

Study Abroad



LIMERICK, IRELAND
SPRING 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Information.....	4	Weather.....	13
The Program	4	What to Pack	13
The Location	4	Appliances	13
The University	4	Getting To Ireland	13
Academic Calendar	4	Travel Arrangements	13
Academics	5	Buying a Changeable Ticket	14
Pre-departure Planning	5	Getting to Limerick	14
Registration at University of Limerick	5	Settling In	14
Reporting Your Registration	5	Orientation	14
Class Attendance	6	Residence Hall Descriptions.....	15
Credits and Course Load	6	What's Provided for My Room?	16
Service Learning.....	6	Laundry.....	16
Grades	6	Meals	16
Transcripts & Graduation.....	7	Other Campus Services.....	17
Irish Academic System.....	7	Student Life.....	17
Money Matters.....	10	Student Clubs & Organizations.....	17
Cost Estimate	10	Activities/Events.....	18
Housing Costs	10	Volunteer.....	18
Personal Travel.....	10	Communication.....	19
Currency Exchange	11	Time Difference.....	19
Credit Cards and ATMs	11	Telephone Information	19
Health & Safety.....	11	Email/Internet	19
STIs at UL	11	Snail Mail	19
Campus Medical Services	11	Travel While Abroad.....	20
Services for Students with Disabilities	11	Organized Travel.....	20
Emergency Contacts.....	12	Bus & Train Travel	20
911 Equivalent in Republic of Ireland.....	12	Contact Information.....	21
Safety in Ireland	12	WEB RESOURCES: IRELAND	22
Required Documents	12	University/City	22
Immigration/Visa.....	12	Culture	22
Visas for Travel to Other Countries	13	Country	22
Packing Tips	13	Past Participant Voices, 2017-2018	23

Congratulations on being accepted to the UW-Eau Claire (UWEC) study abroad program with the University of Limerick in Ireland. Living and studying in a foreign culture is both an exciting and a challenging experience. Past participants of study abroad report that the many advantages of international study include:

Gaining new perspectives on a chosen academic field

Increasing understanding of different cultures

Enhancing personal development

Developing different perspectives on U.S. culture

Gaining self-confidence and independence

Learning skills for the future international job market

It is up to you to determine how you can best benefit from these possible advantages. This is your adventure!

Use this program guide with the general Study Abroad (SA) Handbook. The SA Handbook has information that is valid for all study abroad programs. This guide will provide you with specific information for the Limerick study abroad program.

While this guide contains all of the information available at the time of publication, it is impossible for any single resource to answer all of your questions. Use in conjunction with the Handbook, information that your peer advisor will email throughout the semester, and your own research. Contact the Center for International Education (CIE) staff or your peer advisor with your specific questions. And make use of the web resources listed towards the end of this guide.

Basic questions only you can answer include:

- 1) What are YOUR goals for this experience? Common objectives of student travelers include advancement in a future profession, desire to expand personal and academic horizons, need for a change, and wish to challenge oneself with immersion in a new culture.
- 2) Given the way the program is set up; how can you best prepare to meet your goals? For example, if one of your goals is truly being immersed in Irish culture, yet you are going with a group of UW-Eau Claire students, how can you insure that you do not spend too much time with other Americans?

The information in this guide was current at the time of publication, though changes may occur at any time.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Program

In this program, UW-Eau Claire participants become regular students at the University of Limerick (UL) in Ireland. You will enroll directly in classes with Irish students, learn from UL instructors, and live in one of five residential villages at UL.

The Location

With breathtaking beauty and a long, dramatic history, the island of Ireland is home to 5 million people and 8 million sheep. The Irish combine a keen sense of tradition with the skills and flexibility required to function in an open economy. Ireland's influence exceeds its size or population because of the renowned creativity of the Irish in literature, film, and popular music. Education is the cornerstone of all economic and cultural activity.

Limerick, a vibrant city of historic and literary interest, lies in the heart of the Shannon Region in Ireland's Midwest. This a region offers spectacular landscapes, heritage attractions, and cultural pursuits. Founded as a Viking fortress in the 10th century, it is Ireland's oldest chartered city. An ambitious program of restoration and urban renewal has been implemented in recent years, restoring King John's Castle and St. Mary's Cathedral and successfully blending new buildings with old.

The University

The University was established in 1972 on the Plassey estate. Just 20 minutes from the city by bus, the University of Limerick quickly gained a reputation among Irish universities for

innovation in the design and delivery of its courses. Additionally, UL is regarded for its excellent academic standards and relevance to the needs of the developing Irish economy, particularly in the area of advanced technology and in the context of Ireland's membership in the European Union. The University is focus for a wide range of artistic activity and is home to some fine collections of Irish art, the Irish Chamber Orchestra, and the Irish World Music Centre.

The compact nature of the campus and the UL's size foster a close sense of community. UL believes strongly that the creation of a friendly, caring, and cooperative atmosphere is an important factor in the successful pursuit of a program of study. The university's population is ~ 17,000 students, and there are more than 70 clubs and societies that receive official support from UL. The range of sport/recreation programs and facilities places emphasis on achieving a balance between academic imperatives and a healthy lifestyle.

UL study abroad meets the [Forum on Education Abroad Standards of Good Practice](#). Study abroad students are fully integrated, taking the same courses, seminars, tutorials, and tests as Irish and other international students. Students may select and combine courses from all six colleges: Business, Education, Engineering, Humanities, Informatics & Electronics, and Science.

