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Introduction:

Going to The Netherlands was a great opportunity for me to take an interesting course of high international quality and my expectations for what skills and knowledge I would gain, were therefore very high. I love travelling, and this was a great way to learn about a new country, their culture and so on.

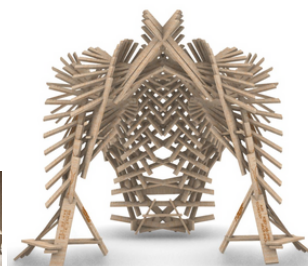
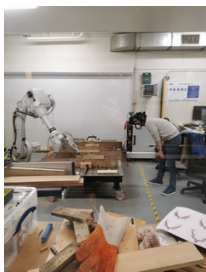
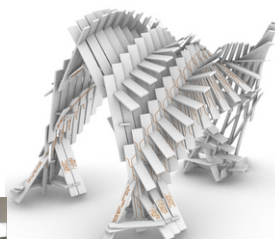
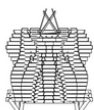
As it happened, my sister was going to The Netherlands at the same time as me, which made it a lot less scary to take the decision to move to another country for a semester.

Having studied abroad is also a good thing to have on your CV, because it demonstrates my ambition, that I prioritize my studies and my future career, and that I am good at making friends in an international setting.



My experience at the university of Hva studying the Minor in robotic production and circular materials, was incredible. The course was divided into two halves. In the first part we addressed the topics in:

- **Digital design:** In which we began to take the first steps in Rhinoceros 3D and basic use, Grasshopper, basic logic, components, parameters, inputs, numbers, simple geometry, referenced geometry, locally defined geometry, baking.
- **Digital visualization tool:** During this journey we recieved help from professors, as well as tips and tricks, in order to present our work visually in an online interactive portfolio. We covered the basics of the WIKI, how to add, edit and elevate our content. It included a crash course in Visual Design to fully enable us to customize our portfolios in the best way possible to convey our story and show the ideas to others.
- **Robot production:** Robots installation, Coordinate systems, Units, Grasshopper workflow, parameters, Tool, Speed, Zone, Frame, Commands, Robot, Program, Errors, Warnings, Code, Simulation. Virtual view and simulation of the different robots in the lab, run through a script.
- **Makeathon:** This project was placed in the end of the first half of the minor, and it was one of the most interesting experiences. We were divided into groups with the goal of creating a pavillium using everything we had learned so far and previous experiences to achieve it.



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Y EL-HASSNAOUI	J POSTEMA
J BESTEMAN	
A ANASTASOVA	M ZUT
J GONZALEZ	T BEGA
M ALKHATEEB	M IJLST
D BROECKAMP	D VELKERS
A DRAGTSTRA	E LAUTIER
D LANGEDUK	S WAIBOER
D ENGERINGH	S MEERT
D HOLMES	J DE KONINK
S TOSTADO	L KUFFEN

In a few words, I can say that the experience at the Hva University was incredibly good in regards to the teachers and the facilities. The coordinator and teacher Marco Gali, who worked harder than anyone every day to make the minor a great experience for all students and who currently works even harder so that the next minors are even better.

Most of the classes were face-to-face, making the course more fun. There were many group activities as well as solo with teachers always present supporting the whole project and helping with anything.

Social and cultural experiences

The social experience in Holland was one of the best. People were always super friendly, conversational, very polite people. In Amsterdam you can find all kinds of people of different nationalities. It is a very mixed city and the number of people who live there make it a bit stressful to walk in rush hours in the city, but in general The Netherlands have a lot to offer.

One of the real problems in Amsterdam is the issue of housing. Getting a room at a reasonable price is almost impossible. Having the bad idea of not taking the room offered by the university, I spent a very long period of searching until I found a room. But Weesp, the city I ended up living in, is a beautiful town about 12 kilometers from the university. The room was horrible but the town was very beautiful.



These are the 10 things you should do during your time in Amsterdam:

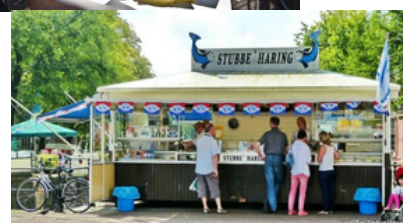
- **Get lost in the arty Jordaan:** Often cited as Amsterdam's most charming neighbourhood, wandering into the Jordaan feels like stepping back in time. Originally a working-class area, the Jordaan's narrow streets and quaint buildings now make up one of Amsterdam's most desirable quarters, dotted with independent art galleries, antique shops, courtyard gardens and atmospheric bars and restaurants. Ditch the map and lose yourself in the labyrinth of narrow lanes that sprawl eastwards from Prinsengracht canal known as the 9 Streets, one of Amsterdam's most rewarding shopping experiences.



- **Cycle to hidden gems:** There are over 800,000 bicycles in Amsterdam. That's more bikes than people! Cycling in Amsterdam is a way of life, made easier by the city's unbeatable network of cycle routes and flat landscape. Amsterdam regularly comes out on top in lists of the world's most cycle-friendly cities, and there's no finer way to explore the region's attractions than by pedal power. Hop on your bike and head to Sloterplass for a dip in the sprawling lake, or cycle over to Ouderkerk aan de Amstel to explore a 12th-century village idyll packed with historic sights. Many of Amsterdam's best-kept secrets can be discovered from the comfort of your saddle.



