

Erasmus Student Report: University of Limerick (Ireland), 2007-2008

I am a student in English literature and History at the *Faculté des Lettres* of the University of Geneva. I went to the University of Limerick during the autumn semester 2007. I arrived there on 4 September and left on 21 December. I did not need to go back after the Christmas Holidays because the exam session ends around the 21 December.

I lived on the university campus, at Plassey Village, which is one of the on-campus accommodations provided by the university. The houses were composed of eight rooms (and therefore seven other housemates) two bathrooms and a living room-kitchen. The houses have two floors, and the bathrooms are composed of a toilet, a sink and a shower. Besides, in each room there is a sink, a desk, a bed and a staircase. My room was not so big, and in some way a little bit sad, but after pinning some pictures on the walls, it got better. The fee for the room was around 1'600 Euros, which corresponds to 400 Euros a month. The rental fees are expensive in Ireland, but the village was at 10 minutes walking from the university, which is very practical. Besides, there is a bus stop right at the entrance of the village.

To go to Plassey village, I took the plane from Geneva to Dublin, with Aer Lingus. Then I took the taxi to go from the airport to the train station, and finally the train to take me to Limerick train station. I had to take a taxi to go to Plassey village. Of course, there are cheaper ways to travel to Limerick. For instance, I could have taken the bus from Dublin to Limerick, it would have been longer though. I paid around 200 Euros for the plane, 25 Euros for the cabs, and 50 Euros for the train. I left Geneva at 3 PM and arrived in Limerick at 9 PM.

The first week was really easy. There was an orientation program, during which the International Office of the University of Limerick explained to us all we needed to know about the following semester. Plus, I met there a bunch of international students, which was great. The first night of the orientation week, there was a huge party that was organized at the Stables, a huge pub in the middle of the campus. There were almost all the international students, and it allowed us to socialize with each other.

Before going to Limerick, I had chosen five modules that would count for 30 ECTS credits. However when I arrived there, the International Office gave us a new course timetable. The result for me was that four of my five classes would be unavailable. I had to choose new courses. Those were two English courses for my free module BA7, and two Sociology courses for my BA15.

My first class was *Romanticism*, a second or first year class. The content of the course was interesting, but the lecturer was not an English native speaker (she was Italian). Moreover she was not at ease with her English, which made her class a bit awkward. We studied the movement in England and in Europe, in literature and in arts in general. It was interesting. The class was assessed as such: two quizzes, an essay, and a final exam composed of two essay questions.

My second class was *From James Joyce to Maeve Brennan: Twentieth Century Irish Fiction*. It was a fourth year courses that demanded a lot of reading. As a

literature student in Geneva, it was not a problem. However I would not advice a non-literary student to take this class. We read seven books, covering the first half of the twentieth century. The lecturer was good in my point of view, for she gave us some background before analyzing the books, and provided copies of essays, which ended up to be very useful. I had to do an oral presentation of about five minutes, hand in an essay on the presentation, write an in-class essay and finally write a final essay of about five pages.

Another course I took was *Sociology of Media*, a second or first year course. It was a little bit trivial at the beginning of the semester, but the lecturer was very interesting and funny. He really got me interested in media by his way of representing them in our society. I did not have a final exam in this class, for I had to hand in two projects of about five or six pages.

My last course was *Investigating Social Reality*, which was supposed to familiarize us with the techniques and means of doing a sociological project. It was helpful, for the lecturer gave good hints and covered not only practical issues, but also theoretical, such as the epistemology of science. I had to hand in a project and do an exam at the end of the semester.