Partner UniversityUniversity College Dublin
Country: Ireland
Faculty: Beedie School of Business (SFU); Lochlann Quinn School of Business (UCD)
Major: Business Administration (SFU); Occasional Business and Law (UCD)
Exchange Term: Spring 2017
Term Dates01/2017 - 05/2017

Preparation for Exchange

In preparing for exchange, I found it very helpful to attend the information sessions and read all the emails I was sent from both SFU and University College Dublin (UCD). For example, when I attended one of the information sessions at UCD many students were unaware of the Irish immigration registration requirements and hadn't booked their registration appointment yet. This made it more difficult (but not impossible) for them to travel outside of Ireland while they had to wait for their appointment. However, we had actually received an email from both UCD and SFU prior to departure on the registration requirements. The emails and info sessions also give you all the information you need to know on topics such as course registration and booking accommodation.

In terms of course registrations, there is an online pdf form listing the courses (called "modules" in Ireland) available to exchange students by term. You can find this form by doing a quick google search f

round and to rain quite a bit, so you will likely not require much summer clothing. However, I do suggest packing a bit in case you wish to travel to other European countries that may be warmer during school breaks.

During Exchange

Go to orientation! There is so much helpful information provided to you at orientation and it is a great way to meet other exchange students. UCD puts on both information sessions and orientation events during the first couple of weeks. You will be provided with information regarding immigration, classes, the campus, and just general suggestions on how to make the most out of your time on exchange. A really great way to meet people is to attend the school organized exchange events during your first weeks in Ireland. At these events, you will meet both Irish students and other exchange students from all over the world. My two best friends that I met on exchange were from New Zealand and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Clubs were also a really great way to meet people. They have business specific clubs and others, such as a caving club and surfing club!

I stayed in Roebuck Castle which is the only catered residence on campus. I would have preferred Ashfield or Belgrove because both of these residences are slightly closer to the business building and are great places to meet lots of other exchange students. That being said, Roebuck Castle is only a 5 minute walk to Quinn, the business building, and I met really great people. Irish students typically go home on the weekends, and Ashfield and Belgrove are mostly housed with international students, so you probably won't find yourself the only one in your residence on the weekends if you stay in these two residences. Muckross residence is off-campus accommodation, so I do not suggest this residence if you want to live on campus.

I took four classes in Ireland. The grading system is quite different to SFU's. 40% is a pass and the majority of your grade will be based on either exams or a large group assignment due at the end of the term. There is no bell curve and all finals are required to be at least 50% of your grade. However, almost all past exams are available online which is a really great way to study for finals. Lectures are typically two hours (lecture styles were very similar to that of SFU) and all the lecturers I had were really great. They were very knowledgeable and engaging during class, and always super friendly. Irish people in general are very friendly, and you can always ask them for help if you need it.

When I wasn't in class or studying I spent my time either travelling around Ireland or to other cities in Europe. Ryanair, the budget airline, is headquartered in Ireland so you can get some very cheap flights to lots of cities around Europe. I was able to visit Portugal, Copenhagen, Northern Ireland, Budapest, and Amsterdam. Other places people visited while on exchange were Berlin, Prague, Scotland, and more. Ireland also has so many beautiful places to explore and their bus system is really great. Some of the great places to visit in Ireland include Galway, the Cliffs of Moher, Glendalough/Wicklow, the Ring of Kerry, Dun Laoghaire, Howthe and Bray. There's also so much to do in Dublin. Temple Bar is the main area for pubs or clubs if you want to go out. My favourite pubs were Porterhouse, Stagshead and the Hairy Lemon. Stagshead has some great comedy nights and Tuesdays are Ukelele Tuesdays. Even if you don't play a ukulele, Ukulele Tuesday is a must. The entire top level of Stagshead is packed with people who are playing ukes, singing, and just generally having a great time!

Reflection After Exchange

I learnt a lot on my exchange, but I think the most valuable lesson (and my top tip) I learnt was simply to

talk to people. While I really enjoyed my classes and learnt a lot in them, there is so much you can't learn in a classroom. From talking with people and other students from all over the world I was able to learn about new cultures and other perspectives. As well, I developed a new found confidence as I became more comfortable initializing conversations and asking for help, even if it was just asking a stranger for directions in a new/foreign city. You can be the most confident and independent person