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**Carleton University**

**University of Antwerp Visiting Research Scholar**  
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From May to July 2022 I had the opportunity to undertake a Visiting Research Scholar position at the University of Antwerp under the supervision of Dr. Dirk De Bièvre in the International Politics research group. The eight weeks I got to spend at the University of Antwerp have undoubtedly been a highlight of my degree thus far and I feel very fortunate to have been able to have this experience.

From an academic perspective, my time at the University of Antwerp allowed me to pursue a research project of great personal interest to me, and the end result has been a policy paper directed at Canadian government officials on confronting the growing problem of space debris in low-Earth orbit. The paper, currently in the process of being edited, is set to be published on the Jean Monnet Network of EU-Canada Relations, and is a body of work of which I am extremely proud. Outer space policy and governance is of great interest to me, and I hope to pursue a career in this realm. While NPSIA is a great program with noteworthy course offerings, there is unfortunately no specific “space governance” course. Thus, I was very excited to be able to pursue this independent research project on a topic of such great interest to me. In the process of researching and writing my paper, I had the opportunity to speak with and glean advice from many of the University of Antwerp’s professors and doctorate students both in the International Politics research group and in the broader Political Science department. Being able to bounce ideas off of each other and engage in critical conversations was invaluable to me as a budding researcher and has made me seriously consider pursuing my education further through a PhD (indeed, perhaps at the University of Antwerp).

From a cultural and social perspective, my time in Antwerp, and in Belgium more broadly, was equally memorable. While I got to engage with many professors and fellow students academically, I was also able to forge valuable social relationships. It was not uncommon for students and professors alike to have lunch together, participate in after-work social activities, and social events organized by the university. These social experiences allowed me to learn a lot about Belgium—specifically Belgian politics and cultural affairs—that I had previously known nothing about. Additionally, during my time living in Antwerp I spent many weekends taking day trips to surrounding cities, including Brussels, Bruges, Ghent, and Ypres which allowed me to learn about and appreciate Belgium’s extensive and rich history.

In all, my experience as a Visiting Research Scholar at the University of Antwerp was both fulfilling and memorable both academically and socially. I am extremely thankful to Carleton University and the Jean Monnet Network on EU-Canada Relations, the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union, and the University of Antwerp for facilitating this opportunity.