

# Experience Report

B.Sc. Social Science at University College Dublin, Ireland

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Autumn Term 2024 - Course List:  
Social Justice and the City  
Global Masculinities  
Race & Racism

## Preparation:

I started my preparation for my semester abroad when I got the offer to spend a semester at the University College Dublin. The first steps were the application for the Erasmus+ scholarship and the matriculation at the UCD. Both were well supported by the University of Cologne (Dezernat 9 and the WISO) and the UCD Global. Including several Zoom Meetings, Checklists and step-by-step instructions regarding the transfer of credits, the choose of courses and the search for accommodation. The latter showed to be the most difficult. In general, rent in Dublin is a lot higher than in Germany. The UCD is a campus university according to the American model, meaning that most students live on campus. Still this option is very expensive starting at 1100 € a month. Shared flats are not common in Dublin therefore I decided to stay off-campus and rented a room in the house of an older woman. This choice was a lot cheaper (rent was still more expensive than in cologne) and gave me the opportunity to live with a local. There are several platforms to look for an accommodation in Dublin. I found mine on the UCD off-campus accommodation Portal but I have heard that lots of internationals had bad experience there so I would recommend more official sites like spotahome.com.

## Studies:

I really enjoyed my studies in Ireland. The UCD has a very different approach to social science than the university of cologne. My modules were far less theory based and more practical than I was used to. I only had three modules due to social justice and the city being a 10 Credit module so I had plenty of time aside from my studies to get to know the irish culture. The UCD Semester is more compact then the German model. There are midterm-exams in every module after 6 weeks and all final exams take place in week 13 and 14 of the semester. Except from this differences the level

of my modules were similar. I can definitely recommend the module:” Social justice and the city” which dealt with solutions to the housing crisis. Due to the actuality of the subject I really found it interesting to learn about different approaches and models to solve this problem, not only in Ireland but international.

With my three modules I was able to collect all needed STAP-module credits.

### **Everyday life:**

My everyday life in Dublin was shaped by the campus model of the UCD. The University College of Dublin was 10 bike minutes away from my accommodation and offered a variety of sports and social clubs. In the second week of my semester there was a great exhibition from all the clubs looking for new members. You can do almost every sport for little money. On Campus there is a free gym, a swimming pool and several football pitches as well as cafes, a small supermarket and a barbershop. I also joined the sailing club and the handball club but there are a lot more options. Even though I could rarely get on the water the sailing club offered a lot of social activities, nights out, pub quizzes and occasionally swimming in the cold northern sea. With the handball club I was able to learn a new sport while meeting new friends from all around Europe. Due to handball being pretty small in Ireland we played in the only senior league and had only a few games so it did not take every weekend and I had still plenty of time to get to know the city or to travel around the country. I was part of the Erasmus Student Network which organized a lot of big and small trips around city and country and provided the opportunity to meet a lot of international students. I visited Belfast, Cork, Galway and made several trips to the Wicklow mountains. The UCD is located slightly outside of the Dublin city center (20 minutes per bus) but therefore closer to the sea which makes a big part of the city’s atmosphere. Dublin is no extremely big city so I was pretty soon able to find my way around. Being part of the Irish pub culture with its live music was a great experience and provided me with lots of opportunities to make new friends and learning about the local sports games. Be it rugby, hurling or gaelic football.

### **Conclusion:**

Looking back, my semester in Dublin was one of the best experiences of my life. It has not always been easy but every challenge was worth it. Studying at UCD gave me a fresh perspective on my field, and I loved how much more practical the courses were compared to what I was used to. Beyond academics, I got to experience Irish culture firsthand, make incredible friends, and step out of my comfort zone in so many ways. Whether it was joining sports clubs, exploring the country, or just enjoying live music in a pub, every moment added to an unforgettable adventure. I can only recommend studying abroad for everyone who thinks about it.