Ireland, Galway
FALL 2015-16

The Galway, Ireland program is offered by International Academic Programs (IAP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in conjunction with the National University of Ireland Galway (NUI Galway). This IAP Program Handbook supplements handbooks or materials you receive from NUI Galway as well as the IAP Study Abroad Handbook and provides you with the most up-to-date information and advice available at the time of printing. Changes may occur before your departure or while you are abroad.

Questions about your program abroad (housing options, facilities abroad, etc.) as well as questions relating to your relationship with your host university or academics (e.g. course credit and equivalents, registration deadlines, etc.) should be directed to IAP at UW-Madison.

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Contact Information

ON-SITE PROGRAM INFORMATION
Your primary contacts will be:

Louise Kelly
International Student Officer
louise.kelly@nuigalway.ie

Orla Naughton
International Admissions
orla.naughton@nuigalway.ie

International Office
National University of Ireland Galway
7 Distillery Road
Galway
Ireland
+353 (0)91 495277
+353 (0)91 495551 fax
international@nuigalway.ie
www.nuigalway.ie/international/

UW-MADISON INFORMATION
International Academic Programs
University of Wisconsin-Madison
106 Red Gym, 716 Langdon Street
Madison, WI 53706
(608) 265 6329
www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

Jessa Boche
IAP Study Abroad Advisor
boche@studyabroad.wisc.edu

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION
In case of an emergency, call the main IAP number (608) 265 6329 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday; after-hours or on weekends call the IAP staff emergency phone: (608) 516 9440. This number is for emergencies only, where the health or safety of a student is at risk.

EMBASSY REGISTRATION
All program participants who are U.S. citizens must register at the U.S. Embassy before departure as this will help in case of a lost passport or other mishap. You can register on-line at https://travelregistration.state.gov. If you are not a U.S. citizen, register at your home country’s embassy or consulate.
United States Embassy
42 Elgin Road
Ballsbridge
Dublin 4
Ireland
+353 1 668 8777
+353 1 668 9946 fax
http://dublin.usembassy.gov
Program Dates

See your My Study Abroad account for information regarding dates and when to depart for Galway.

Preparation Before Leaving

IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS
Passport: A passport is needed to travel to Ireland and to register with Irish immigration authorities. Apply immediately for a passport if you do not already have one. Passport information and application forms can be found on the U.S. State Department website http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english.html. If you already have your passport, make sure it will be valid for at least 6 months beyond the length of your stay abroad.

Visa/Registration: When you enter Ireland for the first time, you will need to carry specific documentation with you in order to enter as a student. Students studying in Ireland for a period longer than 3 months must register for a residence permit within one month of arrival in Ireland. The NUI Galway International Office will arrange an appointment for UW-Madison students to register with the immigration authorities at the beginning of the semester. For more information about this process, as well as the documentation you need in order to enter Ireland, please review the document “NUI Galway Student Immigration Requirements” in your My Study Abroad account.

HANDLING MONEY ABROAD
The official currency of Ireland is the Euro (EUR), with 1 Euro equaling 100 cents. As of 8/4/2014, the exchange rate was $1 USD to 0.75 Euro.

Banks: Some students open a bank account shortly after arrival. Banks near campus are:

Bank of Ireland
National University of Ireland, Galway
Code No. 904018 Intl.
+353 (0)91 524555
+353 (0)91 527671 fax

Allied Irish Bank
Distillery Road
Newcastle, Galway
Code No. 937436
+353 (0)91 524466
+353 (0)91 524095 fax
To open a bank account you need to have a:

- Valid passport
- NUI Galway student identity card
- Letter from NUI Galway confirming your home address and Galway address. This letter can be acquired from the International Office once you have registered as an NUI Galway student.

If you wish to open an account in one of these banks prior to arrival, your own bank may be able to facilitate this. It can take up to two weeks for the international transfer of money through the banking system. You should therefore allow for delays of this duration when deciding how much currency to bring with you in order to meet your initial expenses in the first few weeks after arrival.

