Maastricht 2015

Study Abroad Handbook

A useful guide to your study abroad experience

The usefulness of this handbook depends on student input. If you find erroneous information, please contact overseas@iu.edu. Copyright 2014 Indiana University
# What's Inside?

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## The Netherlands

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The Maastricht program offers undergraduates the unique opportunity of studying the growing interdependence of American and European business at a Dutch university. The curriculum includes the study of European economics, politics and law. This curriculum is provided as a framework for understanding European business and trade policies. In addition, students visit multinational firms and government agencies for presentations concerning the nature of business at the international level and the complexities of production and work force management abroad. Special emphasis is given to the current integration taking place of the economies of the European Union countries.

All students in the program are expected to participate fully in all scheduled activities and events. Your acceptance of an invitation to join the program implies your willingness to go on all field trips, attend any special meetings or events, and participate in all activities of the program. **Your personal travel plans must not be allowed to interfere with your full participation in the above mentioned activities and class schedules.**

This booklet is a supplement to the *Getting Started* handbook received earlier. While it contains specific program information, *Getting Started* contains information relevant to all students on Indiana University Overseas Study programs. Both booklets should be used now as you prepare to leave and later while you are abroad. Since most student questions are addressed in these handbooks, please consult them before calling the Office of Overseas Study.
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THE NETHERLANDS

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Important Documents

Visa

U.S. citizens do not need a visa to enter the Netherlands, although all students will be required obtain a Temporary Resident’s Permit within a week of arrival. The cost of the permit is included in your IU fee. Citizens of other countries will need to submit additional documents for the visa.

Traveling

Traveling by train is a great way to explore Europe. Trains are punctual, clean, comfortable, and they go nearly everywhere. Students recommend seeking out good discount train passes after arriving to Maastricht as this option will provide the most flexibility to travel at reduced rates.

Additionally, there are now many discount airlines operating in Europe. Flying with these airlines is sometimes even cheaper than traveling by train, especially when you book in advance, and of course are much faster. Maastricht staff strongly recommend that you wait to purchase any train or flight tickets until after you arrive to campus and confirm your study schedule. There will still be ample time to purchase reduced fare tickets and you will be able to better plan your travels at that time.

However, if you do plan to use discount airlines, it is recommended that you check the luggage requirements of several European airlines prior to your departure from the U.S. to ensure you bring an appropriately sized piece of luggage as luggage that exceeds the weight or size requirements will incur substantial fees on these airlines.

Guidebooks and Travel Apps

Prepare yourself for life in Europe by reading student-oriented guide books, such as Let’s Go, Eyewitness Travel Guides, Lonely Planet or On the Loose. Traveling will be easier if you understand in advance how to read a train schedule, identify a second class train car, change money, locate a youth hostel, etc.

Also, to check out useful study abroad apps for your time abroad. It is recommended you download desired apps before leaving the U.S. as some students have experienced issues trying to download some phone applications from their host country.

Packing

**PACK AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE.** Experienced travelers rely on coordinated mix-and-match outfits and don’t worry if they are seen frequently in the same skirt or jacket. Dutch students dress conservatively and are not sloppy. They seldom wear white socks or sneakers.
Suggested Packing List

• one or two dressy outfits
• dark colored coat
• raincoat with hood, umbrella, scarf, mittens
• windbreaker
• warm coat and sweater
• good walking shoes, boots with waterproof soles
• warm bathrobe and slippers
• small knapsack for books
• larger knapsack (with zip-off bags) or weekend bag for travel
• batteries and battery charger
• travel alarm clock
• towels and washcloths
• sleeping bag for traveling (blankets, sheets, and pillowcases provided at the dormitory)
• laptop computer (strongly recommended)
• a good European map
• Let’s Go: Europe, Lonely Planet, Michelin, or other travel guides
• International Student ID card
• locks for suitcases, backpacks
• tampons with applicators
• favorite recipes
• photos of family and friends
• pocket knife, small bottle opener, corkscrew for travel
• deodorant (most European deodorant has no antiperspirant)
• prescription drugs to last the duration of your stay
• typewritten copy of your prescription using generic, not brand name, terms
• first aid kit with medications for colds, headaches, stomach upset
• extra pair of glasses or contact lenses
• typewritten copy of your eye prescription
• Headset (for Internet calling, e.g. Skype)

Note: U.S. electrical appliances work poorly in Europe, even with converters, and small items like hair dryers can be purchased inexpensively in the Netherlands. Also, traveler's checks are NOT recommended.
The Program in Maastricht