Academic Calendar

Below is the spring 19 calendar for the University of Limerick. **Please do not book your flight until you receive your official acceptance email from the University of Limerick.**

Depart the U.S.: January 13

Arrival and Pick-Up: January 14

Orientation: January 15-18

Classes begin: January 21

Final Exams: April 29-May 13

(exams can be scheduled up to 6 pm on May 13. Do not plan to leave on that day!)

Move-out of Housing: May 14

You may finish with your exams earlier than May 13. However, the final exam schedule is not set until four to six weeks before the end of the semester, so there is no way to know until then whether you can leave earlier or not.

On one rare occasion, UL changed the semester calendar a few months before students were about to depart. If a calendar change occurs, you will need to sit for exams; no special exemptions will be given to students who have purchased airline tickets. **You will be expected to change your tickets so that you are present for exams. Make sure that you purchase a ticket that allows you to change your dates for a small fee.**

ACADEMICS

Your Study Abroad Handbook has additional information on academic topics such as registration at UW-Eau Claire, class attendance, credits and course load, petitioning course equivalencies, grades, transcripts, and accessing the UW-Eau Claire library while abroad.

Pre-departure Planning

Please see the **UL Academic Planning Guide** on the [UWEC Limerick Academics page](#) for details on how to plan your courses at UL.

To find courses already evaluated for UWEC credit, you will use the Transfer Credit Wizard. A guide to using the Wizard, with screenshots, is on the Academics page listed above.

The CIE will ask the Admissions Office to evaluate any courses listed on your Limerick Module Interest Questionnaire that do not have UW-Eau Claire equivalencies. Equivalencies will be posted on the Transfer Wizard as they are evaluated.

It is difficult to get into physical education courses at UL, and that equestrian skills (riding) classes are limited to those students in the equestrian science major.

Registration at University of Limerick

When you first get to UL, you will have an orientation. During that time, you will get a list of classes that are available to you. After looking over this list and comparing it with your course equivalency sheet, you will decide on 7-10 classes. For the next two weeks, you have the opportunity to go to that many classes and try them out to see which ones you like and which ones you don't. At the end of those two weeks, you officially register with the University of Limerick! Acceptance to UL courses is subject to academic prerequisites for the individual subjects, scheduling constraints, and ceilings on enrollments.

Reporting Your Registration

As soon as you are registered for classes at UL, please complete your online BlugoldsAbroad account questionnaire for all courses that you are taking that have not been approved. You will be asked to include the course title, course number, course description (just cut and paste from the online catalog) and number of credits for each of the

classes you are taking. Your UWEC Study Abroad Coordinator will use your questionnaire to request an equivalency.

Once an equivalency is established, it will be posted to Transfer Wizard. The process of determining an equivalency can take several weeks. **In other words, you will not be able to request equivalencies for three or four new courses so that you can choose which one you wish to take before UL registration closes.**

Class Attendance

When studying abroad, you are required to follow the UL attendance. In general, you are expected to attend all regularly scheduled classes and field trips unless illness or other unavoidable circumstances make this impossible. Absences must be approved in advance by the instructor and may result in lower grades.

Credits and Course Load

You earn abroad UW-Eau Claire resident credit while abroad. The UL classes you take will count towards the total credits needed for graduation, **and grades will be figured into your GPA.** You are required to carry a full load (12-18 credits/semester).

Students at UL take an average of five courses (modules) per semester. Each course is worth three credits. All courses meet approximately 45 hours per semester. UL allows study abroad students to drop down to four courses with special permission from their home university. At the beginning of the semester, your UW-Eau Claire Study Abroad Coordinator will send an email to UL approving all UW-Eau Claire students to take four classes.

With four courses, you will be taking the minimum number of credits (12 credits) to maintain your full-time status at UWEC.

Dropping below full-time status may result in loss of financial aid and/or insurance coverage and must be approved by the international office. Taking more than five courses will result in an additional charge at UL; taking more than six courses (18 credits) will result in additional charges at **both** UL and UWEC.

Service Learning

There are many volunteer opportunities through UL. See the "Student Life-Volunteering" section of this guide for details. If you need to fulfill your UW-Eau Claire service-learning requirement, successful completion of a UL volunteer assignment may fulfill part or all of it. You will complete the service-learning forms online once you have your volunteer assignment before you begin your service. To do so, go to the following website:

<http://www.uwec.edu/SL/students/index.htm>

Grades

The University of Limerick awards letter grades following the completion of a module. These letter grades are transferred to the 4-point QCA grading system (similar to the GPA system).

Limerick grades convert to UW-Eau Claire grades according to the following scale:

Limerick	UW-Eau Claire
A1, A2, B1	A
B2, B3, C1	B
C2, C3, D1	C
D2	D
F	F

Note: UW-Eau Claire students abroad are not allowed to take classes pass/fail, and grades from Ireland are figured into your UW-Eau Claire GPA.

Transcripts & Graduation

A transcript for your time abroad will be sent from UL to UW-Eau Claire. **Transcripts are not available until two or three months after the end of the semester.** Due to this delay, you will initially receive a UW-Eau Claire grade report with "NR" (not reported) for all courses. A revised grade report will be available after the grades have arrived. UL will only send one transcript to UW-Eau Claire; do not request transcripts from UL directly, because the UW-Eau Claire Registrar's Office cannot accept a transcript sent directly to a student.

NOTE. If you are a senior and are studying abroad for your last UW-Eau Claire semester, please note that the different timelines in grade reporting will require you to delay your graduation until May (fall students) or August (spring students).