Most banks in Galway provide Bureau de Change and Traveler’s Check facilities. There are also bureaux de Change at Dublin Airport and Shannon Airport. Banks are open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday, and until 5:00 p.m. on Thursday.

**ATM/Debit cards**: You can also access your checking account using an ATM card; generally you will find that cards of the CIRRUS and PLUS system are the most widely accepted. When you use your ATM card, you immediately receive your funds in local currency; the exchange rate you get is in general better than what you would get when exchanging travelers’ checks. Check with your bank or credit union before departure to ensure that you can use your ATM card overseas and to verify the fee you will be charged for such transactions.

**Credit cards**: Visa, American Express, and Master Card are accepted at many locations and cardholders are able to draw cash on their card accounts per their card company’s policies.

**ELECTRONICS**

Ireland runs on 220V (volts), 50Hz (cycles) AC and uses the British Standard 1363 three-pin plug. If you plan on bringing any appliances from the United States, keep in mind that they will require adapters/converters which you should purchase before departure. It may be more convenient and less expensive to purchase appliances in Ireland rather than purchasing the necessary converter/adapters in the United States. It is advisable to buy heat based appliances (blow dryer, iron, straightener) upon arrival in Ireland as the wrong electronic/adapter combination can be a safety hazard - best to just avoid the situation altogether.

**Travel and Arrival**

You are responsible for making your own flight arrangements to Galway. The major airports in Ireland are at Shannon (SNN) [www.shannonairport.com](http://www.shannonairport.com) (on the west coast, approximately 55 miles from Galway) and Dublin (DUB) [www.dublinairport.com](http://www.dublinairport.com) (on the east coast, approximately 135 miles from Galway). Galway (GWY) has a smaller airport [www.galwayairport.com](http://www.galwayairport.com)
(approximately 5 miles from the city). There are no trans-Atlantic flights to Galway. A great resource for more affordable flights from the US to Ireland is www.studentuniverse.com. If you are booking round trip, be careful to book the return flight after exams are finished.

**Arrival in Shannon:** There is a regular bus service from Shannon Airport to Galway. The journey takes approximately one and one half hours and costs approximately 15 Euro. Bus timetables can be found at www.buseireann.ie. Upon your arrival at Galway (Galway Station) there are taxis which can take you to your final destination.

**Arrival in Dublin:** Direct bus service is available from Dublin airport to Galway and takes approximately three to four hours (see www.citylink.ie, www.buseireann.ie, or www.gobus.ie for timetables and purchasing tickets). There is also regular bus service from the Dublin Central bus station (Busáras) to Galway. Buses leave Dublin Airport approximately every 20 minutes for Busáras. Many of these buses continue to Heuston Railway Station, from which trains for Galway depart. You may also travel via taxi from the airport to the centre of the city but the bus is much cheaper and just as quick. There is a frequent train service from Dublin (Heuston Station) to Galway. The journey takes approximately three hours.

**The Academic Program**

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND GALWAY**

The university was founded in 1845 as Queen’s College, Galway. It was one of three Queen’s Colleges founded under the Queen’s College (Ireland) Act, 1845, the others in Belfast and Cork. The College opened for students in 1849. In 1997, it was reconstituted as a university, under the name of Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh/National University of Ireland Galway.

Since the 1960s, the university has experienced significant and continuous growth, both in its buildings, facilities and physical resources and also in the number of students and staff. Its student body now numbers 13,000 (more than 11,000 fulltime), with academically strong programs of teaching and research throughout its seven faculties:

- Arts
- Celtic Studies
- Commerce
- Engineering
- Law
- Medicine and Health Studies
- Science

The campus is located on the banks of the River Corrib, close to the center of Galway. The original mid-nineteenth century university buildings are a Tudor architectural style. The old stone quadangle, at the heart of the university, is flanked by new buildings, reflecting the steady growth, in quality and numbers, of the university.