Spring 2015 Calendar

January 16.................................................................Arrival day
January 19-31..........................................................Introduction/Study Trip
February 2-April 5......................................................Block period 4
March 3-7.................................................................Carnival Break
April 6 - June 5..........................................................Block period 5
February 16-20..........................................................Carnival Break
April 6.................................................................Easter Monday, no classes
April 27.................................................................King's Day Break
May 4-5.................................................................Liberation Day, no classes
May 14-15.................................................................Ascension, no classes
May 25.................................................................Whit Monday, no classes
June 6.................................................................Departure day

Arrival in Maastricht

You should fly into either Maastricht, Brussels or Amsterdam. Maastricht is best, but likely more expensive than flying to Brussels or Amsterdam. Brussels is closer than Amsterdam. CES will arrange a bus January 16 from the Brussels airport to the dorms. If this won't work out, you will have to take a train to Maastricht. From the train station, take a taxi to the dorm where you will receive program information, sign a housing contract, and get the keys to your rooms.

Orientation Days

During the first few days in Maastricht you will meet your professors and tour the university. Student mentors will show you around Maastricht, point out stores, restaurants and pubs popular with students, and make themselves available to answer questions. Since you will still be getting acquainted with each other, recovering from jet lag, setting up your rooms and adjusting to new customs, schedules and language, this period can be intensive and demanding.
The orientation program also includes:

- European study trip to Berlin or Brussels (subject to change)
- Lectures
- Social activities with Brasmus Student Network

**Temporary Resident's Permit**

In the first week, CES staff will arrange for you to obtain your Temporary Resident's Permit during an information session. The cost is included in your IU fee.

**Academic Program**

In Maastricht you will enroll in 4 courses and an introductory Dutch language course. You will select 2 courses in each block while the Dutch course will be taught over the whole semester. Courses may not be taken on a pass/fail basis, nor does Indiana University permit withdrawals or incompletes for Maastricht course work. All courses are taught in English.

**Dutch Instructional Style**

You will find a striking difference between instructional styles in the U.S. and those in the Netherlands. Adjusting to the new academic environment will be part of the challenge of the program. The European educational tradition gives the student greater responsibility and initiative in a much less structured environment. Professors often provide an extensive bibliography, but no specific reading assignments per lecture, no study questions, no syllabi, and few quizzes. As a result, you may be lulled into feeling that the first part of a course is easy and the last few weeks unbearably intense. You should be reading throughout the semester, setting a reasonable pace so you cover the recommended readings.

**Problem-Based Learning**

The most distinctive educational element at the University of Maastricht is Problem-Based Learning (PBL). Problem-based learning minimizes or eliminates formal lectures and relies instead on direct student involvement in problem solving. Classes are small, with no more than 15 students. Each class is expected to select a leader and work together as a group.

The first day of class you may be given a hypothetical situation and asked to identify both the problems involved and the best methods of resolving them. The course bibliography will give you a general idea of the resources available, but your group will have to scan the texts and decide which are most relevant for the problem at hand. When you return to class, you will discuss your proposed solutions with the professor. He/she will not give specific reading assignments, study questions, syllabi or quizzes. Course grades will be based on presenta-

**STUDENT ADVICE**

“Take classes seriously, but do not let them stop you from traveling. I learned as much from seeing different places as I did in class.”
tion of a group assignment, class participation, and an essay-style final exam. Classes meet for two hours with a 10-15 minute break.

Adjusting to the new problem-based learning will be part of the challenge of the program. University Maastricht students will be more familiar with the system, but you will have greater facility in English. IU students who have studied in Maastricht give these tips for succeeding academically:

1. **It is essential to keep up with the work.**
   
   “Most classes don’t take grades until the final, so be sure to keep up with the reading assignments to be sure you understand the material.” “Don’t get behind in studies—easy to do because there is a lot of influence to have fun.”

2. **The final exam is the basis for 70-100% of your final grade.**

3. **You must keep up with the readings.**

   “You must be prepared for classes because profs expect students to teach one another....” “Making a contribution to the class and keeping up with the work is very important.” “One must keep up with reading material in order to participate. Participation and opinions are required.” “Be prepared for class—if not, you will be embarrassed.” “Teachers grade on participation so skipping class was not feasible (and yes, we had classes on Fridays or Mondays).”