If you are planning to apply to a competitive program at UW-Eau Claire, such as Education or Nursing, for the semester you return, contact the UW-Eau Claire study abroad coordinator to see if any form of grade can be sent prior to the review deadline.

Irish Academic System

The Irish system encourages students to develop through independent learning. As such, your learning is much less prescribed than it is in the United States: the professor will not specifically tell you what to read/study and when do it. As a student, it is your job to pick the materials you want to read from the class reading list and pace your learning. You will not

have regular assignments/quizzes to make sure that you are keeping up with your work. Instead, you are expected to do your own reading and will be assessed one or two times in the semester.

Most courses at UL are taught in the traditional method of lecture and tutorial common in the U.K. and Ireland. Both the lecture and the tutorial play an important yet different role in student learning.

Lectures: Like in the U.S., the lecture is a traditional method of teaching that allows lecturers to pass important information to a large number of students. However, you will be expected to take notes; handouts with lecture notes will not be provided. Also, lectures offer less opportunity for students to ask questions; you ask questions and discuss the topic in the tutorial.

Lectures in Ireland are not intended to tell you everything you need to know for the test or assignment. Instead, the lectures might provide an overview to allow you to place your course material or readings in context or to focus on a difficult concept or theory. **To take the best advantage of lectures, you should keep up with course reading and come to lecture prepared. By being prepared for lecture, you will be able to engage and ask questions in the tutorials.**

Tutorials/discussion groups: Tutorials, or discussion groups as they are also called, are NOT mini-lectures. They are active learning opportunities where the professor and students meet to discuss the material covered in lecture and the reading that you are doing outside of class. For tutorials to be effective,

they require active student participation. This means you:

- must have read assigned and suggested work in advance
- should be prepared to contribute to the discussion
- make note of any difficult concepts or points from lectures or your readings that you do not understand
- should raise issues for discussion.

Tutorials are not optional. Attendance is kept, and absences are noted. One benefit of tutorials is that they allow for closer professor/student relationships than are typically found at the undergraduate level in the U.S.

Advance planning and independent learning:

With only 12-15 hours of class time per week, you may think your time at UL will be an academic vacation. This is definitely not the case. As mentioned before, much of the emphasis is placed on independent study. As one student said, *"You will probably spend a lot less time in class than you are used to, but in exchange, you are expected to do a lot more independent work!"*

Upon beginning a class, you will likely be given a (very) long reading list. This is not a required reading list; it is a list of suggested readings that will expand your knowledge of the subject area. What you actually read from the list is mostly left up to you. **If you are told that "You may wish to look at these specific titles," take that as a strong hint to read those books.** You should also browse through several of the others and choose two or three to read carefully. These readings will form the basis of your contributions to tutorial discussions, as

well as for the essays that serve as assessment for the module.

Assessment: Unlike in the U.S. system, you will rarely find a lecturer who makes short, weekly assignments. In some courses, you may not hand in any work until the last few weeks of the term. At this point, you will probably be asked to hand in essays or papers, which will range in length from 5-15 pages. You often receive the essay questions with your syllabus at the beginning of the semester. Start writing early!

Below, past students talk about the major differences they encountered between UW-Eau Claire and UL.

Grading: *"The grading is a lot different. The assessment for most classes is to attend/participate in tutorial sessions, write one essay, and have a final. The entire grade for my science class is the final exam."*

Scheduling: *"Irish students' schedules (or timetables) are a lot more rigid than ours, since we are a liberal arts college. They get their timetable of classes (or modules) at the beginning of the semester, and those are the classes they have to take. If they fail, they can re-take the final. It would be really hard to re-take a class because they have another set schedule for the next semester."*

"The university schedules are not organized like ours are. By this, I mean that they don't have a class at the same time every day, in the same place. For example, I had my science class on Monday at 10 in one building, on Wednesday at 11 in another, and on Thursday at 2 in another room. There are no 1:00 MWF classes. The good (or bad) thing is that I had a lot of classes on

Monday and Thursday, but hardly any on Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday."

Classes: *"Each class usually meets with the professor/lecturer twice a week for about an hour each time. (In Ireland, not everyone is called "professor" – you have to earn that title, so most are referred to as lecturers.) Then, each class also has a discussion section, or tutorial. ATTEND THESE. They are where you really learn/discuss the material and can ask questions."*

"You have a lecture (with a "lecturer" not professor, professor is a very formal term in Ireland and isn't used often) where you take notes, and then a tutorial where you discuss the module content in a smaller group setting. The tutorials are how professors take attendance and are super helpful!!"

Assignments: *"Typically you will not get any daily/weekly assignments. The lecturer will recommend that you read certain things, but there will be no quiz or assignment that is due along with it. You still need to do the reading—most lecturers teach using the Socratic Method, meaning that they call on you in class and ask you to explain something from the reading to everyone else. Also, it is expected that you will use ideas from it in your mid-terms and final exams. And you will learn a lot about Irish culture from reading journals, books and other literature."*

Homework: *"Since there isn't homework throughout the semester, Irish students claim that they slack off a lot early in the semester, but it seemed to me that they worked very hard throughout. Most classes don't have a required attendance (they aren't graded on it) so many*

don't go—or so they say. It seemed like they went to the classes I was in."

"No homework sounds great, but if you don't keep up with the reading it can come back to bite you at the end of the semester. Finals are worth a huge part of your grade, and it's hard to get back in the swing of things if you haven't kept up all along."

