



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>	BPW
<b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	5 January 2023 until 26 April 2023
<b>Country (exchange)</b>	Canada
<b>City (exchange)</b>	Guelph
<b>University (exchange)</b>	University of Guelph
<b>Faculty (exchange)</b>	Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology

## 2. Motivation for exchange

### Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

*I wanted to challenge myself even more and go abroad to study in different environment thousands of kilometres from home, living on my own and start being independent. Also, after corona I wanted to make some new friends and meet new people from all over the world.*

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

*I think Canada and particularly Guelph because of the nature and the variety of the country. Guelph is quite central of Canada and therefore ideal to travel through the country because the airport in Toronto is also nearby. This makes it also easy to travel to Mexico, New York and other places further away.*

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

*You'll probably fly to Toronto Pearson airport. From there it is about 2 hours with the bus but after a flight it would be understandable to take an Uber which is about 90\$-150\$ to Guelph depending on car size. If you're with 3-4 people I would recommend that after a flight. I flew with 3 other students from Guelph and we booked a motel nearby the airport for the first night because we left the airport around 20.30 (8.30PM) just to rest and travel the next day to Guelph.*

## 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
<b>1</b>	Genomics	0.5 (6 at WUR)	Course examines how genome projects are generated through mapping and sequencing	3.5	Interesting course about how the genome is organized and how it functions. 3/5 of your final grade is just assignments which is great, might be changed a little.
<b>2</b>	Grain Crops	0.5 (6 at WUR)	Management strategies and world production of major cereals are studied relative to their botanical and biological characteristics.	3	Not the best course in terms of its level but as plant scientist interesting to zoom in to a specific set of crops and learn everything about them.
<b>3</b>	Advanced Cell Biology	0.5 (6 at WUR)	Select set of advanced concepts of cell biology are studied, with the underlying theme of understanding how organelles in cells are formed and maintained, their structure and function.	3.5	Quite high level course with a lot of information though really interesting because of the detail. Read the course guide and think about it since it is a 4 <sup>th</sup> year course!
<b>4</b>	Environmental Chemistry & Tox	0.5 (6 at WUR)	Course examines the chemistry of natural environment and influence of pollutants upon the environment.	3	A bit weird course since the prof did not have an official page and did not provide any slides, you just had to make sure to attend lectures. However, not the hardest course since he gives a lot of hints for the exams.
<b>5</b>	Membrane Biochemistry	0.5 (6 at WUR)	Examines structure-function relationships of membrane proteins, lipids & carbohydrates, explains molecular basis and integrate data to explain cell physiology & tools to analyse membranes	4.5	By far the most interesting course. The profs were amazing and a course I would highly recommend for (micro)biology students. It is really useful to learn everything about membranes and the profs explained it really well. Again, read the course outline to consider since it is a 4 <sup>th</sup> year course but it is very doable.

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

*The study is formalized totally different compared to the WUR. You'll have to do more at home compared to the WUR. There are more different weekly assignments, projects, presentations and mid-terms (smaller exams throughout the period) which makes you less dependent on the final exam. The academic level is maybe little lower or quite similar to the WUR, but because you'll be following 4-5 courses that makes it harder to wrap it up on all of them.*

**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 and local students are very friendly, the people are so kind in Canada and will always ask you 'how are you today?', so as long as you're not shy to make the contact, people are very approachable.*

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

*There is a pub (called brass-taps) at the campus which is the best pub, there is trivia night every Tuesday at 8.00PM. Furthermore there are a lot of take-away spots for good food, actually University of Guelph has the best campus food of Canada (not sure if it was Northern America). There is an enormous Athletics Centre to go to the gym, do indoor sport, there is a swimming pool so almost all kinds of sport activities. There is a big ice-hall where our university team plays their ice-hockey games which are free for students, as well as the basketball/volleyball games indoor!!*

## **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?)**

*There are plenty of rooms available at and around the campus. You can choose to go to a host family but I really liked spending my time in residence with 2 flatmates. So there are North, West, East and South-residence on campus which are probably more expensive but again closer to the campus and a residence you share with 2-5 others depending where you end up. I stayed at West-residence, where most exchange/international students end up so we were one, big, happy family which was really nice!! Another benefit is that in West and East you do not have a meal-plan because you have a full kitchen so you can cook for yourself. In South and north I believe there a mealplan is mandatory. So west-residence is about a 10 minute walk to the campus or bus stop to downtown. Walmart and Metro (supermarkets) are again about a 5 minute walk from west. Walmart is cheaper than metro for sure, although Metro has higher quality groceries and products.*