4. **Coursework is demanding, but not overwhelming.**

   “Very much studying to be done, sometimes more than at IU.” “Don’t expect ‘blow-off’ courses.” “Classes are quite demanding and need plenty of work to do well.” “It’s not that bad; if you study during the week you can travel on the weekends.” “Work is probably slightly easier than courses at home.”
Grades

Grades in Maastricht courses are normally based on different components: a midterm, a final exam, participation, essays and presentations can all be part of your final grade. Professors use the Dutch 1-10 scale. CES courses are more traditional (like you will be used to at IU), University Maastricht courses are all taught according to the PBL-system. In nearly all courses you must pass each individual component of the course in order to pass the course as a whole. Grades are equated to IU’s A-F system based on the equivalency scales below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dutch grades</th>
<th>Grade point</th>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Descriptions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.0-10</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.7-7.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4-7.6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0-7.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7-6.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4-6.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0-6.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5-5.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>Fall (no credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0-5.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9 or below</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Libraries

The University Library and Learning and Resource Centres hours are typically: Monday through Thursday: 8:30 a.m.-10 p.m. (after 5 p.m. it is no longer possible to loan books), Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.(after 5p.m. it is no longer possible to loan books), Saturday: 11 a.m.-6 p.m. (after 2p.m. it is no longer possible to loan books); and Sunday: 11 a.m.-6 p.m (it is not possible to loan books). Library resources are much more restricted than what you are used to at IU. Ten to 12 copies of each important textbook or reference book are available in open stacks in several large reading rooms in the Economics library. This departmental library has computer-assisted reference catalogs and several photocopiers, where Dutch students routinely copy important texts instead of purchasing them.

Textbooks

Textbooks for CES courses are included in your IU program fee, but textbooks for the University Maastricht courses are not. For all courses offered by Maastricht University, students have to arrange their own books either by buying them or making copies at the library, unless otherwise specified in the program description.
Computers and E-mail

You will be provided with e-mail accounts in Maastricht. At the start of classes, your CES programme coordinator will start using the Maastricht University email account to communicate with students via email, unless otherwise indicated. Computers are available in the library and each room at the dormitories will have a wireless Internet connection. You can find copy and printing machines in every Maastricht University school and faculty and in the UM library. There are no copying or printing facilities at the Guesthouse. Most students decide to buy a printer with a few students to have printing facilities at the dorms as well.

Laptop Computer

With your own laptop computer you can write papers at your convenience in your dorm room and avoid the end-of-semester crush of students at the computing center. The dormitory rooms you will live in have internet. Also bring a good case or sleeve.

Study Trips

A study trip is included in the spring semester. Students embark on a mini-tour of a European city (usually Brussels or Berlin) and travel to important sites of European culture and history such as WWII memorials, historic cathedrals and cities. You will purchase your own meals during the study trip.
The Universiteit Maastricht has no central campus, and Dutch students live in rooms all over Maastricht. All IU students will be housed together in Guesthouse Universiteit Maastricht, a comfortable and spacious dormitory not far from the city center. Bedrooms are normally doubles and have a kitchen in the room. Singles are also available for an additional fee. The single rooms do not have a kitchen in the room like the doubles. Every corridor has sufficient bathrooms and toilets, washing machines and dryers. Kitchens are equipped with dishes, hot plates, sinks and refrigerators. Most other international students are assigned to Guesthouse Universiteit Maastricht, and the chance to meet students from all over the world is a major advantage of living there. No dormitory is perfect, and Guesthouse Universiteit Maastricht has its share of problems, including echoing corridors and noise.

You will have to adjust to some differences between Guesthouse Universiteit Maastricht and IU dorms. For example, you may need creative, new cooking techniques to cope with the absence of freezers and microwaves.

Pillows are provided as well as bedding and linens. (However, you should bring a sleeping bag for traveling.) Bring your own towels and washcloths.

Damage Deposits

Housing for CES students is handled by an independent housing authority called the Guesthouse, which has an office in Guesthouse University Maastricht. When you arrive, you will have to sign a Guesthouse housing contract. Before the last day of the program, there will be a scheduled inspection, and both your room and the communal rooms (for which all students are held collectively responsible) are expected to be immaculate and all dishes and furnishings intact. You will be held accountable for any damage. The Center for European Studies does not charge a deposit, but if damage occurs, CES will not send your transcript to IU before all bills are settled. In the past, the Guesthouse has been strict and unyielding in its standards. Note that you may check out only on weekdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., not on weekends. If you depart on the last day of your contract, check-out must be done by 12 p.m. at the latest. If you have housing problems, contact the Guesthouse, not the Center for European Studies. CES recommends to check-out during office hours. If many people will have a flight back to the US on the departure day, CES can assist in arranging transportation to the airport and having the final check-out in the early morning.
**Telephones**

Guesthouse University Maastricht has one telephone on each corridor where you can receive incoming calls, and public telephones in the lobby where you can place outgoing calls with a calling card or your credit card. However, most student utilize services such as Skype or FaceTime on their computer to stay in touch with friends and family.