National University of Ireland (NUI), Galway www.nuigalway.ie

**INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS OFFICE**
The NUI Galway International Affairs Office coordinates academic, administrative, and student service arrangements for all visiting students. These arrangements include admissions, course registration, academic advising, transcripts, orientation, health counseling, and information on extracurricular activities.

NUI Galway International Office [www.nuigalway.ie/international/](http://www.nuigalway.ie/international/)

**ORIENTATION**

In September and January of each year, orientation programs are organized by the International Student Officer to provide practical information for new students on living in Galway and to introduce the students to academic and administrative staff of the university and to student services personnel. The sessions include information on procedures which must be completed by incoming visiting students, services and facilities of the university as well as other general information. Registration procedures will also be explained and representatives from the various faculties will be present to offer advice.

The program is designed to help students settle into university life and the new environment as quickly and easily as possible. Included in the program is a guided tour of campus and Galway city. A reception at the conclusion of the program, hosted by the president of the university, gives new students the opportunity to meet university staff and fellow students in an informal atmosphere.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

Courses: The majority of NUI’s B.A. programs are only three years in duration due to a more rigorous high school education system than that of the United States. Most of the Faculties number their courses according to this system. Course levels are clarified as:

- **100 = First Year Program**, introductory level course
- **200 = Second-Year Program**, intermediate/lower level advanced course
- **300 = Third-Year Program**, upper level advanced course

You will be classified at the university as a “Visiting Student.” Admission as a Visiting Student is granted in faculty (department) and subject areas. Within these areas, and in accordance with their own preferences, students may select courses subject only to class and examination timetable limitations. Students are given a “visiting students handbook” during orientation with a list of departments and classes they are allowed to choose courses from. No deviation from this list is allowed.

A wide range of courses are available but some restrictions do apply to course choice as follows:

- First year courses in all Faculties and a small number of other courses are offered on a year-long basis. They must be taken over the entire academic year and must be taken in their entirety. Arising from this, a student who will be attending for one semester only cannot select, either in the first or the second semester, a course which is offered on a year-long basis.
- In all Faculties prerequisites must be met.
- Not all Psychology courses are available to Visiting Students.
• In the subject Sociological and Political Studies admission to final year seminar courses will be limited.
• In the subject English students may only select one seminar course per semester and admission to seminar courses is limited.
• In the subject History there are restrictions on the selection of seminar courses.
• In Second Year Science, a quota system applies to all subjects. Therefore, class sizes are limited and places in subjects may not be available to visiting students. Permission for entry into any subject in Second Year Science must first be obtained from the Head of Department of the relevant subject. Applicants should therefore indicate clearly on their application forms any Science Courses they may wish to take.

When selecting courses students should have regard to their academic and vocational objectives, and in order to make the selection that will best suit their requirements, they may need to with Faculty and Departmental staff. They will be referred to the appropriate Faculty Officers for assistance in these consultations.

The final list of course offerings is not normally available until the July prior to the academic year. In practice, there is little change in the courses offered from one year to the next. Courses available for visiting students are available online at http://www.nuigalway.ie/student-life/international-students/study-abroad-at-nuigalway.html.

**Registration:** Although visiting students will list a tentative course schedule on their applications to NUI Galway, course registration is not finalized until after the semester begins. Like Irish students, visiting students to NUI Galway “shop around” for courses the first two weeks of the semester. The International Office recommends that students attend 7 to 8 classes in order to identify their course schedule for the semester.

Approximately two weeks into the semester, students will have a day reserved for them to submit course registrations to faculties, which is to be done in person - not electronically. Registration procedures will vary according to individual faculties. Registration for seminar classes in the Arts, specifically English, Political Science, History, and Sociology, may require an early arrival when registering in-person. Students must supply one passport-type photograph at registration, with their name and registration number on the back.

Visiting students are assumed to have serious academic objectives in coming to the university and are expected to satisfy all prescribed attendance and course exercises. Once the deadline for dropping or adding courses has passed, no further course changes are possible.

