

# Study Abroad



**LIMERICK**  
**FALL 2018**

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**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!

This program guide is to be used together 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. It is designed to complement the Handbook, study abroad orientation, and your individual pre-departure preparations.

Please realize that although 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. Your peer adviser will email additional information throughout the semester. Please contact the Center for International Education (CIE) staff, your peer adviser, and past program participants with your specific questions. You should also make use of the additional written and 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, be taught by 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 people of Ireland combine a keen sense of tradition with the skills and flexibility required to function in an open economy. Ireland's influence in the world far 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 is 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, leisure activities, 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 was 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 has become a 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 has been recognized for meeting the [Forum on Education Abroad's 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 a **tentative** fall 2018 calendar for the University of Limerick. The dates are currently

tentative with certain dates to be announced at a later time. **Please do not book your flight until you receive official acceptance with arrival and departure dates from the University of Limerick.**

**Depart the U.S.:** September 2, 2018

**Arrival and Pick-Up Days:** September 3, 2018

**Orientation:** September 4-7, 2018

**Classes begin:** September 10, 2018

**Final Exams:** December 7-20, 2018

(exams can be scheduled up to 6 pm on December 20<sup>th</sup>. Do not plan to leave on that day!)

**Move-out of Housing:** December 21, 2018

Please note that you may finish with your exams earlier than Dec \_\_\_\_\_. 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 rare occasion, UL has changed the semester calendar a few months before students are about to depart. If a calendar change occurs, you will be expected to sit for exams and 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**

A planning form, "Limerick Academic Planning and Course Equivalencies," is posted on the "Learning Content" section of your online study abroad application. You can use this information to plan for your semester at UL and complete the module (course) interest section of the UL application. You will not actually register for modules until you arrive at the University of Limerick.

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

### **Course Equivalencies**

Many courses you can take at UL have already been evaluated for UW-Eau Claire credit. To find courses that have been evaluated for Limerick, go to the Transfer Wizard site: [https://my.uwec.edu/psp/PUBLIC/EMPLOYEE/HRMS/c/EAU\\_SS\\_CUSTOM.EAU\\_TRNCRDWZ.GBL](https://my.uwec.edu/psp/PUBLIC/EMPLOYEE/HRMS/c/EAU_SS_CUSTOM.EAU_TRNCRDWZ.GBL). Choose "Ireland" from the "Country" pull down menu, then hit "Search." Then, select "Univ of Limerick" by clicking the link. Look up the equivalencies by using the Limerick module number or subject area code.

If a course appears on the list, it has already been reviewed by the appropriate UW-Eau Claire department chair, and the equivalency listed is what you will receive upon successful completion of the course. (Please note that catalog changes at either university may

change a previously established equivalency. Examples of such changes would be a change in course title, number, or description; dropping a course at one institution; etc.)

Please keep in mind that this is a historical record of past course equivalencies. **There is no guarantee that the same courses will be offered in the future, or that they will be offered during the term during which you are abroad.**

You can request course equivalencies for any UL courses not yet evaluated by UW-Eau Claire when you fill out your UL module interest form. Please note that you cannot assume that a course you are taking will transfer back in the way you want it to just because the course description sounds similar to a course taught at UW-Eau Claire. All course equivalency decisions are made by UW-Eau Claire department chairs and are not official until the Registrar's Office receives the equivalency, with the chair's signature on it.

### ***Registration at University of Limerick***

When you first get to Limerick, 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 study abroad 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.

If no UW-Eau Claire equivalency has been determined for a class that you registered for, Study Abroad Coordinator Cheryl Lochner-Wright will contact the Admissions Office. Once an equivalency is established, it will be posted to Transfer Wizard. Please note that the equivalency is determined by the chair of the appropriate department, and that the process of determining an equivalency can take two to three weeks. Because of the time involved, department chairs will only evaluate courses students are actually taking abroad. **In other words, you will not be able to have equivalencies established for three or four courses so that you can choose which one you wish to take.**

### ***Class Attendance***

When studying abroad, you are required to follow the attendance policies of your university abroad. 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

The credits you earn abroad are considered UW-Eau Claire resident credits. The classes you take abroad 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 will allow study abroad students to drop down to four courses with special permission from their home university. At the beginning of each 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).

### **Irish Academic System**

**The Irish system is centered on encouraging students to develop through independent learning.** As such, your learning is much less prescribed than it is in the United States: basically the professor will not tell you what to read/study and when to do it. As a student, it is your job to pick the materials you want to read and pace your learning. For example, your professors will not assign reading or regular assignments/quizzes to make sure that you are keeping up with your work. Instead, you will be given a reading list and assessed one or two times in the semester.