**Cellular Telephone** Cell phones purchased in Maastricht are inexpensive and popular. There is no monthly service fee. You purchase a prepaid telephone card in the amount you wish and dial a special access number for the best rates.

**Time**

The Netherlands is six hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. When it is noon in New York, it is 6 p.m. in Maastricht.

**Mail**

Letters and packages should be addressed to the CES office, where you will pick up your mail. You may want to have packages sent to the Guesthouse if you would rather not carry packages from CES to your dorm.

**Food and Grocery Shopping**

You will shop for groceries and prepare your own meals at Guesthouse University Maastricht. All shops, including grocery stores and markets, are closed on Sunday and many are closed on Monday mornings as well. In general, supermarkets are open from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on the other days. On Thursdays in Maastricht, most shops stay open until 9 p.m; in other cities, it may be Thursday or Friday that shops stay open later. In Dutch shops, bargaining is not customary; the customer is expected to pay the price that is marked. Bring a shopping bag with you when you shop for groceries, as bags are provided for an additional fee.

The traditional Dutch diet consists primarily of bread and vegetables: bread with cheese, thinly sliced cold meat, or jam for breakfast; much the same for lunch with the addition of tomato or fruit; and for the evening meal large quantities of potatoes and other vegetables together with fish or a small serving of meat. As you would expect, this diet is also the most economical in Holland. Vegetables especially are plentiful, of high quality, and inexpensive, in particular on the weekly market in the city center on Wednesdays and Fridays. Restaurants are expensive. The best bargain in dining out is a meal at one of the many Turkish restaurants.
Social Customs

The Dutch seldom fail to keep an appointment and are usually punctual. Professors expect punctuality. If you are invited to a Dutch home, it is customary to bring a small gift, most often flowers. It’s the thought that counts so don’t go too far with an expensive gift. It will only embarrass you and make them feel obliged to do the same if they are invited to your home. When Dutch people are out in company, everyone expects and is expected to pay their share of the costs. Tipping is not as widespread as in the U.S., but if you are satisfied with service, give a 5-10% tip to waiters and taxi drivers.

Despite being basically reserved, the Dutch speak in a manner that may startle you with its directness. They may sound abrupt but they do not mean to be impolite. They are quite literal in their speech and like to come to the point quickly.

Medical Care

The CES Staff in Maastricht will give you the names, addresses and telephone numbers of reputable physicians. The CES Staff can assist you in case of a medical emergency.

Climate

Chilly, wet winters are typical of Holland’s coastal climate. There will be less snow and fewer subfreezing days than in an Indiana winter, but the Netherland’s wet, windy weather makes the winter cold penetrating. Expect lots of rain and mild temperatures.

Public Transportation

Trains

Public transportation in the Netherlands is excellent. The trains run frequently and on time. The distances are short: Amsterdam-The Hague, 45 minutes; The Hague-Delft, 10 minutes, Delft-Rotterdam, 15 minutes, Maastricht-Amsterdam, 2 hours 30 minutes, Maastricht-Paris, 4 hours 15 min. Train carriages are first or second class, all nonsmoking (niet roken). A first class ticket is about 50 percent more expensive than a second class ticket and the difference in comfort is slight. Tickets must be purchased in the station. There you can also inquire about the many special bargain rates offered by the Dutch Railways.

Schedules are posted on every spoor, or track. Trains stick to their schedules and stop only briefly at each station. You may assume the train scheduled to be on a given track is the correct one and board it whether it carries an identifying sign or not. Inside the Netherlands take advantage of the inexpensive day passes. Three persons traveling together may purchase a cheaper group ticket called a voordeelurenkaart, good after 9 a.m. on weekdays and anytime on weekends.
If you are under 26 and plan on traveling to Belgium much (which you will be doing if you fly Ryanair), buy a "Go Pass" from a train station in Belgium. This can be more cost effective way to travel in Belgium. You can also split Go Passes with others.

When traveling by train overnight you may wish to reserve a bed (couchette) in a compartment that sleeps six passengers. These cost about $15. Train seats may be reserved for a small fee, a good investment on crowded routes and mandatory on all German overnights.

**Buses**

Outlying villages are linked by bus. At the train station you can buy a *busboek*, which contains a complete schedule for all the rural buses. For city buses, purchase a *stripkenkaart*, good for multiple rides, at the post office or train station. They are cheaper and more convenient than tickets purchased individually on the bus. You can also save money by purchasing a one-month bus pass.