Papers: *"For almost any class you will take, you will be asked to write a paper or two. The papers are generally three to five pages and require you to use numerous sources. The most important thing is that you CITE YOUR SOURCES CORRECTLY. Here are some tips for you:*

1) You must use scholarly sources. If you are familiar with JSTOR, that will give you access to an endless amount of scholarly journal articles.

2) When using Microsoft Word, become familiar with using footnotes at the bottom of each page. This is something I learned how to do while abroad. Most papers will require the use of footnotes.

3) Get a copy, from the library at UL, of the pamphlet that tells you how to correctly cite sources.

4) Overall, if you use scholarly sources and cite them in the correct format, you are halfway to earning an A.

5) Be careful of using the FIRST PERSON in essays. Lecturers usually discourage the use of the first person when assigning essays."

Exams: *"The exams are essay style, and you will typically only have a midterm and a final. They are different from exams here. You will be given*

a list of questions or essay topics, and you will get to choose which ones you want to write about. You will have two hours to finish the exam and you need that entire two hours to finish it. In fact, if you leave early from these exams you will lose points. Basically you have two hours to tell the lecturer everything you learned that semester in a clear and organized way."

"Exams at UL are very strict. You know the movies where you see students head into a gym with individual desks and teachers walking around and ripping up people's tests if they cheat? Well... it is almost exactly like that without the whole ripping up tests, they just take it away from you. Final exams are taken very seriously at UL, if you do not have your student ID or you are like 2 minutes late you will not be allowed to take the test..."

Lecturers: *"Most of the lecturers are great. They are available right after class to talk with you and answer any questions that you may have; they also hold office hours. They are very accustomed to American students and they know that their exam format is different from exams here, so they are more than willing to talk with you about this and give you tips on how to study. Other Irish students are also a great resource for advice!"*

"Introduce yourself to your lecturers at the beginning of the semester. They don't bite! Many will be much more accommodating with special request or issues if they know you are a study abroad student from the start."

MONEY MATTERS

Information about making payments, when they are due, the UW-Eau Claire withdrawal/refund deadlines, financial aid, scholarships, budgeting and ways to bring money abroad is in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Cost Estimate

You can find the most current Cost Estimate for your program, in easily printable format, on the [CIE Ireland webpage](#). Be sure you are looking at the correct term. The cost estimate includes what you pay to UW-Eau Claire, what you pay to UL, and what you pay directly to other vendors.

Housing Costs

You will apply to and pay for your housing directly through UL. A €50 application fee will be due when you apply, typically in April for fall and September for spring. An additional €300 security deposit and the full semester's housing payment* will be due when you accept your placement, usually in July for fall and **November for spring.**

*If you receive financial aid, and need to access the aid before you can pay your housing bill, contact the UWEC Ireland coordinator. She will let UL know, and they will defer the rest of your payment to the first day of the UWEC semester, when financial aid is released. You will still need to pay your security deposit at the time you accept your placement.

Personal Travel

The actual amount spent on personal travel will vary greatly from student to student, depending on your budget and your priorities. Students who want to be involved in their host

community generally spend less time (and money) traveling. Others travel every weekend with correspondingly high costs and fewer close connections in their new home. Spring students: please note you can stay in your dorm during your spring break at no additional charge or you can travel during that time.

Past UL students indicated that they spent \$600 to \$3,000 for personal travel. Students roughly categorized the cost and frequency of travel as follows.

- \$300 to 600- Traveled a couple weekends during my time abroad.
- \$1,000 to 2,000- Traveled a moderate amount, every other weekend.
- \$3,000- Traveled a lot, almost every weekend.

Currency Exchange

The currency of Ireland is the Euro. One Euro has 100 cents. There are 8 Euro coins, ranging in amount from 1 cent to 2 Euros. Coins have different designs in the various countries that use the Euro. Bills range from €5 to €500 and have a standard design across countries.

The exchange rate as of May 22, 2018 was 1 Euro = \$1.14075 US. You can find current exchange rates at <http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>.

Credit Cards and ATMs

Credit cards are widely accepted throughout Ireland. However, finding ATMs in some rural counties, including Limerick, may be difficult. Be sure to pull out cash in Limerick city before heading to the country.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Additional information on these issues, as well as information on CISI insurance, is included in the Health Issues and Safety Abroad sections of your Study Abroad Handbook.

STIs at UL

In December 2016, the Irish Times reported an “outbreak” of STIs, specifically gonorrhea and chlamydia, at UL. You can [find the article here](#). Please discuss any questions or concerns you may have with your healthcare provider.

Campus Medical Services

There is a campus health center at UL similar to Health Services at UW-Eau Claire. It is free, but you do need to call for an appointment. There is also a pharmacy near the Students' Union.

Services for Students with Disabilities

UL's [Disability Services Office](#) can provide assistance and accommodations to study abroad students. All campus housing is accessible and there are adapted rooms for students with disabilities. It is vital that students book early and outline their needs to the accommodations office.

As part of the inclusive measures provided by the university there is a Disability Services accessible bus available to bring students to and from the villages. Early application is important.

It is also important to look at the level of accessibility in Ireland. To find more information on this topic, please see the [State Department Country Specific Information page](#).

If you have questions or concerns about this, please contact your UWEC study abroad coordinator.

Emergency Contacts

General emergency procedures are described in the *Study Abroad Handbook*, and UL has a Study Abroad Adviser who is available for consultation if difficulties arise. You will receive an emergency contact card at orientation; be sure to keep it in your wallet at all times. The information is also on the [Contact Names & Addresses](#) page of this guide.