Most courses at UL are taught in the traditional method of lecture and tutorial that is 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 as handouts with lecture notes will not be provided. Also, lectures in Ireland may offer less opportunity for students to ask questions as students are expected to ask questions and discuss the topic in the tutorial. Lectures in the 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. Instead, tutorials are active learning opportunities where the professor and your fellow students meet regularly to discuss the material being 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 work and suggested sources in advance
- should be prepared to contribute to the discussion
- made note of any difficult concepts or points from lecture or your readings that you do not understand
- you should be willing to 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 peoples 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 how payments are made, 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. Remember that 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 deposit will be due when you apply, typically in April for fall and September for spring.** An additional €200 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 study abroad coordinator for Ireland. She will let UL know, and the semester housing payment will be deferred to the first day of the UWEC semester, when

financial aid is released. You will still need to pay your housing 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 December 19, 2017 was 1 Euro = \$1.14272 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.

### ***Travelers Checks***

Due to a decrease in demand, many Irish financial institutions have recently stopped accepting and/or cashing traveler's checks. At the banks that do still accept traveler's checks, you will need to pay a fee to cash them. However, traveler's checks can be useful in an emergency situation such as when your credit or debit cards are lost or stolen, your cards are damaged, your cards are deactivated due to fraud concerns, etc.

## **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. U.S. citizens do not currently need a visa to enter Ireland. Should that change, **however, it is your responsibility to apply for and receive a visa from an Irish consulate or embassy in a timely manner.** Please see the Learning Content "Limerick Immigration Entry Requirements" in your UWEC study abroad account and read the "Visa" section of your Study Abroad Handbook for more information about what documents you should bring with you for immigration and what to do to keep up-to-date on visa requirements.

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.

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 downtown Limerick during normal office hours, excluding public holidays. Your appointment will be organized through the Study Abroad Office at UL, but it will be your responsibility to get to and from the appointment. Directions will be provided by UL.

To register with Immigration, you will be required to 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 can be found at the Irish Council for International Students site: [http://www.icosirl.ie/eng/student\\_information/immigration\\_and\\_visas](http://www.icosirl.ie/eng/student_information/immigration_and_visas).

### **Visas for Travel to Other Countries**

If you plan to travel while abroad, you should 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 U.S. citizens to have a visa for tourist travel of less than three months.

## **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 influence of 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 at pre-departure orientation.

### **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.

There is information on student-oriented travel agencies, instructions for booking a flight, and other travel information in the *Study Abroad Handbook*.

**Remember that Ireland entry requirements may affect your ticket purchase.** Please carefully read the Learning Content "Limerick Immigration Entry Requirements" in your UWEC study abroad account before purchasing a ticket. **Note that a roundtrip ticket is required for immigration.**

### **Buying a Changeable Ticket**

UL has informed us that they are not aware of students having issues in the past few semesters with airlines allowing them to board the plane with a return date that exceeds the



90-day limit as long as you can supply the immigration documents listed in Learning Content of your UWEC study abroad account. However, this can depend on the gate agent: some UWEC students flying American Airlines a few years ago were required to change their return date at the airport in order to board the plane.

In addition to the entry requirement issues that could affect tickets, on rare occasion UL has changed the semester calendar after students have purchased their tickets. If a calendar change occurs, you must sit for exams and no special exemptions will be given to students who have already purchased tickets. You will be expected to change your ticket to be present for exams. **Therefore, we strongly recommend that you buy a roundtrip ticket with a low change fee.**

## *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](mailto:limericktio@failteireland.ie).

Please note that the UL International Education Program office lists some temporary accommodations on their website:

<http://www.ul.ie/international/en/index.php/quicknesslinks/accommodation>. Scroll down to find

contact information for "Temporary Accommodations."

## SETTLING IN

### *Orientation*

An orientation program is offered for incoming international students at the start of the semester in Ireland. All new students attend the program. The objectives are to give 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. Details will be provided with your acceptance email from UL. 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 students have to bring their 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:

[http://www2.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Information\\_Technology\\_Division/Student\\_Computing](http://www2.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Information_Technology_Division/Student_Computing)

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 centre (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. Laundry tokens can be purchased at the village reception to operate the machines. Past students have reported 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**

**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.

**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 be issued a voucher book that can be redeemed at designated food outlets on campus. The UL Meal Plan will be available from 8.30am to 8.00pm Monday through Thursday and 8.30am to 3.00pm on Fridays. Weekends are not included on the meal plan. 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.

### **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**

Aside from the services mentioned within the residential villages, 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 the 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](http://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.

### **Computer Access/Email**

With computers all over campus, email is free and easy. To limit email time, set up a mass distribution list of friends and family – then you can write up a message about what you've been doing and send it to everyone at once. You can print the emails to serve as a journal of your time abroad.