- **Try herring from a herring cart:** Raw herring may sound a little scary to the uninitiated, but every visitor to Amsterdam should give it a go. You'll spot haringhandels (herring carts) serving up this Dutch specialty all over the city - ask for a 'broodje haring' to get the fish served in a small sandwich with pickles and onions.



- **Immerse yourself in culture at Westergas:** Located at Westerpark, this sprawling complex of former industrial buildings used to be the city's municipal gasworks. Now transformed into a colourful cultural hub, Westergas is home to a variety of tempting bars, restaurants, coffee roasters, a microbrewery, art-house cinema, and a whole host of creative businesses. Look out for regular food markets, mini-festivals and events held here, such as the vibrant Sunday market held on the first Sunday of every month.



- **Check out the museums & majestic buildings in Museumplein:** Home to the Rijksmuseum, the Van Gogh Museum, the Stedelijk Museum and The Royal Concertgebouw, Museumplein is the cultural beating heart of Amsterdam. Recently renovated to a world-class standard, the leafy and architecturally astounding 19th-century district of Oud-Zuid is an art lover's utopia. The open square between the buildings pulses with activity all day, with open-air exhibitions, markets and a large paddling pool to dip your toes into on warmer days. In the winter months, the square transforms with a vast outdoor ice rink.



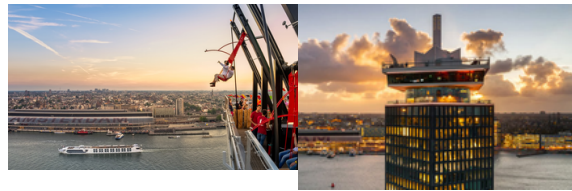
- **Cruise past canal houses and bridges:** Created in the 17th century to keep the sea at bay, Amsterdam's UNESCO protected canal belt is the quintessential postcard-perfect vision of Amsterdam. It is an unbelievably pretty sight, especially after sundown when the bridges are lit up by fairy lights and the whole area takes on a magical feel. Floating along the canals by guided boat tour is a great way to get under the fabric of the city, and you'll learn lots of fascinating facts along the way – such as why the tilting homes along the canals are known as 'dancing houses'. There are many different canal cruises on offer, from hop-on-hop-off sightseeing tours to atmospheric candlelit night time cruises with food and wine.



- **Try local beer at a historic brewery:** There are eight remaining windmills in Amsterdam and the easiest to visit is De Gooyer in the Oostelijke Eilanden (Eastern Islands) neighbourhood. And this isn't just any windmill – for under the sails of this striking landmark is Brouwerij 't IJ, an award-winning artisan microbrewery with a large outdoor drinking terrace and 30-minute guided tasting tours. The brewery produces a range of organic standard and seasonal ales that you'll find in many Amsterdam bars, though nothing tastes quite as good as beer brewed on the premises.



- **Visit the Hotel A'DAM Tower:** Having a unique view of the entire city of Amsterdam with restaurants and bars, and the main attraction swinging at the top of the tower having a unique experience.



- **See how Anne Frank lived:** Reflect on the atrocities committed against the Jewish people during World War II at the Prinsengracht house where diarist Anne Frank and her family hid from the Nazis for two years after fleeing persecution in Germany. The front of the Anne Frank House is now a thought-provoking museum but the back annexe has been preserved to give an idea of what life was like for Anne and the families she hid with.



- **Eat pancakes & feed goats in the Central Park of Amsterdam:** Amsterdamse Bos, on the southern edge of the city, is almost three times the size of New York's Central Park. This lush urban oasis provides ample opportunities for bike rides, picnics, swimming, strolling over hills and flower-blanketed valleys, or just barbecuing with friends. In the forest, you'll find Goat Farm Ridammerhoeve, where you can meet goats, lambs, chickens, pigs, cows and horses and then fuel up at its charming restaurant that serves delicious goat cheese. For heartier fare, head to Meerzicht Farm and Pancake House where the Dutch-style pancakes are beyond delicious.



Among many other things to do in Amsterdam, and if you get bored of Amsterdam today many nearby cities, Rotterdam, Leiden, Zaandam, Hague, where there is much more to do and new things to see.

