good for learning French, but can also make you feel a bit isolated. Just know that from my experience they don't speak French to exclude you, just because they are very unused to speaking English which makes them uncomfortable.

Could you give a general price indication of the place of residence compared to living in Wageningen?

It was about the same price

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure? (E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?)

You can buy a student transport card which gives access to unlimited transport for I think about 350 euros per year. It is not possible to buy this for half a year, but I still thought the price was worth to get it for half a year too.

6. Free time

What are must-sees in the area? (E.g. nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?)

It is on the south of Paris, so for a weekend trip going to Fontainebleau castle and the forests around it is not too far away and a great way to be out for the weekend. To get to Paris from the campus you only have to take one train: the RER B. This train takes about 1 hour to reach the centre of Paris and from there you can take the metro to wherever in Paris you want to go. If you want to go out at night there is a nightbus that goes the same route as the RER B that goes about every hour.

What does not appear in the travel guide, but is worth a visit?

In Paris itself I only saw the main sights as it was an hour away and I only went there in the weekends. But I can definitely recommend going to the halle saint pierre in Montmartre, it is a hall with a changing art exhibition and a small café. Which to me was an oasis of rest in a busy Paris. I also recommend going to as many museums as possible because most of them are free for Europeans under 26 years old. So you can really explore a lot of them when you are there and discover unexpected surprises.

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time (E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?)

For going out I either went to the parties organised by my university on the campus or to café Oz châtelet. Café Oz is also where ESN has their parties one Wednesday a month and they are always fun! For restaurants la felicità is very pretty with a nice atmosphere. For cheap French food I can recommend Bouillon Chartier, you can't make a reservation here but the building is a monumental building and very pretty and it offers all traditional French dishes for small prices. What's also fun about this restaurant is that they have tables of 6 or 8 that are always filled. So if you go with 2 people you will be placed with random people which can be cause for fun conversations!

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

For me the main challenge was loneliness. This was both caused by living in a studio while being used to having housemates and also when being in a group of French people that speak French not being able to follow everything (the French speak quick!!) and feeling a bit excluded.

What was your best memory abroad?

This must have been the combination of all meaningful conversations with the other internationals. It was great to learn about all their cultures and backgrounds. The most fun example of this I can think of is that in Paris you have a lot of restaurants with different cuisines. So we decided to go to everyone's native restaurant so we could try a meal from their country. We had Turkish, Vietnamese, Thai, Mexican, French, Greek and maybe even more that I can't think of. These were always fun times and even though there is no Dutch restaurant in Paris I could provide them with "kruidnoten" so they could taste some Dutch tradition as well!

8. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
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