

University of Aruba Fall 2018

Your study programme

I came to Aruba when I completed my bachelor already in Groningen. But I wanted to have a lot of options in choosing courses, that's why I didn't complete my bachelor officially. I wanted to follow bachelor and master courses. But during the semester I changed the courses to all master courses, the master courses were very interesting. By having discussions, we came to the right answers and to the information we needed for the exams. Also, the small groups in the master course were a very nice thing for me, we were sometimes with classes of 5 people and the maximum of 14 people. It is easier that way to participate in the classes and to get to know your fellow students.

The courses I followed were all in Dutch, but you have also courses in English. The courses I followed in the first block were two master courses: 'Jeugdstrafrecht' (Juvenile justice) and 'overheid en privaatrecht' (government and civil law). For both subjects, we had to take an exam. Jeugdstrafrecht was a new course, a woman from Curacao was the teacher and for one time we had a judge from Aruba to give us a lecture! 'Overheid en privaatrecht' was given by a Dutch woman who is living in Aruba, her teaching method was quite similar to the "dutch way of teaching" but with a lot of discussions. In the second block, I followed three master courses 'sanctierecht' (punishment law), 'verdieping ondernemingsrecht' (deepening in business law) and 'strafprocesrechtelijke rechtsmiddelen' (the procedure of criminal law). The first block I started with 'Arubaans verbintenissenrecht', but it was too much a repeat of my study in Groningen, it was not a challenge for me. That's why I swapped this course for 'verdieping ondernemingsrecht' and 'strafprocesrechtelijke rechtsmiddelen'. The two courses were hard to follow, but it was very interesting. For 'sanctierecht' and 'verdieping ondernemingsrecht' we had to write a paper on a subject of our choice. For the other course, we had to take an exam, be careful because it's one of the hardest subjects to choose, but very interesting though.

The university of Aruba is a really nice place to study, it is very quiet and a 'relaxing place'. It was once a monastery, you can still feel that spirit. All the students and teachers are also very helpful and kind, because it's a small university (only 700 people in total) you know almost all of your law-students and teachers. That's a really nice thing!

Language

In Aruba people speak at least three languages per person. The most common are: Papiamentu, Spanish, English and Dutch. But some people only speak Spanish, that's sometimes difficult. But most people do speak English and Dutch, just try and they will talk and help you! At the law faculty, the main language is Dutch, the bachelor is fully Dutch. In the master you have two tracks, an English version and a Dutch version. For exchange-students you can choose.

Finance and other conditions

In Aruba they use the Arubaanse Florin, this is quite similar in value as the dollar. Likewise, one euro is two florins. You can pay with your European card, so you don't need a credit card. Most payments are being done in Arubaanse Florin or in dollars, so you don't have to bring your euro's. Aruba is a very expensive country, they have to import almost everything

so be aware of that. Check out if you can get any scholarships, very helpful. If you go to supermarkets, buy a lot of frozen vegetables and chicken, it is way much cheaper. In Aruba, you have a lot of small Chinese supermarkets, a store like the Dutch Lidl/Aldi, a store like the Dutch Albert Heijn and a store like the Dutch Jumbo. But the same goes for clothing and going out. Everything is expensive unfortunately, except for gasoline (very nice, because you need a car in Aruba). You need in Aruba at least a house and a car to live, the routes in Aruba are not suitable for walking or a bike.

Preparation and contacts with the faculty before, during and after your stay

For preparation, you just need to make a list what you need and arrange it on time. The most important thing is to get a nice place to stay, the car we arranged in Aruba. The contact person is a really nice lady, she even comes to pick you up at the airport if you like! But also in the preparation she helped me a lot, don't forget the timegap by waiting on a response.

Housing

Together with another student of the University of Groningen we rent an apartment. We stayed at Sebrina's resort, very nice and very new. In the end, the best apartment we've seen so far. The apartments are very clean, a weekly cleaning lady, two separate bedrooms and a swimming pool. We paid about 1800 florins for it, so 450 euros each. A lot of students who are doing their internship were staying there as well, very nice to know new people besides the exchange- and law students.

Culture

A specific culture of Aruba you won't see. Typical Aruban things are doing everything by car and eating a lot of takeaway food haha! You mostly see a lot of American tourists. But in the end the 'real Aruban culture' doesn't exist, we asked a lot of people but the Aruban people are a mix of a lot of different cultures that it makes it difficult. But almost all Aruban people are really nice for you, everyone wants to talk and help you.

Free time

In the beginning, we had a lot of free time, in the first three weeks we only had 3 introduction days before school started. that's why we choose to do a trip to Miami, it was amazing. And in the first block we had enough free time to see a lot of things and having family and friends over. In the second block, we didn't have a lot of time over, because of the two essays and the exam. So, if you want to do things in and outside Aruba, plan it and do it as soon as possible. Time flies when you're having fun!

Traveling

Aruba is really nearby North- and South-Amerika. Like I said before, we went in the first weeks we arrived a week to Miami. That was really nice to see the States for the first time in my life. In November we did another trip, we went to Colombia! It was very cheap to go to Colombia, and very beautiful.

Other

I really enjoyed my time in Aruba, I love the people, the study and the culture. In the end, we enjoyed it so much, that the other student from Groningen and I got the opportunity to

finish our master in Aruba! And yes, we're going back for four months to get our degree.
Never stop dreaming!