



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student information

Study programme WU	BSc International Development Studies
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	8/1/2024 until 4/5/2024
Exchange destination: University	Purdue University
Faculty	Forestry
Country	USA
City	West Lafayette

2. Motivation for exchange

a. Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I went on exchange to the USA 4 years ago when I was 18 and I really really loved it. I went to a high school there and now I wanted to do college life as well. Since it is super expensive to go to college in the USA by yourself, I wanted to experience the college life whilst not paying a fortune. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I also feel like these are the years you have the time to do different adventures so I wanted to take advantage of it.

b. What is the reason you chose for this country?

Since I went on exchange to the USA already I knew that I liked the country a lot. The school spirit is amazing and there are a lot of sport events and other activities to do in this country. Everything is open until late and even a short drive in the car can turn into an adventure. The whole ambiance of the country is something like you never experienced before.

c. What is the reason you chose for this university?

The university caught my eye since it was a good university for agriculture. On top of that, it seemed like a large university with a lot of opportunities to try different things. The architecture of the campus is also amazing and you feel right at home. Purdue has a very nice sport facility where you can do fitness, basketball, volleyball, rockclimbing, swim and there even is a spa and sauna. There is also a very big scala of courses you can choose from, there is always a course that you will like. It is also easy to change within the first week if you don't really enjoy the course.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

a. Do you have any advice about reaching your exchange destination?

There are two airports that you can fly to from Amsterdam. Indianapolis International Airport and O'Hare International Airport in Chicago. Indianapolis airport is a little more than an hour away from Purdue University and Ohare 2,5 hours away. I chose Ohare since it was cheaper and got a reindeer shuttle bus to the airport. You can also choose Lafayette limo.

4. University and studying

a. 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	Communication Strategies In ANR	6	In this course you learn about how to communicate and effectively discuss controversial topics in agricultural science	4	We learned useful approaches to have conversations with people that have different opinions without starting an argument. The pace of the course was a bit slow though
2	Marine biology	6	In this course you learn about the ocean, wind, rocks and sand, and a lot of characteristics of animals in the ocean or sea and shore birds	5	I enjoy biology and since it also gives you information about conservation and threats of these animals it fitted in my bachelor's. Fast pace of the course and very fun
3	Human-wildlife conflicts	6	In this course you learn about different human-wildlife conflicts in North America and what kind of threats the animals propose to humans	3	It was a very easy course. It also talks a lot about lethal ways to kill animals effectively and as an animal-lover it was sometimes not very fun (but still interesting) to listen to
4	Global awareness	6	In this course you learn the basic principles of globalisation	2	Very easy course and very basic
5	Introduction to environmental policy	6	In this course you learn about the history of environmental policy in the USA	3	The course taught a lot about the history and not necessarily the things that work and don't work in

					environmental policy. A lot of theory
6					

b. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses that were taught in English (Yes, No - Explain): almost every course was in English

c. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses in my field of interest (Yes, No - Explain): there are a lot of possibilities since it is such a big university with a lot of different departments

d. I am satisfied with the level of the courses that I followed (Yes, No - Explain): the level of my courses was below average and I wished I had more guidance on the difficulty of the courses

e. I am satisfied, in the end, with the selection of courses I followed (Yes, No - Explain): it can always be a hit or miss with choosing courses

f. What is it like to study there?

E.g. Study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material?

In my experience it is quite easy to get good grades at this university. Homework is also graded so you can easily get your grade up if you don't score well on exams. Workload is heavier than in Wageningen. There are a lot of assignments and essays and also more than 1 exam. The examination is also smoother and doesn't take hours.

g. What is the culture of the university?

E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with WU?

The culture of the university is enjoyable. There are a lot of different nationalities at this university and there are facilities for people who want to do more with their culture. People are often also open to help and lecturers are very friendly. Local students enjoy talking to people from different cultures and always like to have a chat

h. What does the university offer students additionally?

E.g. Catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?

The university offers a lot of facilities, the sport complex being the most beautiful one. Many sports are available to play here, in teams but also individual. There are dining courts where you can eat for an all you can eat buffet for 13 dollar and many other food options like subway or panera bread throughout the campus. There are a lot of places to study.

5. Housing-traveling-living

a. What are the possibilities for housing?

E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?

You can choose to live in dorms, which is usually the most expensive option but an amazing American experience. You can live alone, with a roommate or even two. When you apply for an exchange year it is very easy to sign a contract with a dorm. You get paired with someone that has the same living habits or hobbies as you. You can also apply for a cooperative house, where you live with 20-30 people in a house and cook and

clean together (this is what I chose). This is usually the most cheap option, it is very clean and works very well since the cooperatives are part of a system that is very strict. You can get in contact with them by emailing them or asking a representative to help you. Lastly, you can choose to get an apartment or a small house that you share with 3-5 people. Here you can cook your own meals. It is easy to get in contact with roommates by using facebook groups.

b. What is the culture like?

E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?

I think many people have an idea of what American culture is like, and most of it is true in my opinion. There are a lot of food options and there is a lot to try. It is sometimes a bit fatty, but that is mostly the meat. As a vegetarian you can definitely get good meals, as there are enough options. People are very welcoming, helpful and gullible and will oftentimes offer you items that you need or food. there are a lot of activities to go to, so you don't get bored often. There are a lot of house parties and bars or pubs to go to. The party life is pretty much the same as in Wageningen, although at Purdue you sometimes had to be asked to get on the guest list to enter a party.

c. Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?

As a student you have free travel with the bus to a few places like the city centre and Walmart. However, if you want to go further than that, there are buses you can pay for to take you to a city nearby. To go to Chicago you pay 55 dollars round trip, which is not bad. Taxi prices, when you share them between others, is also doable. There are a lot of taxis available around campus.

6. Expenses

a. Can you give an indication of your expenses for/during your exchange?

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	1250
Visa - if applicable	500
Vaccinations - if applicable	-
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	If your insurance covers it 0, if you need Purdue insurance 600
Daytrips/sight-seeing	500
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	530
Grocery costs per month	Included in rent
Public transport costs per month	0
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	50

b. The price levels were in general [higher; lower; equal] in comparison to in the Netherlands:

c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?

It can get quite expensive in the USA overall, with visa, vaccinations, insurance and plane ticket. On top of that, the USA is expensive. Make sure to have enough money saved up for your exchange. However, I don't think you pay a lot more money in the USA then if you would have gone to Italy or Norway. Your exchange year is always going to cost money.

7. Free time

a. What are must-sees in the area?

E.g. Nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?

Definitely go to Chicago, it is like NYC but a bit smaller and less busy. NYC is also close by, like a 2,5 hour plane ride. Indianapolis is also close and worth a visit. If you are a basketball fan, it is great to see the Pacers, an NBA team. It is easy to book a bus with reindeer shuttle, flibus or greyhound.

b. What does not appear in a travel guide, but is definitely worth seeing/doing?

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8. Challenges & best moment abroad

a. Any challenges? How did you deal with them?

It was difficult in the beginning to understand how the system worked with submitting homework and seeing when you had assignments. I asked help when I needed it and always got the help I needed.

b. Best memory?

It was amazing to go with all my friends to Miami, Florida in the spring break. Especially since it gets very cold and snowy in Indiana. Secondly, I enjoyed spending some of my dinners in the dining court with my friends, we oftentimes spend 3 or 4 hours just talking and having fun whilst enjoying the menu of the day.

9. Contact details

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