

My DCU Experience

By Johannes Reindl

Study Abroad Student at DCU 2017/18

(from HFWU – Geislingen – Germany)

My flight from Germany to Dublin was delayed and as I waited for my luggage I was worried about not getting to DCU. I arrived so much later than expected. Fortunately, the problem was just in my head and I was picked up by Gavin, a student ambassador who brought me and other DCU international students to the shuttle bound for DCU. Orientation Week at DCU was designed very well to allow students get to know Dublin, DCU and other international students. My personal highlights were the Bus Tour through Dublin, the tour to a farm outside Dublin (**Causey Farm**) and the introduction talks from the DCU Students' Union (**SU**) and DCU's President Brian. During the bus trip and the farm trip, we were caught in a couple of bad rain showers but the general energy was so good that it made it an even better experience! I also found my first friends during this time. The talks of the **SU** helped a lot since all of the speakers were very aware of the possible struggles of **'Freshers'** and international students. I was able to sort the problems with my timetable within the orientation week and was ready to go! Forward to week Four and the **'Clubs and Socs'** fair. Societies are not common in Germany so I wasn't really sure what to expect. While wandering through the isles at the fair, I saw Gavin again (from the shuttle bus), representing 'SpeakEasy'. Joining **'Speakeasy'**, **'Enactus DCU'**, **'Students for Sustainable Living'** and the **'Student Business Consulting Society'** were one of the best decisions I've made til now. Before going further, I want to include a twitter thread that I created while waiting at the airport in Dublin before flying home for Christmas:

"Leaving Ireland for Christmas in Germany. Quick breakdown on what made my time at **@DublinCityUni** special: -Societies: I don't know how this is not a thing in Germany, clearly the best way to meet new people and for personal development.

@EnactusDCU: delighted of being a part of the Enactus DCU fam. #SecondScoop is a great idea and gets rolling after a start with a couple of hiccups. Speakeasy: thank for showing me that public speaking is way less scary than expected. Thanks

@SarahBerney - Students for Sustainable Living Society: you always need some surfer vibes around. Also the great people in the DCU Olympic handball club and the Student Business Consulting Society - NED: got my first contact to entrepreneurship through a module; opened another door for me.

Thanks to **@RoLyonz** for being a great lecturer, mentor and person. -events: #SWDubUni was one of the best experiences in my life - 54 hours of unbelievable energy, even better people. It was a pleasure to work on #Ecovent. My networking skills definitely got an upgrade as well.

Thank you **@DanielKyne** for this opportunity. Just the people in general were awesome. Had 7 nationalities in my SW team alone. Thank you to everyone, students, mentors, friends, committee and group members, SW participants and everyone else I had contact with for making my time so good."

The societies were clearly my highlight at DCU as they provided everything that I was looking for; and way more. Next to my module NED Enactus which gave me an additional contact point to entrepreneurship and my first experience to social entrepreneurship. I only got into NED because I had problems with my timetable and luckily, I had these problems. NED helped me as a promoter for other actions and to learn 'stuff' for life. NED gave me challenges which will help me to solve similar

problems in the future. But mainly it gave me an introduction to entrepreneurship and its many characteristics. Roisin Lyons is, by far, the best lecturer that I've had so far. She deeply cares about her students and her motivation and desire to teach helps everyone in her lecture so much. For both 'Enactus' and 'NED' it wasn't about what I did during my time at DCU but the things that it still gives me today; the introduction to entrepreneurship and the people that I got to meet and friends that I made. Speakeasy had the biggest impact on my personal growth by showing me that I shouldn't be scared about public speaking. The letter that I sent to the 'SpeakEasy' committee tells a lot: 'Speakeasy' was the first society that I joined during the 'Clubs and Socs' fair; on one hand because I wanted to improve my public speaking, but also because Gavin, who picked me up from the airport on the day that I arrived was representing it at the stand which made it much easier for me to approach him rather a stranger. Joining 'Speakeasy' turned out to be one of the best decisions that I made during my time in Ireland. Speaking about Ireland during the first 'Da Shpoof' gave me an easy enough topic to begin with, some people didn't share my opinion on cheese(!) and I agree that choosing to eat rice for the rest of my life was a horrible option; my last topic of Irish names gave a nice ending with its connection to the first topic. It was clear to see how fast you can improve in public speaking, my confidence growth between the first three events was unbelievable! It's not about ending it with a **TED** talk but you all got me so far that I now believe that I could pull it off and that's an awesome achievement, especially considering how many problems I had to just approach strangers! MY personality grew a lot during my time at DCU and every one of you played a part in it - thank you so much for that! I wish y'all the best for the future.

Thank you,

Johannes