911 Equivalent in Republic of Ireland

If you are in an emergency situation in the Republic of Ireland, you will need to know how to reach the local police, fire, or ambulance services. The local equivalent to the 911 emergency line in Ireland is 999. **However, you can also use the European wide emergency number which is 112.** We suggest you save these numbers in your cell phone in case you need to use them quickly.

The U.S. State Department also provides a list of [911 numbers abroad](#). Please note that in some countries there are different numbers for fire, police, and ambulance. Plan ahead and research numbers before you go.

Safety in Ireland

Information on crime, road safety, drug penalties, and terrorist activity in Ireland is included in the State Department Consular Information Sheet which you can find at this link. Safety in and around Limerick will be discussed during orientation in Ireland.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Passport information is included in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Immigration/Visa

A visa is official permission to temporarily reside in another country and is granted by the government of that country.

At the time of this writing, U.S. citizens are deemed to be from a “non-visa” country, [per this document](#), meaning that you do not need a visa to enter Ireland. However, because you will be in Ireland for more than 90 days, you do need to register with Irish immigration within a month after arrival.

Please see the Learning Content “Limerick Immigration Entry Requirements” in your UWEC BludoldsAbroad account and read the “Visa” section of your Study Abroad Handbook for current information about what documents you should bring with you for immigration and what to do to keep up-to-date on visa requirements.

At Irish customs, make sure you say that you are coming to Ireland as a student **so that you receive the correct immigration permission stamp in your passport.** (It is not possible to change to student status if you receive a tourist immigration stamp on arrival.)

The Irish immigration authorities will review the documents and computer-swipe and date-stamp your passport. You have one month from the date stamped in your passport to **register with the Immigration Office.**

Please note that these regulations may affect your airline ticket purchase. See the

"Travel Arrangements" section of this guide for details.

Registering with immigration after arrival:

Immigration registration takes place at the Garda Síochána (police) station at Henry Street in Limerick during normal office hours, excluding public holidays. The UL Study Abroad Office will arrange your appointment, but it will be your responsibility to get to and from the appointment. UL will provide directions.

To register with Immigration, you must produce all of the documents needed at immigration, plus:

- A valid UL student ID card (provided by UL Study Abroad Office during orientation)
- An immigration letter (provided by the UL Study Abroad Office during orientation)
- €300 fee (as of 2016-2017) payable by bank giro (similar to a money order) or credit card **in your name**. You cannot use a parent's credit card, nor can you pay cash.

More information on Irish immigration requirements for students are on the Irish Council for International Students site: <https://www.internationalstudents.ie/info-and-advice/immigration/visas-and-immigration>

Visas for Travel to Other Countries

If you plan to travel outside of Ireland while abroad, verify visa requirements for each country you will visit by contacting the nearest consulate for that country, or your travel agency. Most Western European nations do not require US citizens to have a visa for tourist travel of less than three months, but you should always verify the requirement as entry requirements can change with little notice.

PACKING TIPS

In addition to the general packing information in your Study Abroad Handbook, you should know the following about Ireland.

Weather

Limerick has a temperate climate due to the Gulf Stream. Past participants have noted, however, that at times the weather can be very cold, rainy, and windy, and that it can change several times throughout the day.

What to Pack

You will receive a suggested packing list Orientation 2 in November.

Appliances

The standard electric current in Europe is 220 volts. U.S. appliances such as hair dryers and razors run on 120 volts. If you plan to bring these appliances, you will need to buy both a **converter and a plug adapter**. You may also choose to buy the appliances abroad.

GETTING TO IRELAND

Travel Arrangements

It is your responsibility to make travel arrangements to Limerick. You will fly into Shannon International Airport, which is located 16 miles from the city and is directly accessible from many destinations, including daily flights to and from the United States. **Note that a roundtrip ticket is required for immigration.** There is information on student-oriented travel agencies, instructions for booking a flight, and other travel information in the *Study Abroad Handbook*.

Buying a Changeable Ticket

As noted earlier, exam dates are only set 4-6 weeks before the end of the semester. If your exams are early in the exam period, you may want to change your ticket to come home earlier. **Therefore, we strongly recommend that you buy a roundtrip ticket with a low change fee.** Note that trip insurance does not cover flight changes if you buy a non-changeable, non-refundable ticket.

Getting to Limerick

Pick-Up by UL

Your acceptance email from UL will include information about airport pick-up. As long as you return the information before the due-date, and you are arriving on one of UL's designated "arrival dates," you will be picked up at Shannon International Airport and transported to your accommodation. Typically, you must submit the form at least 3 weeks in advance of the arrival day.

Delayed Arrival

If you have turned in arrival information but your flight is delayed, please phone the UL Study Abroad Coordinator (see Contact Names and Addresses) as soon as possible so they know when to expect you. You may need to take a taxi to UL. You can also try to call/email the UW-Eau Claire Center for International Education and we will try to contact UL staff to notify them of your delay.

You should wait in the "Arrivals" terminal, and you will be paged if you are not met immediately.

Independent Arrival

If you did not return your Airport Collection Form to UL by the requested date, UL will not arrange for you to be picked up from the airport. However, there is regular bus or taxi service from the airport to UL.

You are not required to fly into Shannon Airport; you can also fly into Dublin. However, when comparing ticket costs, be sure to factor in the time and cost of getting from Dublin to the UL campus with all of your luggage!