Students are encouraged throughout the semester to check their registration statement and to notify the admissions office if there are any errors. All courses posted on the NUI transcript must be posted on the UW transcript even if it is a registration error.

IAP will register you for a special “Study Abroad Course” for the term(s) you will be studying abroad; therefore, it is not necessary for you to register on the UW-Madison campus. This is a temporary registration, which will be converted into graded UW-Madison credit after the completion of your program.

**Equivalents and Course Equivalent Request (CER):** Each course you take abroad must be assigned a UW-Madison “equivalent” and the grade you receive in the course also transfers back to be recorded on your UW-Madison transcript. In order to establish UW-Madison course
equivalents for your study abroad courses, you will submit a Course Equivalent Request (CER) through your My Study Abroad account. The deadline to submit the CER is by the end of the fourth week of classes. Detailed information on the UW course equivalent process that you will use through your My Study Abroad account is available in the IAP Study Abroad Handbook and in your My Study Abroad account under the academics tab.

CREDITS
Conversions: NUI Galway uses the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credit system. The detailed credit conversion scale is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUI Galway ECTS Credits</th>
<th>UW-Madison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or 5.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 or 6.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 or 7.5</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Limits and Load: A full-time credit load is 30 ECTS credits per semester. Many classes at NUI-Galway meet only twice a week and have only one or two assignments that make up the bulk of the students’ grades, so a full course load may not require as much time spent in-class as a full 18 credits at UW-Madison. Visiting students may, at their discretion, take fewer or more credits but should carefully consider the implications, from the point of view of transferring credit, of taking less than the full-time quota. Important note: students must transfer back a minimum of 12 UW credits and a maximum of 18 UW credits.

PASS/FAIL/DROP/AUDIT
Please refer to the IAP Study Abroad Handbook for Academic Policies. A Pass/Fail form as well as the due date for Pass/Fail submission can be found in the Academics tab of your My Study Abroad account.

GRADES AND GRADE CONVERSIONS
Visiting Students undergo the same assessment as full degree students. Assessment is usually by end-of-semester examination or essay(s). In addition, departmental assessments may take place during the semester. However, the final end-of-semester assessment is that on which the final grade, or greater part thereof, for the course is based. Exam schedules are not available until midway through the semester. Travel plans (throughout Europe or home) should NOT be made until exam schedule is known, as they can be scheduled anywhere throughout mid April to late May (exams may even be scheduled during NUI-Galway’s designated “study week”).

NUI Galway Grading Scale:

<p>| First Class Honours | 70% and above |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Type</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second-Class Honours, Grade 1</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-Class Honours, Grade 2</td>
<td>50-59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-Class Honours</td>
<td>45-49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>40-44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**UW-Madison Conversion:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUI Galway</th>
<th>UW-Madison</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>66%+</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-65%</td>
<td>AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-62%</td>
<td>AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58-60%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-57%</td>
<td>BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52-54%</td>
<td>BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-51%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-47%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-39%</td>
<td>F</td>
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Living Abroad

IRELAND
Ireland is an island of five million people located in the Northwest of Europe and is a member of the European Union. Long renowned for its culture, it has a strong tradition of developmental and educational links with other nations.

Almost 40% of the Irish population is under the age of twenty five. Ireland has an excellent educational infrastructure and a high rate of participation in third-level education. Its highly-skilled workforce makes Ireland an attractive location for international corporations and industrialists. Irish graduates have distinguished themselves as leaders of economic, social and cultural development in Ireland and throughout the world. NUI Galway is a leading institution in the Irish tertiary education sector.

Ireland is one of six Celtic nations with its distinctive Irish (Gaelic) culture and language. Although Irish is its first official language, English is now the most common language in daily use. However, Irish is still the first language of Gaeltacht (Gaelic speaking) communities which are located mainly on the west coast of Ireland.

