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Sunshine in Galway and the End of Classes

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Sunshine in Galway and the end of classes



Flowering tree outside of Tesco

Classes finish up for break tomorrow. Even so, our semester isn't quite over. Many of us have spent the last few weeks working on papers so we can travel during break. When it comes to final papers and tests, the NUIG system differs from that of the American colleges I've attended. Here, there's nearly a month between the last days of class and the deadline for papers or finals. It's kind of nice; I like having a few weeks to work on projects without also attending classes because it makes it a bit less stressful.

It's been a bit difficult to get started on projects, however. Ireland is in the middle of a gorgeous sunny streak, and for the last few days it's seemed like an entirely new country to me. Flowers I've watched tentatively emerge over the course of weeks have burst into full bloom. My walk to campus or Tesco is filled with colorful dandelions and other gutter weeds, . My Irish friends wryly joke that they're getting their week and a half of summer before the clouds and rain return.

Even though I'll still be here until the middle of May, it feels like things are drawing to a close. I think of spring back home, during weather like this, and a part of me is eager to return. I haven't experienced much homesickness but I also find myself looking forward to a summer job and working on the family farm for hay season. It's this feeling of being-here-and-looking-ahead, of being torn between two places, that makes it seem like the weeks are flying by... and I think that's okay, too. Sometimes my floormates and I chat about what we'll miss, and some days we just wish we were home (usually for slightly silly reasons – like missing mac and cheese). Still, in general we see the ways we've grown to love Ireland and the things we miss about home as two sides of the same coin. And when I think about going home, I'm reminded just how much we take the places we go with us. We've already incorporated parts of Galway into our lives; soon the coin will be reversed. I'm glad that I'm here during this glorious sunny weather so that my memories of Ireland unfolding into spring will be something I'll bring with me, too.

It's begun to cloud over, but across the way there's a large group having a barbeque... making the most of the end of a beautiful day.

Best,

Abby Lundberg