Early Arrival

Since UL cannot accommodate students prior to the start of orientation, you will need to find alternative housing arrangements if you arrive early. If you decide to remain in the city of Limerick, you may want to stay in a bed-and-breakfast (B&B) for one or more nights. There is a Limerick Tourist Office located at 20 O'Connell Street in Limerick City Center. They offer housing suggestions on their site or you can email at limericktio@failteireland.ie.

SETTLING IN

Orientation

UL offers an orientation for incoming international students at the start of the semester in Ireland. All new students attend the program. The program gives a student's view of the university: its physical layout, courses, administrative procedures, counseling services, library, student services office, and sports and recreation facilities. You will register for your classes at this time, too. Regular sessions are also held with visiting students during the first weeks of each semester to

assist the integration process and to resolve outstanding issues.

Housing

You will apply for housing through the UL online application system. Your UL acceptance letter will include instructions. Please see the "Money Matters" section of this guide for details on dates and payments.

The University offers five residential villages specifically designed for Irish and international students. Individual two-story terraced houses of six to eight bedrooms are arranged in landscaped courtyards in an attractive village style. One or two U.S. students live with six or seven Irish or other international students to enable integration into the social life of the full-time Irish students. All villages are mixed gender, so you will have both male and female housemates.

Past participants report that living with five to seven other people can be challenging at times. Each living group is responsible for keeping their apartment clean, taking out garbage, etc. Address these issues directly and early on, in an organized manner: a cleaning chart agreed upon by all household members and hung on the refrigerator door is one suggestion. If everyone agrees at the beginning to a specific approach to keeping the apartment livable, it will be easier to hold people to it later on. Don't be afraid to be the one to organize the initial discussion! Unlike the dorms at UW-Eau Claire, there are no RAs, but there is a village manager. One time during the semester, the village manager will inspect the house or apartment to make sure it is up to par. If you fail an inspection, you will get another try. If you fail a second time, all roommates will pay a fee to a cleaning crew.

Semester student housing is booked for the full semester, so fall and spring students can stay in their room during any breaks at no additional charge. Year-long students are booked in accommodation from September to the end of exams in May and can stay in their room during all breaks at no additional charge.

Residence Hall Descriptions

The following descriptions of the five villages were provided by a past participant. For a look at the residences, go to <http://www.studentliving.ul.ie/>.

- 1) **Kilmurry (KIL-mur-ee)**: This village consists of two story houses that generally have six to eight people living in them. There is a bathroom upstairs and downstairs. All the occupants share a kitchen and living room. The village has its own shop and launderette. In terms of location, Kilmurry is just a short walk from the workout center and about a 5-15-minute walk from where classes will take place.
- 2) **Plassey (PLAH-see)**: Plassey is much like Kilmurry, although they are located on completely opposite sides of the UL campus. Generally, these two-story houses are designed for eight people, and roommates will share kitchen, living room, and two bathrooms. A bus stops and other shops are nearby, and a launderette is located in the village center. Plassey village is the least expensive of the five accommodations.
- 3) **Dromroe (drum-ROW)**: This village is made up of apartments in connected housing complexes. Six people share an apartment with a living room and kitchen. At Dromroe, everyone gets their own double bed and their own private bathroom. The village has its own shop, restaurant, and launderette. While the walk to the bus stop is longer when compared

to Plassey and Kilmurry, Dromroe is the closest building to the campus where you will be attending classes.

4) **Thomond (TOE-mund):** Thomond is similar to Dromroe in the apartment style layout with six occupants. All six share the kitchen and living room and there is a launderette in the village. UL is located on the River Shannon, and you must cross the river to get to Thomond, which is about a 10-15-minute walk from campus. The bridge is a little bigger version of the UW-Eau Claire footbridge.

5) **Cappavilla (CAH-pa-VIL-ah):** This village is the newest addition to UL and the village is newer and larger. It is laid out in a way similar to Dromroe and Thomond, but Cappavilla offers six and four ensuite units to undergraduates and it also has a launderette. It is located behind Thomond next to the health service building. Living in Cappavilla means it is quite a walk to campus, but a shuttle bus frequently runs from this unit to campus.

What's Provided for My Room?

Each house offers single study-bedrooms, a large kitchen/living room, two bathroom facilities, a telephone, and cable TV. Each room contains a bed, (usually a single bed, except in Dromroe) desk, closet, and sink. Bedspreads are provided, but you have to bring your own sheets and pillowcases. In rare cases, you may be asked to share a room, usually with another U.S. student. The houses are often cold by U.S. standards, so be sure to have some warm clothes.

Computer hook-up from individual study-bedrooms to the University network can be

provided, and there is a good Wi-Fi connection throughout the house. UL provides an Ethernet cable for your use if you wish. The Internet charge is included in your rental fee.

Free Internet access is available in the library and computer labs throughout the university. If you have questions about computer services or support at UL, please visit the Student Computing website:

<https://ulsites.ul.ie/itd/student-computing-services-information>

If you discover you need something for your room that you forgot to pack, don't worry! Past students suggest the Roches Store on O'Connell Street in the Limerick city center (downtown) to pick up little appliances like curling irons or alarm clocks. Penney's, on the same street, is good for inexpensive pillows, sheets, and towels. You can take the bus from campus or walk if you want the exercise. (It's about two miles.)