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

<p><b><i>University of Limerick</i></b>  Katherine Martin  Study Abroad Manager  International Education  Division  Main Building Room EO-030  University of Limerick  Castletroy, Limerick, Ireland  Phone: + 353 61 234653 or 353  61 213034  Fax: + 353-61-213062  Email:  <a href="mailto:katherine.martin@ul.ie">katherine.martin@ul.ie</a>. Or  <a href="mailto:study.abroad@ul.ie">study.abroad@ul.ie</a>  Web:  <a href="http://www.ul.ie/international/en/home/study-at-ul/study-abroad/">http://www.ul.ie/international/en/home/study-at-ul/study-abroad/</a>.</p> <p>Carol Moloney  International Room Bookings  Accommodation  Campus Life Services  University of Limerick  Limerick, Ireland  Phone: +353-61-202433  Fax: +353 61 202188  Email:  <a href="mailto:accommodation@ul.ie">accommodation@ul.ie</a></p>	<p><b><i>Irish Consulate in the U.S.</i></b>  Consulate General of Ireland  1 East Wacker Drive, Suite 1820  Chicago, IL 60601  Phone: (312) 337-2700  Fax: (312) 836-1267  Web: <a href="https://www.dfa.ie/irish-consulate/chicago/">https://www.dfa.ie/irish-consulate/chicago/</a> or  <a href="https://www.dfa.ie/irish-embassy/USA/">https://www.dfa.ie/irish-embassy/USA/</a>  HOURS:  (Monday -Friday)  Public Office Hours - 10.00 am -  12.00 pm</p> <p><b><i>U.S. Consulate in Ireland</i></b>  American Embassy  42 Elgin Road  Ballsbridge  Dublin 4, IRELAND  Phone: +353 1 668 8777 (During  Business Hours)  Fax: +353 1 668-9946  After Hours Emergency Tel.  +353 1 630 6200, follow  prompts to reach operator  Email: <a href="mailto:acs_dublin@state.gov">acs_dublin@state.gov</a>  <a href="http://ie.usembassy.gov">http://ie.usembassy.gov</a></p>	<p><b><i>UW-Eau Claire</i></b>  Center for International  Education  Cheryl Lochner-Wright  Study Abroad Coordinator  <a href="mailto:lochnecb@uwec.edu">lochnecb@uwec.edu</a>  3 Schofield Hall  University of Wisconsin-Eau  Claire  Eau Claire, WI 54702  Phone: (715) 836-4411  Fax: (715) 836-4948</p>
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## WEB RESOURCES: IRELAND

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

## *When past participants of the Limerick program were asked to sum up their experience, here is what they said:*

"My semester in Limerick, Ireland was hands down the best four months of my life! Going abroad frees you from the routine of everyday life and forces you to acknowledge the world around us. Every day is a new adventure. I wouldn't trade my memories for anything in the world. Rain or shine, Ireland is always bursting with life and culture. I absolutely love this country!" Angel P.

"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 G.

"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 R.

"There really aren't any words to describe how amazing Ireland was. I have come away a new person, with new life and new hopes for my future. I was so fortunate to have had this experience. I have learned so much, not only about myself, but about a different culture and a different lifestyle. Overall, this journey was nothing short of fabulous. I am coming home without regrets and with an immense longing to stay here forever. The people I have met are ones that will be my forever friends and always in my heart." Chelsea L.

"I have had so many "once-in-a-lifetime" experiences while abroad that I can't put them all into words. All I can say is that this has been the best experience of my life. I have grown in so many ways, both personally and academically. I have learned so many new things; I cannot begin to list them." Jacklyn F.

"My semester abroad was incredible! I learned so much about the culture, school system and lifestyles of Irish people as well as of people from around the world. The best part of the program was being integrated with the Irish students and with students from other states and countries in accommodation as well as in classes. The people who I met this semester were from many different places, and I am so grateful for the relationships that I have developed with them - they helped to enrich my study abroad experience more than I could have ever imagined. I wouldn't trade my experiences abroad for anything – I had the time of my life, and if given the chance to do it all over again, I would be on the plane in a second!" Becky A.

"I feel that my time abroad gave me a perspective of this world and my place in it that I could have never have come to realize without leaving. It was a time to reflect on my past, present and future in a different environment. I grew so much as a person in such a short time, my college experience has become so much better because of my time abroad." Billy B.

"My experience in Ireland was definitely life-changing! It was amazing to experience a different culture and get the opportunity to travel around the world. I have met so many nice people here, both Irish and other study abroad students. You have to make an effort to meet people, but that is exactly what studying abroad is about - coming out of your shell. I recommend traveling and studying abroad to anyone because I think that it really changes a person for the better. I spent a lot of time talking to my roommates about the differences between Ireland and the U.S." Erin L.

"My experience in Ireland was one of the most rewarding of my life. Never before have I experienced another culture to such an extent. I loved all my friends, my professors were absolutely some of the best I've ever had, and the country and people in it were wonderful. I would do this again in a second!" Julia S.