Irish Times [www.ireland.com]
Irish Tourism [www.ireland.travel.ie]

GALWAY
Galway, with a population of 65,000, is the third largest city in the Republic of Ireland and one of Europe’s fastest growing urban centers. It is a vibrant, cosmopolitan city, with a thriving cultural and commercial community. Settled by the Kings of Connacht and Norman traders in the Twelfth Century, Galway grew steadily in the middle ages. In 1484, the English monarch, King Richard III granted the city its charter.

Traces of Galway’s rich medieval past can still be seen today in the city. The most impressive is Lynch’s Castle in Shop Street, now in daily use as a bank. At St. Nicholas Collegiate Church, according to tradition, Christopher Columbus prayed before setting out on his voyage of discovery to the ‘New World’. The Spanish Arch - so named because of Galway’s maritime trade with Spain - is located close to the Claddagh - a traditional nineteenth century fishing village on the banks of the River Corrib.

Because of its dynamic and pioneering role in theatre, arts and culture, Galway has earned the title ‘Cultural Capital of Ireland’. The world renowned Druid Theatre Company, the Macnas Street Theatre Company and An Taibhdhearc, the National Irish Language theatre, are all located in the city centre. The close proximity of the Connemara ‘Gaeltacht’, the country’s largest Irish speaking community and location of the Irish-language television service, Teilifís na Gaeilge, gives a distinctive ‘Gaelic’ dimension to the cultural life of Galway.

HOUSING
You are responsible for finding your own housing in Galway. Although there is no university-owned housing, NUI, Galway does have an Accommodation Service Office.
http://www.nuigalway.ie/student-life/accommodation/ which provides local housing information for students.

The Accommodation Service helps students find accommodation and provides advice on accommodation issues, e.g. letting agreements, tenant rights and obligations, and help in the event of a dispute. Fact sheets on a wide variety of accommodation issues are available from the service.

**STUDENT LIFE**

There is no better way to integrate into the social, sporting and cultural life of the University than through membership of one of the University’s clubs or societies. It is a most effective way of meeting Irish students. There are more than fifty societies and thirty athletic clubs on campus which cater for a wide variety of interests. The Societies’ contact person is Mr. Matt Doran, Student Services, ext. 2235. Mr. Doran’s office is based in the Student Centre (first floor). The Societies’ notice-boards are situated in the Hub (Student Common Room) - check these for venues and meeting times.

The University's indoor and outdoor Sports and Recreation Centers offer tennis and squash courts, Olympic handball courts, gymnasium, badminton, volleyball and basketball courts, table tennis, boxing, karate and aerobics. Playing fields are available for other sports e.g. hockey, rugby and football, while provision is also made for horse-riding and golf.

The University's prime location on the banks of the River Corrib provides students with excellent opportunities to take part in all water sports, from rowing to kayaking to canoeing. Wind-surfing, sailing and a swimming pool are available nearby in Salthill, while the mountains and hills of Connemara are easily accessible for those interested in mountaineering, hill-walking and orienteering.

The University also houses one of the main musical venues in the west of Ireland - the Aula Maxima recital room hosts a varied program of internationally renowned classical, traditional and contemporary Irish musicians throughout the year.

Every student of the University is also a member of the Students' Union, which promotes and protects the interests of its members. The Union runs a stationery shop, bar and snack bar service. Entertainment is organized on a regular basis by the Union and is open to all students.

Students are also encouraged to consider volunteering during their time in Galway. Established in 2003, ALIVE (A Learning Initiative and the Volunteering Experience) offers volunteer opportunities as part of the Community Knowledge Initiative project. The goal of this project is to enable NUI Galway to become a role model in promoting the development of civic and leadership skills in students. Over 700 students have been recognized to date for their volunteering commitment within a variety of pathways including community and non-governmental organizations, through participation within societies and clubs, and mentoring first year students through the Student Connect Program to mention a few. Further information on student volunteering is available at http://cki.nuigalway.ie/alive/.

**Working in Ireland**

If you are from an EU/EEA country, you can work in Ireland without a work permit.

EU/EEA countries are the 25 EU countries and Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland plus
Switzerland. The United States is **NOT** an EU/EEA country.