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

*People are really friendly so that is quite nice. The cuisine is totally different, people eat pizza and fastfood almost all day so that was quite shocking at first. Therefore I cooked for myself and did groceries once every week or 10 days. But then again, you're almost stimulated to eat unhealthy since vegetables and fruit are more expensive compared to unhealthy food as pizzas and food with a lot of sugars or fats. It is affordable though so do not worry, you just have to look for the sales and good prices!!*

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

*So totally I had to pay 4747\$ (CAD) for the whole semester which was including some mandatory insurances, a bus pass & residence. For my residence I paid about 4110\$ (CAD) which is about 2800 euro right now so about 700 euro per month for residence. Take into account that I lived on campus, which again I would recommend, but there are (little?) cheaper options off-campus but you can have a look at them on the internet, think you have to type in something like 'Residence fees University of Guelph' and it will show prices, what the environments look like and the facilities. There were also some mandatory insurances I had to sign up for from the university. A dental plan (112\$ CAD) and some health insurances (add up to 335\$ CAD).*

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

*So you have a bus-pass which is about 160\$ (CAD) which you can use unlimitedly in Guelph. An Uber downtown will probably be around 15\$ (CAD) which is cheap if you're with 4-5 people and it is cold but otherwise just use the bus which goes every 15 minutes towards to the university. A train to Toronto (Union Station, downtown) probably is about 1 hour and 15 minutes and cost you about 15\$ (CAD) I think and 10\$ (CAD) during the weekends. A bus to Toronto (Union Station, downtown) probably is about 2-2.5 hours and costs you 15\$ (CAD) as well. See point 3 for how to travel to university!*

## **6. Free time**

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

*Obviously Toronto, an amazing city with lots of variety! You cannot skip the Niagara Falls where an immense amount of water falls down every second. During the reading week you can easily go a bit further places like New York, Vancouver, Mexico, Banff are popular spots to go to. You should definitely see an ice-hockey game of the Guelph Storms downtown in the Sleeman Centre. The last evening I went to a baseball game of the Toronto Blue Jays which was also an amazing experience.*

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

*A weekend in Algonquin Park during fall semester somewhere in September or late winter (march/April) or Spring is amazing! THE chance to see a moose or beaver in real life with hiking opportunities, outdoor activities and just a fun time with your friends.*

*During the winter semester, I had more snow days than normal days which is quite new but really fun. Just outside the city there is an easy trail of about 5 km which looks like winter wonderland, It is called 'Smith Property Loop Hiking trail'.*

*There is a claybar (called 'The Clay Bar, Play with clay') downtown where I went with my girlfriend and I got to say, I am not creative at all but had a great time and created a nice maple leaf so I would definitely recommend going to the clay bar since it also had some good wine and food.*

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

*Contact the other WUR students that go to Guelph so you can meet beforehand and maybe travel to Canada together, that way you'll always have some familiar faces around who can help you in tough times.*

*Definitely get yourself a membership for the Athletics centre which is about 60\$ for the whole semester!!! A really good price which includes access to the gym, participation opportunities for all lessons, access to the swimming pool/sauna.*

*I would not recommend taking a meal-plan unless you do not want to cook for yourself. If you do want some campus food you can pay with creditcard, the Creelman Hall is the best place to go for a proper diner. Restaurants and pubs are all downtown and easily accessible. On Thursday there is dollar-beer night in downtown so a fun night to go out and get some beers for a cheap price. The best club and a must see downtown is 'Palace', afterwards you can get some food like Burritos, pizza's or shawarma nearby!*

## **7.Challenges & best moment abroad**

### **What was a challenge you have experienced?**

*The first week was tough since some course might change and you have to change some papers. You'll meet a lot of new people so my social battery was done already after like 3 days so just take enough time for yourself to explore the campus and settle down in your room.*

### **What was your best memory abroad?**

*Definitely all the lovely people I met!! We had so much fun and did a lot of activities together so I have contacts all over the world now and lot of places to stay!!*

## **8. Contact details (optional)**

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