University College Utrecht (UCU) is the International Honors College of University Utrecht, the Netherlands. It was founded in 1998 as the first academic institution in the Netherlands offering a 3-year Liberal Arts & Sciences (BA and BSc) undergraduate education to a highly selected student body. UCU admits approximately 220 students per year, 50% of whom are non-Dutch. Our graduates are readily accepted by prestigious Master and PhD programs in the Netherlands and elsewhere.

For more details about UCU and its curriculum, see http://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/university-college-utrecht
ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The UCU in Africa Program runs since 2008, when Dr. Caroline Archambault, then teaching a course in Development studies, proposed the idea to put theory into practice by travelling with a group of students to East Africa. Since that pilot year, the program has matured into its present, highly successful form. It aims to offer students interested in development issues an intensive - on site - cross-cultural personal and interdisciplinary academic learning experience. The program enables students to appreciate the importance of an inter-disciplinary perspective to the development process. Students learn to evaluate critically the nature and impact of policies and programs implemented by governments, NGO’s, and other agents of development. They are introduced to the major environmental, cultural, socio-economic, and political issues of communities participating in development processes. Through participation in internships, students have an opportunity to contribute personally to the aims of an NGO, or local - community-based organization, as well as to a local community. The program prepares students for a professional or academic career in the field of development, and consists of 3 main components:

1. A three month Preparatory Course: Theory and Practice in International Development

2. A four week Summer Field Course: Topics and Field Methods in East Africa

3. A six week Summer Internship
ABOUT THE STUDENTS

The UCU in Africa program accepts a limited number of selected students in the summer following their second or third year in an application process that includes an interview. The program looks for the following characteristics in our students:

1. Genuine interest in development issues
2. Excellent academic performance
3. Interdisciplinary interest
4. Cross-cultural interest
5. Maturity
PREPARATORY COURSE

The preparatory course is taught in the semester preceding the summer field program and internship. The course provides students with:

1. **Foundation in Development Theory**
   - Seminars and readings in development theory expose students to the current debates on how to define and approach issues of poverty and development.

2. **Specialized Knowledge on East Africa**
   - Topical seminars on history and livelihood dynamics in East Africa with a foundation for the field course and their internship.

3. **Exposure to Development Practitioners**
   - A development speaker series offers students the opportunity to get acquainted with development practice.

4. **Theoretical Preparation for their Internships**
   - The second half of the course is dedicated to students pursuing independent reading and research culminating in the preparation and presentation of an internship proposal.
FIELD COURSE

The field course: Topics and Field Methods in East Africa, takes the students on a journey through three very different socio-cultural environments: 1 - highland agricultural communities, 2 - rangeland pastoral communities, and 3 - urban informal settlement communities. The course provides students with a unique opportunity to engage with and understand different livelihood practices and development challenges facing local communities. Students engage locally through homestays, local teaching staff, and many other encounters. The course also focuses on directing students to various qualitative and quantitative field methods, which they can later employ for the benefit of their internship project.
The following general conditions apply to all internships within the UCU in Africa Program:

1. Internships have an approximate duration of six weeks.
2. Preferably, pairs of interns will be allocated to one location.
3. Internships contain the following elements:
   * a community service component, i.e. hands-on work for the host organisation
   * if so desired, a research component serving the host organization
   * a personal cross-cultural learning experience, on which the students will reflect in both a personal and academic way.
4. Internship programs can relate to any academic field (Humanities / Social Sciences / Sciences I Interdepartmental).
5. The selection of candidates for a particular internship program will be a joint responsibility of UCU and the host organization.
6. The host organization will appoint an on site supervisor for each internship.
7. UCU will appoint an academic supervisor for each internship.
8. The host organization will assist interns in finding accommodation during their internship, but interns will finance their own travel and housing unless agreed otherwise by the host organization. For every intern, the host organization will receive 500 euros to cover expenses.

**Participating Host Organizations, past and present:**

Africa SOMA - Kenya
Refugee Law Project - Uganda
Enduimet - Tanzania
War Child - Uganda
Twende - Tanzania
GreenPower - Kenya
MTD - Kenya
Chako - Tanzania
Maria's libraries - Kenya
Ilepå - Kenya
FT Kilimanjaro - Tanzania
Mnazi Moja - Tanzania
HIVOT - Ethiopia
Vision on Africa - Ethiopia
Sauti Moja - Tanzania
OSSA - Ethiopia
Sauti Moja - Tanzania
JamiiSawa - Tanzania
World Friends - Kenya
Muthaa - Kenya
WASH alliance - Kenya
MHC - Tanzania
Mama Watoto - Uganda
Fairtrade - Kenya
Yaden - Kenya
HOST ORGANIZATION TESTIMONIALS

“Our UCU intern was academically well prepared for her internship. Her academic program before the internship was very thorough and provided many opportunities for learning about various indigenous cultures as well as issues of development in Kenya. I would gladly work with more interns from University College Utrecht in the future.”

“The students were innovative. They were willing to learn and were fast to meaningfully interact with the community. The interns demonstrated good interpersonal, team-building and communication skills and were professional in their approach.”

“The UCU interns have excellent research and analytical skills and have contributed significantly to our programs. They are hard working, eager to learn, enthusiastic and motivated. They recognize the value of socially integrating and approaching the field with cultural sensitivity.”
“Our UCU interns delivered an in-depth research report. The document will be immensely useful in informing our advocacy and lobbying for durable solutions to the problems of internal displacement.”

“UCU produced a detailed report on food security at the household level. Their scientific approach towards food production and agricultural practices will help us identify workable solutions that will enable the community to be food secure.”

“The UCU students managed to undertake an impressive amount of work during the relative short duration and produce a report that was clear, well organized and that provides a nuanced and well substantiated description of the key components of the program.”
STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

“Interns who are fortunate enough to work for this NGO find themselves in a unique environment”.

“The Maasai community offers people from outside a mirror through which someone all of a sudden sees himself from a different perspective.”

“The UCU in Africa program was interesting and engaging. I believe that I contributed to the NGO just like the internship greatly complemented my education at UCU by providing a practical understanding of the various theoretical concepts concerning development I had studied. I learned a lot from what I saw, heard, and experienced. I am grateful for the opportunity as it was truly an unforgettable experience.”

“I learned valuable lessons from my experience in the field. The UCU in Africa program allowed me to meet fascinating and extraordinary people. I also learned the value of nature and became committed to conservation. I learned a number of things about myself, which I could only have discovered in difficult moments that put one up to the test. This has been one of the most precious experiences I have ever had.”
“Being in the company of so many inspiring individuals opened up a very different world to what I had naively decided to box as yet another case of undefeatable political processes and the inevitable fading of tradition by the unyielding Westernized idea of modernity.”

“It is a privilege to study East African society from so close and to see the world changing in front of your eyes, brought alive through observations, stories, personal contacts and friendships.”

“This program unraveled to us the complexity of development and posed new questions about the solutions to end poverty.”
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