The central station in each city is its transportation hub. There train, bus, taxi, and bicycle routes converge, and you will find travel information, connections, and food. Near most central stations is the office of the VVV, which offers tourist information and assistance in booking rooms in pensiones or hotels (for a small charge). Do not confuse the central station with the *centrum*, which is the town center.

Local bus transportation is frequent and inexpensive. Weekly or monthly passes are available. Take a passport photo the first time you buy one. Strips for three or eight rides can be purchased for about 50 cents per ride.

**Bicycles**

For short distances or for poking around the country roads, no form of transportation is better than the one used most by the Dutch themselves. In a country of 16.5 million people, there are about 10 million bicycles.

Buying a bicycle is not expensive, especially if you choose a simple model. Second-hand bicycles are readily available, and you can sell the bike before you head back to the U.S. Don't buy a flashy model. The Dutch are usually honest, and the general crime rate in the Netherlands is low, but for some reason bicycle theft is almost a sport. Invest in a stout bike lock and use it. Seek advice from CES staff on a good place to get an inexpensive bike. Buy one quickly because they often run out and prices increase. Do not spend more than 40-50 Euro!

**Land Use**

The Netherlands is extremely flat. There are a few hills in the southeast corner of the country. There are no obstacles to the wind, which is an almost constant feature. Water criss-crosses the land with perfect geometric regularity; even the fields where Holland’s five million cows graze are separated not by fences, but by water. Land is very precious in the Netherlands. Through enormous efforts over the centuries thousands of hectares have been reclaimed from the sea. Creating dikes along the coast and rivers with draining polders behind them has added a great deal of land. Forty percent of the country lies below sea level.
Hardly any patch of ground is wasted. Complexes of garden allotments, called people’s gardens, occupy land that cannot otherwise be used. The allotments are rented very cheaply by city dwellers who leave their flats behind on weekends to get out in the fresh air and tend their vegetables and flowers.

The high value placed on land can also be seen in the careful spatial planning. Urban areas are kept within strict bounds. Extreme care in land use permits the second most densely populated country in the world (after Bangladesh) to be an exporter of food. It is possibly this attitude toward the land that has caused the Dutch to place great value on cleanliness and orderliness.

**Population Diversity**

Over 15 million people live in an area that is less than 37,000 square kilometers, or about 1/3 the size of Indiana. The area defined by drawing a line connecting Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht has four million inhabitants. This area, known as the West Holland conurbation, or Randstad, has a high population density.

The Netherlands is inhabited by a largely homogeneous population, but there are small minorities of Indonesians and Surinamese, testimony to Holland’s former colonial role. In the 1950s and 1960s when Dutch industry was growing fast and there was a shortage of cheap unskilled labor, workers were brought in from Turkey, Italy, Spain, Morocco, Yugoslavia and Tunisia. Many of these gastarbeiders (guest workers) brought their families to Holland and settled permanently.

The employment situation has now been reversed because of automation, more working women, population growth and economic stagnation, and unemployment is a serious and persistent problem.

The Netherlands has a wealth of different religious and political persuasions. The largest religious group is Roman Catholic (27 percent), followed by the various groups of Protestants (12 percent). On the nation’s two television channels and four radio stations, broadcasting time is divided among nine different organisations, each with its own political or religious bias. Each organisation is allotted time according to the number of its supporting members.

**Politics**

The Netherlands is a monarchy, whose Queen, Beatrix of Oranje Nassau, has been on the throne since 1980. But the monarch has had very little real power since the present constitution was adopted in 1848. All men and women have had the vote in the Netherlands since 1922. In order to govern, the Cabinet needs a majority in the two chambers of parliament. The first chamber, or Senate, is elected by the members of the Provincial States, the elected officials who govern the provinces. The second chamber is the main arena of Dutch politics. Its 150 members are engaged full-time, unlike the 75 members of the first chamber whose positions are part-time. The first chamber reviews all proposals that have been approved by the second chamber but hardly ever presents a divergent point of view.
General elections for the second chamber must be held at least every four years. The Netherlands has a multiple-party system (and more than 20 political parties), so it relies on coalitions for governing. Arriving at a workable combination to form a cabinet can take months. The major parties are: the Labor Party, or social democrats (PvdA), the Christian Democratic Alliance (CDA), the People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy, or liberals (VVD), the Democrats ’66, a progressive liberal party founded in 1966 (D’66).

There is probably no other country with as many protest demonstrations as the Netherlands. The orderly, often silent, demonstration or vigil has become a fairly standard form of political expression in recent years. Many demonstrations focus on the courtyard of the parliament buildings in The Hague.