Laundry

Each village has communal laundry facilities with washers and dryers where you can wash and dry your clothes. Buy laundry tokens can at the village reception to operate the machines. Past students report that doing laundry is expensive and machines are much smaller. You should expect to pay \$6-7 per load. To save money, you can purchase a laundry package for one load of laundry/week ahead of time, which will be cheaper in the long run.

Meals

Meal plan: Recently, UL began offering optional meal plans to students. You can sign up through the UL housing application. If you

select a meal plan, you will get a voucher book that good at designated food outlets on campus. The UL Meal Plan is available from 8.30am to 8.00pm Monday through Thursday and 8.30am to 3.00pm on Fridays. Weekends are not included. For students who don't like to cook at home, the meal plan may be less expensive than buying single meals at the University cafes. Depending on the plan option selected, you can save between 10-20% at campus dining.

Self-catering: Historically, students have been expected to cook for themselves in their kitchen or purchase food/meals at the University cafes or cafeterias. Each kitchen is equipped with dishes, cups, utensils and cutlery for each resident. Kitchens are fully equipped with oven and stove top, refrigerator and freezer. UL also offers a Farmers Market every Tuesday in the Student Center Courtyard where students can buy fresh produce from local vendors.

Traditional Irish Foods to Try

Bangers and mash: Sausages with mashed potatoes and gravy

Beef and Guinness stew: A beef stew made with a Guinness beef broth, served with mashed potatoes

Irish stew: A lamb and mutton stew

Corned beef and cabbage: Beef cured in salt and pickling spice, with cooked cabbage and root vegetables

Shepard's pie/Cottage pie: Minced lamb/beef and vegetables topped with mashed potatoes

Irish soda bread: a yeast free bread, delicious with soups or for breakfast!

Traditional Full Irish breakfast: Fried eggs, rashers (bacon), sausage, potatoes, baked beans, fried mushrooms and tomatoes, brown bread, and black and white pudding (blood sausage). It is served with your choice of tea or coffee, and sometimes orange juice.

Irish breakfast tea: Black tea served with milk and/or sugar. The Irish milk is so good and it makes Irish tea very addicting! The two famous and rival tea brands are Barrys and Lyons, you will find that Irish people could argue for days about which one is better.

Other Campus Services

The campus center at UL offers:

- Book shop
- Full banking service (including ATM)
- Food store
- Pharmacy
- Laundromat
- Full bar and restaurant facilities
- Student function rooms
- Students Union offices
- Athletic center w/ pub

STUDENT LIFE

Student life is centered on campus with restaurants, pubs, a modern dance company, chamber orchestra, and a national art collection.

Student Clubs & Organizations

All registered students are members of the Students' Union at UL, and the Union's aim is to promote student well-being and welfare. It has developed an extensive range of services and other facilities in support of this aim. The Union supports more than 70 clubs and societies which cover almost every interest, mainstream sport, and specialist activity. Past

students recommend the International Society, the Outdoor Pursuits Club, the Kayak Club, and Language Exchange. Find more information at <http://www.registercs.ul.ie/>.

Activities/Events

There are also a number of workout classes offered at the UL athletic center, and you have a free gym membership for use of athletic center facilities. (Specific classes may have a small additional fee.)

Communication about university/community events is very decentralized, so you'll need to make an effort to find out what is going on. Good sources of information are bulletin boards, particularly the board in the Students' Union.

Volunteer

UL strongly encourages study abroad students to volunteer in the community. There are many opportunities to get involved that enrich your study abroad experience, and can enrich your resume, including getting involved in research projects and tutoring in local schools. This is a great way to experience more about the Irish culture and way of life by interacting with Irish people from all ages!

Students interested in volunteering or who wish to undertake a practicum module are advised to secure **Local Police Clearance before arriving in Ireland**. To do this, submit a record check request through the Wisconsin Department of Justice.

<https://www.doj.state.wi.us/dles/cib/background-check-criminal-history-information#request>

There is a small fee, and it will take 7-10 business days for you to receive the report, so

plan ahead. Once you receive your letter, **put it in a safe place and bring it with you**. You will ultimately share it with the volunteer site coordinator.

While this is not necessary for all volunteering opportunities, it is increasingly required for any placements working with children, the elderly or other vulnerable groups, all of which are popular options with Study Abroad students.

(<http://www.doj.state.wi.us/dles/cib/crime-information-bureau>). You must apply for and receive your background check before you depart for the UK.

The next step is to apply for Garda Vetting; UL will provide further information on this during Orientation.

You can register on the Volunteering website: [Volunteering opportunities in UL and Limerick City](#) as soon as you have a working UL email address, however most students will register during orientation week, once they arrive in UL.

Volunteering is not for academic credit; however, it is listed on your UL academic transcript. (UL is the only university in Ireland to include this!)

Those who wish to do so can also apply for the (UL) [Presidents Volunteer Award](#), to qualify students must volunteer for a minimum number of hours and are required to submit a reflective portfolio.

Remember to submit your service-learning forms online before you begin your project if you want it to count for UWEC service-learning! (www.uwec.edu/SL)

COMMUNICATION

Information on accessing/forwarding your UW-Eau Claire email address and on computer-based phone services (SKYPE, Facetime, etc.) is in your Study Abroad Handbook.

Time Difference

Ireland is normally six hours ahead of Eau Claire. For example, when it is 1:00 PM on Thursday in Eau Claire, it is 7:00 PM on Thursday in Limerick. However, daylight savings time does not happen in both places simultaneously, so for a few weeks, there is a seven-hour difference!

