To begin, let me start by first saying that the task of possibly even beginning to translate my exchange experiences in simply a few words is near impossible. I have just arrived back home, and am now experiencing what other fellow returned exchangers are calling ‘post-exchange depression’! Exchange is a once-in-a-lifetime-out-of-this-world opportunity where you will meet people who challenge your current mind frames, visit places that you never knew could exist and be enriched by strange cultures and new relationships which will truly prove that saying goodbye is the hardest thing to do.

Exchange is a personal experience – by this I mean to say that one’s exchange in the same country will differ by worlds to another’s. It is about the people, the places and all that lies in-between. On my exchange, I was lucky enough to be settled in the mighty ‘Emerald Isle’, whilst having to opportunity to visit eleven other countries and meet people from all over the world. I was blessed with experiences like no other; I skied the Swiss alps, climbed the Eiffel tower, rode a neurotic donkey in Greece, ate gelato on the steps of the colosseum, witnessed history in the German concentration camps, dressed proudly in green on the Dublin streets on St. Patrick Day (and reaffirmed my distaste for Guinness!), was wined and dined by the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi himself on a student conference, failed to spot Nessie in the Scotland Lochs and countless other memories that I will hold dear for a lifetime.

The only thing I would change about my exchange in Ireland is that I wouldn’t have to leave at the end of the six months time. I was challenged culturally, academically and socially - my new vocabulary, much to the dismay of my family and friends, include such sayings as “That’s class”, “It’s grand”, “What’s the Craic?” as well as one of my favourites, “You’re as mad as a box of frogs!” The exchange process itself expressed many obstacles, including subject approvals and timetable mishaps, however, there are always many friendly Irish faces around campus that are only too willing to lend a helping hand. If you are deeply considering exchange in the Irish land, look no further. Good luck, and in the words of the Irish themselves…
“May the road rise to meet you,  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
The rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.”