If you are from outside of these areas, you must be registered as a full-time student on a course leading to a recognized qualification (degree) in order to work legally in Ireland on a part-time basis. UW students on this study abroad program may not work legally in Ireland if they are US citizens.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Information on travel within Ireland, and abroad, can be obtained from the student travel company USIT which is located at 16, Mary St. in Galway city centre (telephone +353-91-565177). The International Student Identity Card (ISIC) is available at USIT and offers concessions on Bus Eireann (the National bus company) bus routes. To obtain an ISIC card, it is necessary to have your University I.D. card and one photograph. Concessions on rail travel are available with an Irish Rail Student Card which can be purchased at the Galway train station. The application form for the Irish Rail Card can also be downloaded from the web at [www.irishrail.ie](http://www.irishrail.ie). The completed form should be taken to the Students' Union Office in NUI, Galway.

**SAFETY**

Galway is generally regarded as a safe city. However, normal precautions regarding personal safety both on and off campus should be taken. If leaving campus after dark, avoid poorly lit areas or areas that are not frequented by the public. A Campus Watch Service operates in the University and its objective is to make NUI Galway a safer place in which to study, live and work.

Fire, Police, Ambulance and Coastal Rescue, Mountain and Cave Rescue: Dial 112 and ask the operator for the emergency service you require. There is no charge for this service.

The police in Ireland are called Gardaí - full details of national and local Garda stations are in the green pages at the front of the telephone directory. In Galway, the main Garda station is located at Mill Street, +353 (0)91 563161.

**COMMUNICATION**

**Telephone:** When making calls, keep in mind time zone differences [www.timeanddate.com/worldclock](http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock). To make an international call to the United States, dial the access code for the country from which you are calling plus the United States country code (always “1”) followed by the appropriate U.S. area code and local number. To call internationally from the United States, dial “011”, the country code, city access code (if necessary) and the phone number. Country and city codes can be found online ([www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/dialing.html](http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/dialing.html)). Some of above steps can vary if you are using a calling card.

There are public telephones in many outdoor locations all over Ireland as well as in telecentres, public buildings, including rail and bus stations, shops, pubs, restaurants and hotels. Local trunk and international calls can be dialed direct from these phones. Most students utilize Skype in order to keep in contact with their friends and family from home. Skype offers free IM and video chat, and you can make calls to any phone throughout the world for one cheap, flat rate.
There are many cheap options for international calling cards on sale in newsagents in Ireland. An increasingly popular option for students is to buy a “Ready to Go” mobile phone (cell phone). These are reasonably cheap to buy and you can control your usage as they work on a “phone card” basis, so you pay as you talk.

**Mail:** There are many post offices in Galway. Stamps, air-letter forms, postal orders etc. can be purchased in them. There is a post office adjacent to the University campus on Newcastle Road. The General Post Office, on Eglinton Street, is normally open from 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. Smaller post offices may close for lunch.

**Email:** Computer Services provides the University’s Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure, ICT support services to students and academic staff, and strategic co-ordination of University Information Services provision. Computer Services provides desktop provision and support services to approximately 2,000 academic staff members.

In addition, PC Suites across the campus provide free of charge Internet and email facilities to registered students. Printing is charged on a per-page basis. At registration students receive a registration statement that contains their username (student ID number) and password required to login to computers on the campus network. The registration statement also contains the student’s email address, which will end with @nuigalway.ie.

Support Services are available to all staff and students. Computer Services operates a User Support Centre (USC) from 9:15 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday in Room 118, Computer Services, Arts and Science Building (Ground Floor). The USC is a one-stop-shop where users can bring their computing queries and problems. Contact the USC via e-mail at user_support@nuigalway.ie, telephone (ext. 3325) or in person. Operator emergency cover is available at ext. 3325 on Saturday and Sunday from 9:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 2:15 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

A “wi-fi” computing service is available for students and staff with suitably equipped laptops. Please view the Computer Services website at [www.nuigalway.ie/cs/wireless/](http://www.nuigalway.ie/cs/wireless/) to find out about the wireless service and technical requirements for connecting to it.

