



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	BSc Management and Consumer Studies
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	09/08/2022 until 16/12/2022
Country (exchange)	United States
City (exchange)	Ames
University (exchange)	Iowa State University
Faculty (exchange)	College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to broaden my horizon, explore living in a new country/culture, make new and international friends and to find out how university is like in a different country.

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

The European culture is influenced a lot by the United States and I was very curious how life really is in the United States, whether it is comparable to what we see on TV or read in books. Iowa seemed to me as the perfect place where "normal" people would live their lives and where I could get a good view of the normal life in the United States.

Furthermore, the campus looked really beautiful online (and in real life as well, I can say now) and the courses looked appealing to me.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

The university offers new exchange students a free shuttle from the airport, which is very interesting to consider because public transport is pretty bad from Des Moines to Ames and taxis are difficult to get as well.

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	Agricultural Selling	5		5	I really liked this course because we were challenged to put a lot of the theories we learned into practice. The course ended with a sales night in which we had to sell a product ourselves to a sales representative.
2	Economics of Discrimination	5		5	Dr. Orazem is a great and very enthusiastic teacher who presents the content of the course in a very appealing way. I learned a lot during this course, also due to the discussion of many real-life cases.
3	Introduction to Agricultural Markets	5		4	This course was interesting because I didn't know much about how agricultural markets work. Nevertheless, the level of the course was not very high and thus the course was not very challenging but it's a great introduction to start learning about agricultural markets!
4	Rural Society in Transition	5		5	Dr. Balayar is a very enthusiastic teacher who is very interested in the stories of his students. He taught us a lot during this course, with real-life examples and interesting course contents. A great way to enlarge your knowledge of rural America.
5	Personal, Professional, and Entrepreneurial Leadership in Agriculture	5		4	Interesting course, teaches you all the theories of leadership and provides practical examples and cases as well. The course work is mostly done on your own through the online book.

How is the study formalized? (E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material)

You follow your courses for one semester, which is different from most courses in Wageningen. Furthermore, almost 20% of your grade consists of your presence. For most courses, you have weekly quizzes and assignments to keep up with the work load. That makes it very doable because in the end, you have repeated everything already. Work load is less compared with courses in Wageningen but it is important to keep up and show up.

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?)

Lecturers are very approachable and the culture is very personal. Professors want to get to know you and they have weekly office hours in which you are encouraged to come by to chat or ask questions. Furthermore, participation in lectures is very much appreciated. They want to help you so if you have questions or you have to hand in things later due to circumstances, they are always open to help you.

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

The university offers two gyms for free, there are many dining halls and cafeterias, there is a bowling alley, cinema and a game room on campus. Furthermore, you can play many sports or join one of the 800 clubs on campus. The library is great as well, it offers many places and also many different places, from silent rooms to group work rooms to more relaxing spaces.

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?)

You can get a room on campus through the university. I would definitely recommend this because it is easy and the facilities are very good. Most of the exchange students had a room in a shared apartment at Frederiksen Court. This is also easily accessible with the free bus from the center of the campus. You pay around \$600 each month for a room like that and it comes with a washing machine, dryer and even a dishwasher.

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

Eating out is more common, also because of the dining halls, which is fun to eat together with other students, also because eating out is not very expensive and most restaurants in campus town have daily deals. Furthermore, most American students own a car. Thursday night is also the most popular going out night in Ames, just like in Wageningen.

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

It is quite comparable, although food in supermarkets is a bit more expensive but eating out is cheaper. Furthermore, it depends on the exchange rate of the dollar and euro.

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

Happily, the university offers free bus services with which you can easily travel on and off campus. Furthermore, you can also walk to the university. Taxis are more difficult to find in Ames, but if you are able to get in touch with American students they might want to give you a ride because almost all of them have a car. Public transport is almost non-existent besides the bus services from the university. The university also offers Safe Ride and the Moonlight Express after 6 pm to offer free rides on campus to make sure that students don't have to walk alone in the middle of the evening/night.

6. Free time

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

Des Moines, Pella (Dutch town in Iowa) and otherwise Chicago (a six-hour drive with car) or Omaha (a three-hour drive with car). You can travel to Des Moines with an Uber or Lyft. Furthermore, of course go to the Jack Trice football stadium or Hilton Colosseum to watch football, basketball, wrestling or volleyball. Reiman Gardens is also a must-see and has a student discount. They also host some fun events around Halloween and Christmas. Downtown Ames is also worth a visit.

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

Going tailgating before a football match. Or just go to Target or Walmart, explore some fast food chains we don't have in the Netherlands. Furthermore, The Café in Ames is a great restaurant with some European influences where they serve amazing cakes! If you like to play golf, the golf court of the university is definitely worth a visit because it's cheap and close by.

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

Campus town is a lot of fun, has great bars and restaurants. For example, Taco Tuesday at Estas (very cheap tacos and beers), mug night is a must do on Thursday night (at all bars but I preferred Paddy's/Sips or AJs). I think you can find the bars you like yourself the most when you go to campus town. They have a lot of good deals on all days of the week. Doing a pub crawl in downtown Ames is also fun. Furthermore, the gym facilities are great and free, so definitely worth a visit. The university organises a lot of other things like open mic nights, cheap bowling evenings, etc. Joining a club is also worth a try, to meet American students and explore their student life.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

Arriving completely on your own in a place you have never seen before and meeting new people you also have never seen before was pretty scary the first night/day but just jump into the adventure and that scary start will be the start of an amazing adventure and a great time! And don't forget that most people feel the same.

What was your best memory abroad?

Just the normal daily life on campus with the great people I met but also the trip we made with a group of exchange students during our free week with Thanksgiving where we visited national parks like Grand Canyon and Arches National Park and Las Vegas.

8. Contact details (optional)

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