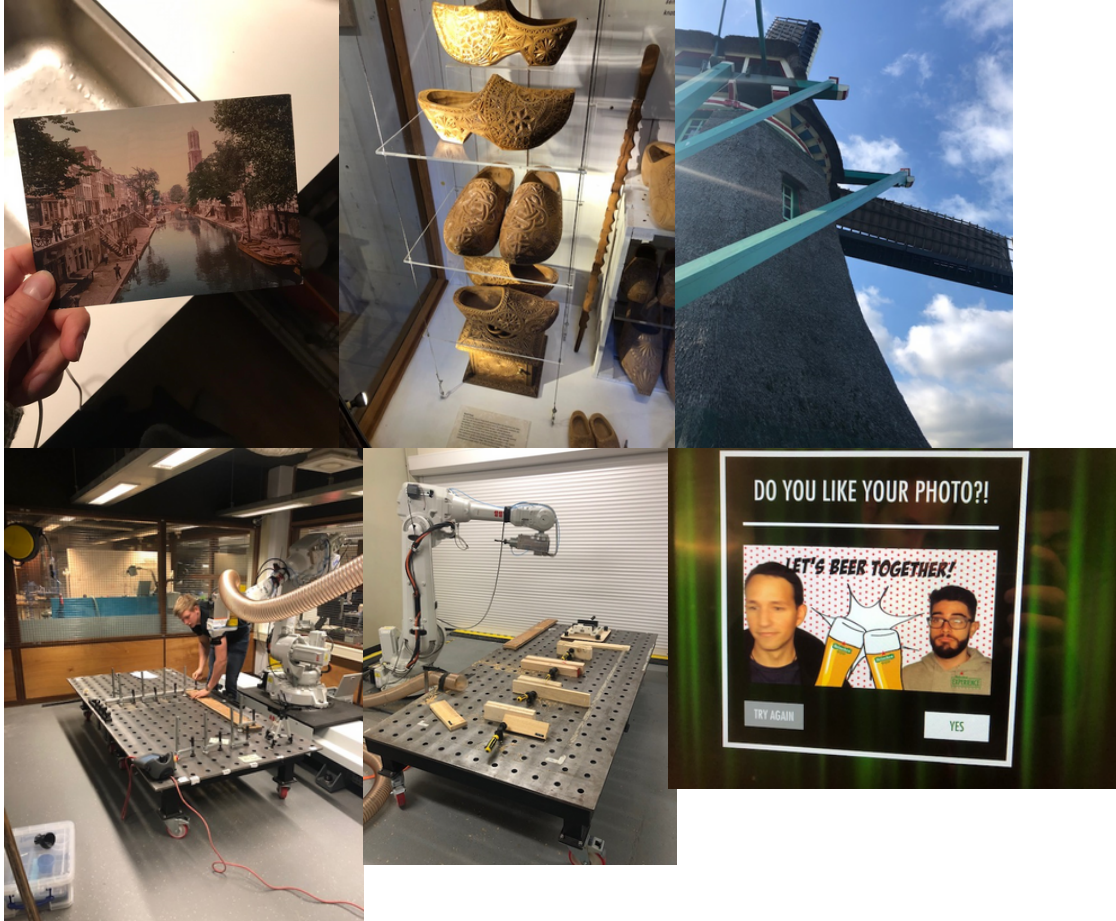
A simple way to make groups of friends and get people to travel to other cities and explore the city is to be part of the ESN A'dam program, where they are always doing cultural events and different fun things, but also socializing in the classes is very easy. The Dutch society is very friendly and easy to deal with.

Practical experiences

I wanna give thanks to the Erasmus Office of Kea and Andreas Berger who took care of all the paperwork for the program, allowing me to qualify for financial aid that allowed me to have more facilities when moving to Amsterdam to do the minor and have the peace of mind of just focusing in the studies without having to work. I made a mistake by not accepting the room offered by the University of Amsterdam, thinking that it would be more comfortable and easier to find something on my own, which turned out to be very difficult. Due to the large number of people in Amsterdam, getting a room is quite complicated. I therefore ended up living in a town quite far from Amsterdam where I had a terrible experience with the landlady, which made my time in the Netherlands difficult, because I was not able to find another place to stay. But having received the help from Erasmus I was able to travel and see different cities in the Netherlands from Rotterdam, Leiden, Eindhoven, Hague, among others I had the opportunity to explore and meet people of different nationalities and taste many types of food.

The prices in The Netherlands are quite similar to the Danish ones. In terms of accommodation I can say that The Netherlands is more expensive and complicated to get a room and even more so when it is for short periods like a semester. The supermarkets have more variety than Danish ones, but they present many problems with the Mastercard and Visa cards. I therefore advise you to always have cash with you, even though it is a bit annoying.

The gastronomic variety in Holland is very wide and the prices are not so high. You can easily have lunch for 80 kr. at a very good place. Public transportation is a bit expensive and more so when you have to use trains combined with the subway. If you live in Amsterdam, getting around the city by bike is the best way, although due to the large number of bicycles it is quite stressful and you have to be very careful. Having a bicycle in good condition also means having double security. It is necessary to install all the possible locks you can, cause it is incredible how often bicycles get stolen or robbed for spare parts. My recommendation is to have a rental bike and only use public transportation when visiting other cities.



Conclusion

I am very content with my time abroad in Holland and it is something I highly recommend other to do. It was a great experience for me to grow intellectually, as well as making new friends and learning a lot about what is like to live in Holland.

During the whole process I felt like I had the necessary support system and the formalities were easy to fulfill. The country is similar to Denmark but still has a lot to offer. I met a lot of companies and possibilities for future work places. I learned a new and interesting culture, and their history.

All the information the minor gave me was very precious and interesting, and I learned a lot of things that are gonna help me in my future career. I believe it will open up more opportunities for me.