Further information on Computer Services is available at [www.nuigalway.ie/cs](http://www.nuigalway.ie/cs).
Student Testimonials

The quotes below are comments from past participants; they reflect various students' experiences and are included to provide different perspectives. IAP does not endorse any specific view expressed in this section.

GALWAY

Galway is absolutely wonderful! Looking back on it, I am very happy to have stayed on the west coast of Ireland vs the East coast; it is beautiful, rugged, and much more of what is though of as 'true Irish Ireland'.

One thing to realize is that it rains quite a lot in Galway. I would guess that each semester has an equal share of Irish winter, which is quite different than Wisconsin. It is cold and rainy, and when it's not raining, it's probably cloudy. If you won't be able to stand not seeing the sun for sometimes a week at a time, then Ireland (Galway especially, since the West coast gets the most rain) might not be for them. But! All this rain is what makes Ireland so green! This country has the most beautiful scenery I've ever been privileged enough to travel through and love. Ireland is absolutely gorgeous.

BANKING AND FINANCES

Everything seemed more expensive to me, but I had to buy a lot of stuff since I was living in an apartment so I needed sheets and a quilt etc.

I just used my ATM card. I had to pay a fee to my bank as well as to the machines I used while over there, so I took out a lot of money each time.

PACKING

Everyone always says to pack as light as you can. Bring lots of sweaters and warm clothing. Invest in a pair of waterproof shoes as well as a waterproof coat, both are essential. The Irish don’t really bother with umbrellas because it gets pretty windy.

Don’t overdo it on the packing. Chances are you’ll buy a ton of stuff while you’re over there, and you will need a way to get it back. Overweight luggage fees are very high.

THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

I loved the vast array of subjects I was able to choose from.

As for academics, 6 classes were manageable; NUI is one of the best schools in Ireland!

Waiting in long lines for several hours to gain admission to some courses was a pain. Many NUI-G students commonly stay up all night in order to secure places at the front of the line. Quite a few students reported that they were unable to enroll in at least one or two courses because of the long lines. Course availability information from some departments was not always very reliable.
HOUSING
I was lucky enough to find a residence that had a variety of different national and cultural backgrounds. I was able to actually visit with many Irish people, learn their culture and history, and attempt to speak Irish.

Finding housing for the semester is a bit harder than finding it for the entire year, but it is manageable. Having to contact and set up housing while still in the US was very hard to do, and I think that people interested in the program should know of this challenge, which I think is fairly unique to the Galway program.

STUDENT LIFE
Galway is very similar to Madison in that it is a college town; the students have a very strong presence in the city, which is also similar in size to Madison.

To meet people, get involved! NUI loves having international students in their clubs and organizations, and they’ll make sure to tell you all about them once you get there.

Seminars seem to be where visiting students have the best chances of being with mostly Irish students. My English seminar was with six Irish girls and I got a lot of perspective on how their college perspective.

I would say that Ireland, with its English speaking people, is maybe a bit more similar to the US than the rest of Europe. So in that sense, I didn't have too much culture shock. Just give it time, it takes time to readjust to being home again.

TRAVELING
Traveling around Ireland is simple. They have a very good bus system. Also, if you want to leave Ireland, getting to the Dublin airport or the one in Limerick isn’t hard. Buses go to both. A train also goes to the Dublin airport.

There are day trip options all around Galway. When you first get to Galway, be touristy! Go the information booths and check out the best sites.

SAFETY
In general I think future students should know Galway is extremely friendly and actually I found so safe compared to Madison. As a girl, I felt more secure going out and walking alone then I do here.

TRAVEL
Ireland for me was the stepping stone into further travel into Europe and RyanAir is a great resource for any study-abroad student interested in European travel.

If you plan on travelling a lot for long/short periods of time, I highly recommend a backpacking backpack. They are very useful, especially if you plan on doing a lot of travelling by train.