

OREGON TO IRELAND

Students fly to Dublin over winter break to study abroad

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Famous for its lush green landscapes, ancient history and of course, the Guinness, Ireland is a beautiful country that 31 students and community members got to experience in the final weeks of fall term.

Working alongside Dr. Niamh Hamill and John O'Connell of the Institute of Study Abroad Ireland (ISAI), the Clackamas Community College Cougars spent two weeks learning about the history of the Irish people and exploring the countrysides.

From the moment the students stepped off the airplane, they were met with fresh cold air and rain similar to Oregon's climate. Throughout the two weeks there, students would experience all different types of weather, from extreme hail, to massive lightning storms with winds that would blow anyone over, quickly followed by clear skies and beaming sun, making a memory of the massive storm witnessed minutes before.

Not only did CCC students get the chance to learn about the history of Ireland, but they were also able to visit many of the historic places that they had learned about.

"I think the way ISAI structured the trip made every moment memorable and an ideal Ireland experience. I think the excursions were amazing, enabling students to apply kinesthetic learning to our lectures," said Laura Smith, the administrative coordinator for campus services at CCC.

Every morning students would have a lecture after breakfast where they learned about ancient Irish history, Irish emigration and the great Irish famine, among other things. They learned and got to see firsthand where the Derry/Londonderry Bloody Sunday massacre occurred. On Jan. 30, 1972, British soldiers shot 28 people, of which 14 innocent civilians were killed during a peaceful protest.

"I really loved going to the museum and hearing from the

family of the victims," said CCC student Gloria Hartung. "I think we tend to paint England in a pretty good light, but we should remember that governments can be cruel and corrupt anywhere. What happened in Derry was horrific and I'm so

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-Timothy Batdorf

happy they finally got vindicated in 2010."

Throughout the trip, the group of Clackamas students were able to witness some of the most beautiful parts of Ireland, from the cliffs of Sliabh Liag which towered over the north Atlantic ocean, to Yeats Country with its breathtaking landscapes and home to one of the world's greatest poets, William B Yeats. The CCC students got to witness the sides of Ireland most tourists never see.

"It's definitely one of the most stunning scenic experiences I've been on — spectacular views and some nice short walks

with plenty of wind. The drive to and from is nice too," third year student Timothy Batdorf said of the Sliabh Liag cliffs.

But not all trips go according to plan. Kyle Butler, a fourth-year student was one of the unlucky few who got sick shortly after arriving in Ireland due to a viral infection.

"I just started feeling really sick at dinner and went to bed early," said Butler. "After a couple of hours, I felt really sick and started throwing up. Then everyone helped me and John took me to the hospital. It was interesting, there were a couple of homeless wandering the halls [of the hospital] who seemed to be not all there, but the staff was very friendly and helpful. They didn't have any rooms available so I had to be treated in the hallway, but at least they treated me."

Sue Mach, an English instructor who has visited Ireland three times — twice with the college, said, "I think it's a magical place. I can't even explain it. There's something so magical. I can't put my finger on it."

For students interested in traveling abroad, who maybe haven't made the decision to go, Mach said, "Do it. Figure it out. Almost every single person said 'this trip changed my life' and that's not an understatement. I've never had a student say 'this was worse than I thought it would be.' Everyone said 'this was beyond my expectations, I learned a lot about myself, I made new friends' I found that people who have gone on this trip make lasting friendships. It's a transformative experience. I would say to just do what you can to go."

If you're interested in traveling abroad, there are two upcoming trips to join. There will be another trip to Ireland in the fall of 2020 and a trip to France in the summer of 2021. The 2019 trip cost roughly \$3,000 and included airfare, lodging, transportation, and most meals. Tuition was extra.



The Sliabh Liag cliffs