Telephone Information

From the U.S. to Ireland. You must first dial 011, which is the international dialing code. Next, you must dial 353, the country code for Ireland, and then the rest of the number to reach a specific city and location. Note that if there is a "0" listed before the main number, drop it when dialing internationally.

From Ireland to the U.S.: To "phone home" while you are abroad using a calling card or calling collect, you must dial 0800-89-0011 to get an AT&T operator, and then the regular area code and number. Many students get a pre-paid Irish calling card to use for calling home while they are away. To dial directly, you can dial "001," the area code, and the phone number you are calling. Note that "00" is the international access code in Ireland and "1" is the country code for the United States.

Phones in University Housing: UL does not offer phones in the room, but there is a phone in each residence. You are charged to use the phone. To make phone calls, you will probably want to use calling cards. Some students have

also bought cell phones (mobiles). Both options are more expensive than email.

Cell Phones: if you bring your own phone, the easy Wi-Fi access on campus makes communicating with a free app such as WhatsApp pretty simple. Set it up before you leave, and make sure those you plan to contact have it, too.

It is not necessary to get a local number for your cell phone, but you can choose to do so.

Options:

- Some students decide to do so by buying a new SIM card that allows you to get an Irish phone number. You can then call any Irish number as well.
- Others decide to get a burner phone for emergency purposes. They keep their US phone & number (check with your provider about an international plan), and they also have an Irish burner phone with an Irish number.

There are many places to get a phone or SIM card in downtown Limerick.

Email/Internet

With computers all over campus, internet is free and easy. However, if you have a laptop, you may want to bring it so that you can do homework in your residence.

Snail Mail

International airmail takes 7-10 days in either direction. Until you have an exact address, your family and friends can send mail to:

Your Name
Study Abroad Student
University of Limerick

Limerick
Ireland

TRAVEL WHILE ABROAD

See additional travel information in your *Study Abroad Handbook*.

Organized Travel

The International Society at UL plans some trips for international students. In past semesters, the Society has offered trips around Ireland, to Scotland, and to London. Past students recommend them: *"They are reasonably priced, a great way to meet students from around the world, and someone else does the planning for you!"*

Bus & Train Travel

Taking a bus is probably your least expensive travel option in Ireland. To travel by bus around Ireland, check out Bus Eireann at <http://www.buseireann.ie/>. Show your student ID for a student discount!

To travel by train, you leave from the same location as the buses (<http://www.irishrail.ie/home/>). The nice thing is that you can buy tickets at the bus/train station. There are buses that leave from campus that go near the bus/train station too, or you can pay a bit more and take a cab.

In the words of a past participant, *"The bus was my main source of transportation all over Ireland. Usually, you will not pay over 20 Euro for a round trip bus ticket, which is fairly inexpensive for a weekend trip. Another option for travel is by train. This will be more expensive than a bus ride, but you will generally get to your destination faster. If you go to Northern Ireland, train may not be a bad option because the bus ride can get fairly long."*

If you plan to travel outside of Ireland, you may want to consider a Eurail pass. Ryanair and Easyjet also fly out of Shannon Airport. See your *Study Abroad Handbook* for details.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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WEB RESOURCES: IRELAND

University/City	Culture	Country
University of Limerick Homepage http://www.ul.ie	Limerick Life http://www.limerickslife.com	Everything You Wanted to Know about Ireland http://www.ireland.com
City of Limerick Homepage https://www.limerick.ie/	Irish Genealogy http://www.ireland-information.com	Directory of Irish Websites http://www.browse.ie/
	Poetry in Ireland http://www.poetryireland.ie/index.php	Irish Government http://www.gov.ie/
	Irish Weather http://www.met.ie/	International Country Codes http://www.countrycallingcodes.com/
	Irish TV/Radio News http://www.rte.ie/news/ http://www.tg4.ie/	Irish Newspapers Irish Times: http://www.irishtimes.com/ The Irish Independent: http://www.independent.ie/

PAST PARTICIPANT VOICES, 2017-2018

WHAT THEY WISH THEY HAD KNOWN BEFORE THEY LEFT

- They don't have microwaves.
- Things will go wrong. You will forget things. It's okay to spend money, because you've saved for exactly this. So, don't stress!
- That I had nothing to worry about!

THE BEST PART OF THEIR EXPERIENCE MID-WAY THROUGH

- Getting to experience the difference between the UK education system and the US. It has helped me work on my adaptability and I have learn so much culturally!
 - Events organized by the International Society
 - Hanging out with new friends from student orgs I've joined.
 - Meeting new people and taking weekend trips.
- Joining the Ultimate Frisbee club and hanging out with my housemates.

BIGGEST ADJUSTMENTS THEY HAD TO MAKE

- People being late for everything ("Irish Time").
- No car; having to use public transportation.
- Living with people from many different cultures.
- The time difference/communicating with people back home.

HOW THEY SUMMED IT UP

Studying abroad is more than seeing the world. It's about understanding different cultures and ways of living.

Mary Kate

"You learn so much by experiencing and living a new culture. With many programs you live or learn only with US students and teachers, but here in Ireland you live and learn with the Irish. In doing so, you learn about yourself, others, and another culture and come back a different person, not changed directly, but with a greater appreciation for another culture and world outside your own if you actually give it a chance." Bryan

"Amazing. Unforgettable. Irreplaceable. It's not even that my time abroad was filled with endless travel and crazy experiences, because it wasn't really. But it enabled me to see things differently and gave me a new perspective on not only the world, but also my life". Kelly

